

Morning Prayer

at home with your
Parish Church

in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH

Belonging

Sixth Sunday of Easter

5th May 2024

Preparation

You may wish to mark your time of worship by arranging a table with a cloth, a candle and your Bible, or anything, such as flowers, that makes it a special reflective space.

Music: click on the links to hear and join in the music. Click stop at the end of each.

HYMN [At the name of Jesus](#)

1. At the name of Jesus ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who, from the beginning, was the mighty word.
2. At his voice creation sprang at once to sight,
all the angels' faces, all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations, stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders in their great array.
3. Humbled for a season, to receive a name
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious when from death he passed.
4. In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
all that is not holy, all that is not true;
crown him as your captain in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you in its light and pow'r.
5. Truly, this Lord Jesus shall return again,

with his Father's glory, with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

(words: Caroline Maria Noel; music: Michael Brierley)

At home, we pause to remember those gathered in Church who, in turn remember us.

We take this time, united in Christ, to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world, and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may find new ways to serve God.

Prayers of Penitence

We confess:

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord, have mercy.

You bring pardon and peace to the broken in heart: Christ, have mercy.

You make one by your Spirit the torn and divided: Lord, have mercy.

ABSOLUTION *In church forgiveness is declared for all while at home we pray:*

*May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, time for amendment of life and the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.***

The Word of God

NEW TESTAMENT READING Acts 10:44-end

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

PSALM 98 *If you are able, you might stand to read this psalm aloud.*

O sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvellous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
have gained him victory.

The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming
to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

GOSPEL READING John 15:9-17

Jesus said: 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.
'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.'

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH – THE APOSTLES' CREED

We stand and turn to look in the direction of Church, to emphasise our gathering around a precious, shared story:

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,

**creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers

We pray THE COLLECT for the sixth Sunday of Easter

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence he may raise us to eternal joy; 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 fore ever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

We pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All: Our Father in heaven...

FOR REFLECTION

Think of a place, a community or a role where you have felt you truly belong. What were the conditions that made that feeling possible? What, in turn, did that feeling of belonging make possible?

Acts 10 is another wonderful moment in the early Christian community's discovery that more and more people truly belonged in their fellowship. Exclusion was not on, they realised. God was already busy in the lives of many outside the church. They were at first annoyed, then puzzled, then delighted.

We must consider, then, and puzzle and lament over the kinds of people church has excluded or made life difficult for over the centuries. Why on earth are so many pleasures and blessings in life sabotaged by our desire that other people shouldn't have what we've got?

Jesus' moving farewell reflections and prayers for his disciples and the church they will germinate include a great deal about belonging. Last week we heard about how humans flourish and bear

fruit if we abide in God. This week he exhorts us to help each other feel we belong. He tells us individually we are "chosen". This is not to make us feel superior, but to feel special. Everyone can feel special without superiority. This is not to belittle anyone outside the church. It is to make sure anyone inside does feel they belong. The beautiful Psalm of Praise today reminds us that thanksgiving and praise and wonder are all expressions of delight at the fact of our consciousness, of celebration at the surprise of being alive. To praise God is to express and effect our belonging in the world.

So let us pray about belonging.

We turn our reflection into PRAYERS:

Pray for the on-going life of the community or place you felt you belonged to.

If you perhaps feel less of a sense of belonging in your confinement at home, find things for which you can give thanks; aspects of the world for which you can give praise and things for which you can express wonder. It may be as simple as the birdsong heard from your window or the trembling blossom nearby. Express your praise in prayer and feel God's delight in your cognition.

Pray for those who came to mind when thinking about exclusion from the church or society. Pray for a healing of the lingering prejudice that still excludes.

Pray for any craving belonging, seeking refuge or asylum in a country not their own.

Among those who have asked for our prayers we remember Howard Drury, Adrian Koslowski, Kathy Farbrother, Wendy Turner, Colin and Janet Groves.

SONG [A new commandment](#)

*A new commandment I give unto you:
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.*

1. By this shall all know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another. (x2)
2. You are my friends if you do what I command you.
Without my help you can do nothing. (x2)
3. I am the true vine, my Father is the gard'ner.
Abide in me: I will be with you. (x2)
4. True love is patient, not arrogant nor boastful;
love bears all things, love is eternal. (x2)

*(words: v1 unknown, from John 13; vv2-4 Aniceto Nazareth, from John 15 and 1 Corinthians 13;
music: Anon, arr Andrew Moore)*

Imagining all whom we miss, we pray for each other:

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.

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