

Welcome to
your Parish Church
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH

Freedom from Boundaries? Holy Communion First Sunday of Lent, 26th February 2023

We gather

Music as we gather:

1. O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heav'nly frame;
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

2. What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
how sweet their mem'ry still!
But they have left an aching void
the world can never fill.

3. The dearest idol I have known,
whate'er that idol be,
help me to tear it from thy throne,
and worship only thee.

4. So shall my walk be close with God,
calm and serene my frame;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

(words: William Cowper; music Charles Hutcheson)

When the song ends we stand to sing: [Forty days and forty nights](#)

1. Forty days and forty nights
you were fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights,
tempted still, yet unbeguiled.

2. Sunbeams scorching all the day,
chilly dew-drops nightly shed,
prowling beasts about your way,
stones your pillow, earth your bed.

3. Let us your endurance share,
and from earthly greed abstain,

with you vigilant in prayer,
with you strong to suffer pain.

4. Then if evil on us press,
flesh or spirit to assail,
Victor in the wilderness,
help us not to swerve or fail.

5. So shall peace divine be ours;
holy gladness, pure and true:
come to us, angelic powers,
such as ministered to you.

6. Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by your side,

that with you we may appear
at th'eternal Eastertide.

*(words: George Hunt Smyttan, adapt Michael Forster;
music: Melody from 'Nürnbergisches Gesangbuch' [1676])*

Priest: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all.

All: And also with you.

WELCOME, BANNS and NOTICES

We pray: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known
and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of
our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We seek forgiveness

CONFESSION

Deacon: The story of Adam and Eve we shall shortly hear dramatizes our
experience of falling short of the glory God intends for humanity. The
story of Jesus whom we worship invites our trust and confidence that
God forgives, and calls us to fullness of life. Let us confess our sin with
just such honesty and hope.

Silence

God, in creation you gave us all we need for our sustenance and
flourishing, yet we have over-reached ourselves and threatened life on
earth.

Kyrie eleison.

God, in creation you showed you have more than enough love to go
around, yet we have nursed a fear of missing out.

Christe eleison.

God, in creation you gave us all the freedom we need in order to be
fulfilled and fall in love, yet we have pursued a false freedom and
jeopardised happiness.

Kyrie eleison.

("Lord, have mercy," tune from Ukraine)

Forgiveness is declared:

Priest: The God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself, and cleanse you from all your sins, that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We pray THE COLLECT for The First Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

BIBLE READINGS [Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7](#)

PSALM 32 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD',
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.
You are a hiding-place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.

I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.

Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.
Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

and [Romans 5:12-19](#)

SONG [Do not be afraid](#)

*Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by your name; you are mine.*

1. When you walk through the waters, I'll be with you.
You will never sink beneath the waves.

2. When the fire is burning all around you,
you will never be consumed by the flames.

3. When the fear of loneliness is looming,
then remember I am at your side.

4. When you dwell in the exile of the stranger,
remember you are precious in my eyes.

5. You are mine, O my child, I am your Father,
and I love you with a perfect love.

(words: Gerard Markland, based on Isaiah 43:1-4; music: Gerard Markland, arr Andrew Moore)

We remain standing for the GOSPEL READING [Matthew 4:1-11](#)

In church, when it is announced, we say:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *in Church is from David*

How brief was the time in Eden: just twenty Bible verses. Some think of the Genesis creation stories as describing how things were a long time ago. David prefers to think of them as poems or dramas which help us understand how things are. The tantalising time of perfection, simplicity and complete absence of shame dramatizes our longing for innocence, and our deep yearning for something, some way of being, better. Our hunch that holiness is just out of reach, our anxiety that we're missing out on something bigger or better, our curiosity that makes us always try to find out more: these are at once attractive and fraught human characteristics. They make us amazing and yet often get us into terrible trouble. Very swiftly, the poets of Genesis help us feel all these turbulent, immeasurable, existential currents and marshal them into a story with a sequence, a narrative we can hold in our heads. The purpose of the story is to set our relationship with God at the heart of our search for meaning. It prepares us to read the great saga of humanity's separation from and reconciliation with our creator.

We remember Adam and Eve tasting that fruit. What are you anxious about missing out on?

Take a look around the world and look for some examples of how fear of missing out has led to conflict.

What makes you curious? What intrigues you about the world? It may be something scientific, or something relational.

Take a look around the world and look for examples of human ingenuity and curiosity leading to great life-giving discovery. Find some examples of where we have over reached ourselves and curiosity has led to disaster or harm.

If God were to come and fix everything we have done, we should lose our freedom. Ironically, it was freedom Adam and Eve sought by reaching for the fruit. In doing so they lost the freedom of innocence. Instead, God chose to come and be with us in our freedom with all its temptation and difficulty in finding the right balance in life. Dwell on the bare fact of Jesus experiencing temptation. What kind of reassurance does it give you?

Dwell on his coming to experience the confinement of human finitude. Take a look around the world and find some examples of where freedom is over stated, idolised to the point of destructiveness or where something is presented as a solution when it might be a bigger problem.

