

Welcome to
your Parish Church
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH

The service of my love

Holy Communion for our Festival of Weddings
over 160 years at All Saintsⁱ
Trinity 18, Sunday 29th September 2024

We gather

For those worshipping at home, have ready in an honoured place a portion of food and something to drink. It may be bread and wine or something else. Set your Bible alongside. You might light a candle. You might have a photograph of someone whose relationship with you has been life giving and sustaining, or it could be an object that reminds you of them, and evokes a special time in your life.

The Ashes of Elaine Apps are beside the Altar today. At the end of the service, any who wish to join us as we bury them in the Memorial Garden are welcome to do so.

Music as we gather: The Prince of Denmark's March by Jeremiah Clarke

suggested by Lindsey and Ted Hammond:

"Lewis Coley was the organist and we walked up the aisle as a married couple on 31 July 1981."

1. Join with us, friends, today
as from our hearts we pray
that God himself may bless our lives together;
may he our vows receive,
our faltering trust forgive
and help us trace his image in each other.

2. As Christ the Lord has cared
and our existence shared –
the joy, the pain, the darkness of rejection:
so, as we walk his way,
give us each dawning day
the power and newness of his resurrection.

3. Spirit of God, descend –
promised, unfailing friend –
to fashion in us gifts beyond our making;
fruitful our branches be,
rooted in love the tree,
strong through the years to weather earthly shaking.

4. Join with us, friends, today
as from our hearts we pray
that God himself may bless our lives together;
sing with us joyfully
praise to the Trinity,
as here in trust and hope ourselves we offer.

(words: David Mowbray; music: Ralph Vaughan Williams)

Suggested by Gillian Lever: These words were written by her father for Gillian and Jake's wedding in 1987.

When the song finishes we stand in silence.

We sing: [Love divine, all loves excelling](#)

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2. Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy grace receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above;
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3. Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

(words: Charles Wesley alt; music: William Penfro Rowlands)

Suggested by Clare and Ben Noakes:

"We had this at our wedding in 2004 and surely it's the ultimate wedding hymn!"

Priest: The Lord is loving to everyone and his compassion is over all that He has made. (Psalm 145:9) With those words from a psalm with which I usually begin a wedding service, it is God's welcome, not the Priest's nor the Church's, that we enjoy together this weekend of thanksgiving, penitence, lament, celebration, and reflection on our Anglican call to serve this beloved neighbourhood.
The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

WELCOME 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 give thanks, we confess and we look forwards

This building has witnessed many weddings and other life thresholds for over 160 years. As we pause to give thanks for the humbling privilege of such hosting, we acknowledge the gift of all our varied experiences brought to enrich our prayer and reflection this weekend.

Candles are lit as diverse experience is honoured:

The air trembles with the prayers of generations. We honour today:

Those who have been married here;
Those who are single;
Those who are gay;
Those who have lived through divorce;
Those who are widowed;
Those who live not defined by binary categories;
Those whose deepest love was never recognised;
Those first discovering their sexual being;
Those who have ministered through the sacraments at life's thresholds;
Those whose deepest prayers were silent.

Where our rejoicing has left others out,
God of love, have mercy.

Where our institutions has stifled prayer and celebration,
God of Spirit and truth, have mercy.

Where our loyalty has become threadbare, neglected and unreliable,
God of covenant, have mercy.

FORGIVENESS *is declared:*

[May] The God of love bring *us* back to himself, forgive *us our* sins,
and assure *us* of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We stand to give thanks for grace overcoming resentment, singing THE GLORIA

Glory! Glory! Glory to God!
Glory! Glory! Glory to God!

1. Glory to God in the heights of the heavens.
Peace to God's people, all people on earth.
2. Son of the Father, all glory and worship;
praise and thanksgiving to you, Lamb of God.
3. You take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us, receive our prayer.
4. Seated in pow'r at the right of the Father,
Jesus alone is the Lord, the Most High.
5. And with the Spirit of love everlasting,
reigning in glory for ever. Amen.

A COLLECT

Dear God, Giver of life, bearer of pain, maker of love, affirming in your incarnation the goodness of the flesh, may the yearnings of our bodies be fulfilled in sacraments of love, and our earthly embracings be enjoyed as a foretaste of the glory to come, in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus, our Companion, our Lover, and our guide. **Amen.**

(Jim Cotter, The Service of my Love, 2009, gestated over many years' ministry and reflection as a gay priest, for the celebration and blessing of civil partnerships and for those who are "looking for a life-enhancing *Yes* deeper than any institutional *No*.")

We hear and respond to God's Word

READINGS [Song of Songs 8:6-7](#) and [1 John 4:7-11](#)

HYMN

1. For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.*

2. For the beauty of the hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,
sun and moon and stars of light:

3. For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
pleasures pure and undefiled:

4. For each perfect gift of thine,
to our race so freely giv'n,
graces human and divine,
flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n:

5. For thy Church which evermore
lifteth holy hands above,
off'ring up on ev'ry shore
her pure sacrifice of love:

(words: Folliot Sandford Pierpoint; music: Geoffrey Shaw, adapt from a folk song)

Suggested by Tony Lee:

"It includes expressions of the extended value of love both in marriage itself and family members, such as 'for the joy of human love' and 'brother, sister, parent, child.'" These words were sung, set to John Rutter's music, on the wedding day of our former Children & Families Minister Emily Hoe-Crook and her wife Lisa at their celebration service at Shirley Methodist Church.

We remain standing for the GOSPEL READING [John 15:12-16](#)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end This is the Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *in Church is offered by Nigel*

At home:

Spend time with the photograph or the object you have chosen, and dwell on how that person's love has enriched your life. All our human loves, at best, teach us about God's love for all. What have they taught you about God's love? How have they helped make you receptive to it?

[At this point we usually say a Creed.

Our Eucharistic Prayer today is woven with

AFFIRMATION of FAITH *in God, Father/Mother, Son and Holy Spirit]*

INTERCESSIONS

At home:

Having dwelt upon the cherished person in your photograph, or with the object you chose, give thanks for them.

Imagining the 6,059 couples married at All Saints over 161 years, then the many people alive today as a result, pray for God's continued blessing on them.

Pray as you feel able for the future evolution of marriage, and any hurt by the exclusions that continue.

Pray for places where trust has broken down, seemingly beyond repair, especially for Israel and all her neighbours.

Among those in our community who are unwell we pray for Venda McCollin, Gill Parkin and Jenny Watling.

We stand for THE PEACE

Deacon: We love because God first loved us. Those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

(1 John 4:19; 21b)

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN 1. [Lord, the light of your love](#) is shining,
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us.
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.*

2. Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
from the shadows into your radiance;
by the blood I may enter your brightness,
search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory;
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.

Shine on me, shine on me. *(words & music: Graham Kendrick)*

Selected for this service as Ben Noakes notes: "Of all the ceremonies that I've played for at All Saints, this song – along with *All things bright and beautiful*, *How great thou art* and *Jerusalem* – has been requested more than any other."

The Table is prepared in Church. At home, now is the time to say the Lord's Prayer (below) and consume the food and drink you have prepared.

We tell the story of salvation

Priest: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Glory to you, Creator God, you mother all things into being: earth-stone and moon-dust, molten lava and fissured rock, ocean depths and mountain heights. Amongst the splendour of your creation, you fashion creatures to show forth your beauty, and a people to live out your truth. You welcome and nourish each one into life: dolphin and dog-rose, swallow and sword-fish, human and hippopotamus. In each you display your particularity; the simple and the complex, the hidden and the manifest, the infinitesimal and the immense, the tender new-born and the wrinkled well-worn ones. None to you is alien or unchosen, all are children of your love.

All: Glory to you, Creator God.

Glory to you, Incarnate God, you come and tabernacle among us, sharing our flesh and our ways. Living among us you taste our hunger, you share our sufferings, you inhabit our longings. Learning to know us, you touch our faces, you speak our names, you eat and drink at our tables. Longing to empower us, you reveal God among us, nearer than breathing, closer than touching, yet stranger than knowing, fiercer than loving.

All: Glory to you, Incarnate God.

Glory to you, Sustainer God, you kindle, protect and encourage life in all things, you are the presence and the dynamic of love in the world. As holy fire, you inflame the world with longing for freedom and justice, never letting us rest in plenty or despair in poverty. As sacred truth, you inspire prophets, sages and saints of all times and

places to discern and interpret your mysterious ways. As mighty wind, you empower the Church to live out the life of the gospel, blowing within and beyond the boundaries we set for your working. As enduring presence, you keep alive in the hearts of the faithful the memory of God's saving actions and the hope of the fulfilment of God's purposes.

All: Glory to you, Sustainer God.

As we gather together at the table, we remember our blessed brother Jesus, who feasted and feted among us, who shared the scraps of our poverty and the bread of our plenty. On the night on which he was betrayed, he gathered his friends together to share the last meal before his death. He took bread, gave blessing, broke the loaf and said: "This is my body, which is for you. Do this to remember me."

A bell is rung.

And the cup, too, he offered to them, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, whenever you drink it, to remember me."

A bell is rung.

Come now, God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer: send your Spirit to bend over this bread and this wine, and over us as we gather around them.