We affirm our faith

AFFIRMATION of FAITH

Deacon: We stand to affirm our faith in the one who came to be tempted as we are, yet without sin:

**Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every other name:
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow.
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

(From Philippians chapter 2)

INTERCESSIONS *in Church, using this or another response:*

Leader: Lord, in your mercy,
All: hear our prayer.

ending with

Merciful Father,
**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour
Jesus Christ. Amen.**

For those at home:

Let the examples you found coming to mind in your reflection populate your requests to God in prayer.

Pray for wisdom about boundaries: how they can confine or liberate.

As Lent gets under way, offer to God the temptations you experience, great or small, and, knowing Jesus' empathy, ask him to minister to you with his angels.

Among those who have died recently we pray for Peter Harris, Dalton Yvonne Hunt and Margaret Watson.

We stand for THE PEACE

Deacon: Christ came to preach peace to those who are far off and peace to those who are near. The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN *during which the Table is prepared* [God is working his purpose out](#)

1. God is working his purpose out as year succeeds to year.
God is working his purpose out, and the day is drawing near.
Nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

2. From the east to the utmost west wherever foot has trod,
through the mouths of his messengers echoes forth the voice of God:
"Listen to me, ye continents, ye islands, give ear to me,
that the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea."

3. How can we do the work of God, how prosper and increase
harmony in the human race, and the reign of perfect peace?
What can we do to urge the time, the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea?

4. All our efforts are nothing worth unless God bless the deed;
vain our hopes for the harvest tide till he brings to life the seed.
Yet ever nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

*(words: Arthur Campbell Ainger, adapt Michael Forster;
music: Millicent Kingham, in 'Church Hymns' [1903])*

We celebrate God's faithfulness

We stand, if able, for the Eucharistic Prayer

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Praise and thanks are yours, Lord God, because you remain faithful through our unfaith and constant amid our failure. Adam and Eve could see only scarcity, but you continue to offer us abundance. Though sin came into the world and poisoned your good creation, you nonetheless called the children of Abraham to be your companions, and in Jesus you faced the cost of our sin and received its poison in your own body, transforming death into life. And so we give you humble thanks for your forgiveness and our new life, with angels and archangels and the company of heaven, singing your unending praise.

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Righteous God, in Jesus you were tempted to make stones into bread, but instead in him you make us living stones and you make bread become his body. Send down your Holy Spirit that we may be transformed into your body for the life of your world, and this bread and this cup may become for us our strength and stay, the body and blood

of your Son Jesus Christ. Who, at supper with his disciples took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung.

After supper he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung.

Deacon: Great is the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Justifying God, in your patience you see the hunger of your children: send upon us your Word that in your living bread we may never be hungry again. In your mercy you know your people's craving for drama and miracle: raise up among us witnesses to the triumphs of your grace, that we may see you face to face. In your glory you hear your fragile world's cries for justice: shape us in the habits of faithfulness, the disciplines of holiness and the practices of peace, that we may find your justice as we walk with your Son on the way of the cross, until that day when you surprise us in the joy of resurrection, one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, full of grace and truth. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, each in our mother tongue, so we pray:
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body.
For we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you. Eat in remembrance that he died for you and feed on him in your hearts with thanksgiving.

Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world: grant us peace.

We pause to remember all who pray at home, then share the bread and wine, now for us the body and blood of Christ. All are welcome to receive. If you prefer not to share the common cup, receiving just the bread is as much communion as receiving both. If you prefer not to receive but would value a prayer of blessing do come forward and simply keep your hands by your sides. We will pray for you.

For the sake of those with gluten intolerance, please do not dip your wafer in the wine.

SONG during Communion [Bread is blessed and broken](#)

1. Bread is blessed and broken, wine is blessed and poured:
take this and remember Christ the Lord.

2. Share the food of heaven earth cannot afford.
Here is grace in essence – Christ the Lord.

3. Know yourself forgiven, find yourself restored,
meet a friend for ever – Christ the Lord.

4. God has kept his promise sealed by sign and word:
here, for those who want him – Christ the Lord.

(words & music: John L Bell & Graham Maule)

We are sent out

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with your Word [*and with the body and blood of Christ*]. Strengthen us in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

THE BLESSING *In Church the priest declares God's blessing. At home we pray:*

May Christ give us grace to grow in holiness, to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always.
Amen.

HYMN

1. Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

2. O loving wisdom of our God!
when all was sin and shame,
a second Adam to the fight,
and to the rescue came.

3. O wisest love! that flesh and blood,
which did in Adam fail,
should strive afresh against the foe,
should strive and should prevail.

4. And that a higher gift than grace
should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and his very self,
and essence all divine.

5. And in the garden secretly,
and on the cross on high,
should teach his brethren, and inspire
to suffer and to die.

6. Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

(words: John Henry Newman; music: John Bacchus Dykes)

Deacon: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ, Amen.



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All Saints Safeguarding and child protection coordinator is Mary Miles (0121 449 0851) - if you have any concerns or worries about children, young people or vulnerable adults and don't know what to do don't hesitate to contact me

Giving to All Saints: We now have a card reader in church, near the door, which you are welcome to use if you would like to make a donation to sustain All Saints' Ministry, Building and Service to Kings Heath.

Wednesday Evenings in Lent: 9pm in Church **Compline** (Night Prayer), a quiet service of 10-15 minutes prayerfully concluding the day and accepting the night.