**All: Warm us with your life-giving breath.
Suckle us with your nourishing breast.
Enlarge us with your passionate love for the world.**

Feed us now with your bread
**All: so that, nourished ourselves,
we may go forth to nourish others.**

Quench our thirst here with your wine
**All: so that, satisfied ourselves,
we may share our table with others.**

Impassion our hearts now with your fire,
**All: so that, enflamed ourselves, we may set your creation
ablaze with the fire of your truth and justice. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**All: 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: Breaking this bread, we offer our own brokenness
**to be united with the broken body of Christ
and of Christ's world.**

Pouring out this wine, we pour out our own generosity
**to be united with the shed blood of Christ
and the Spirit's outpouring.**

Bread for a hungry people, wine for a thirsty world. Come eat, come drink, at the banquet of the Beloved.

We sing: [Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,](#)
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

SONG *as we receive Communion*

1. Blessed are the pure in heart.
for they shall see our God;
the secret of the Lord is theirs,
their soul is Christ's abode.

2. Still to the lowly soul
he doth himself impart,
and for his cradle and his throne
chooseth the pure in heart.

(words: J Keble; music: H Walford Davies)

ANTHEM *at the end of Communion* [If ye love me](#)

If ye love me, keep my commandments,
and I will pray the Father,
and he shall give you another comforter,
that he may bide with you forever,
e'en the spirit of truth.

(words: John 14:15-17; music: Thomas Tallis)

A favourite anthem, sung most recently at the wedding of Katie Birse and Ernest Appleby in 2023.

We are sent out

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

A WORD OF THANKS

A wedding cake is cut by Don Stacey, whose parents and children were married here, as were he and Noreen.

Priest: Married and single, joining and parting, approaching beginnings and nearing endings, gay, non-binary, trans, and heterosexual, we each have wisdom with which to enrich society and strengthen community.ⁱⁱ

Will you continue to support and uphold each other in joy and in sorrow by your friendships, partnerships, marriages and fellowship?
We will.

Will you rejoice to show those who are forgotten their place in the circle of God's love?
We will.

Will you continue to care for the Kings Heath parish we serve for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health?
We will.

THE BLESSING

[May] God the Holy Trinity make *us* strong in faith and love, defend *us* on every side and guide *us* in truth and peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among *us* and remain with *us* always. **Amen.**

(The blessing for Trinity Sunday, which is also used in Marriage services)

HYMN [All people that on earth do dwell](#)

(short fanfare)

1. All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with fear, his praise forth
tell,
come ye before him and rejoice.

3. O enter then his gates with praise,
approach with joy his courts unto;
praise, laud and bless his name
always,
for it is seemly so to do.

2. The Lord, ye know, is God indeed,
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed
and for his sheep he doth us take.

4. For why? the Lord our God is good:
his mercy is for ever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

(short fanfare)

5. To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
the God whom heav'n and earth adore,
from us and from the angel-host
be praise and glory evermore.

(short fanfare)

Amen.

*(words: William Kethe, from 'Day's Psalter' [1560] alt;
music: 'Genevan Psalter' [1551], attrib Louis Bourgeois, arr Ralph Vaughan Williams)*

Suggested by Alma Beattie: "A wonderful tune, especially in this version, wonderful words. We came out of church to it at our wedding. The organist can be on a roll!"

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

ORGAN and TROMBONE VOLUNTARY Music for the Royal Fireworks: Menuet and Trio (*George Frideric Handel, arr Sidney M Lawton*)

We take Elaine's ashes to the Memorial Garden for burial.

The exhibition is open 2-4pm this afternoon.

Bring visitors if you wish.

*This evening, 6.30pm **Evening Prayer***



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Eucharistic Prayer and words of breaking and invitation from Praying like a Woman Nicola Slee, SPCK 2004

PHOTOGRAPHY

Sometimes photographs are taken, with permission, as a record of All Saints' common life. We respectfully ask that others do not take photographs at Church without permission.

All Saints Safeguarding and Child Protection Coordinator is Eira Jones. 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 her on 07497 781681.

Giving to All Saints

If you wish to contribute financially to sustain All Saints Church and our ministry to Kings Heath you can leave a gift of cash on the collection plate on your way out of church; use the card reader near the Church door; speak to Steve Brittle about the *Parish Giving Scheme*; make a transfer to: HSBC - Sort Code 40-11-15, All Saints Kings Heath PCC - A/C No. 71801163.

ⁱ The Service of my Love is the title of a book of liturgies by Jim Cotter, responding to the new opportunity of Civil Partnerships opening up in 2008. Even as it was honed by painful rejection and criticism, It illustrates how the greater spectrum of people enjoying the godly gift of Marriage is enriching, not diluting, our experience and understanding of the gravity of Marriage and its spiritual richness and consequence.

ⁱⁱ The introduction to the Marriage Service describes how it "enriches society and strengthens community."