

Today, as part of our year of 70th Anniversary Celebrations, we are thinking and praying about the future of our Church. We are thanking God for what the community of St. Christopher's is today: it's people, it's worship, it's fellowship, it's witness, but we are moving on to think about how we will grow and continue to serve the people of Hinchley Wood.

We gather as those called and welcomed into the presence of the living God through the grace of the Son. Let us respond to this wonderful invitation by offering ourselves in worship.

Please join in with the words in **bold** print.

Gathering

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

All **and also with you.**

Hymn: Guide Me O Thy Great Redeemer (252)

Anniversary Prayer

Gracious God, as we celebrate our past and rejoice in our present, we also look forward with eager eyes to the future.

We pray that You would continue to make Your love known among us. Give us a zeal for mission. Help us to look beyond our walls to those who do not know You. Make this church a blessing to those around us, and embolden us to move forward with strength toward what lies ahead.

Eternal and loving God, today we give thanks to You for Your goodness through all the years of worship and witness in this parish of St. Christopher. We give You thanks for Your grace in calling us to be Your people, for Your love revealed to us in Christ Your Son, for Your gift of the Spirit and the joy of salvation:

We give thanks for those who established this congregation 70 years ago and for their faith and vision, for their gifts and abilities:

We give thanks for all who have been members of this congregation, those who have given freely of their time and money, and for those whose wisdom guided our congregation:

We give thanks for all who have preached and taught here: for all who have confessed here that Jesus is Lord; and for all who today lead in worship, witness, and service in our parish.

May we be faithful in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus and being a gift to our world.

All Amen

Confession

Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus has opened the way for us to enjoy God's kingdom as forgiven people. Let us humbly confess our sins and receive afresh the righteousness secured for us.

When we let our hearts be driven by desires that dismiss you.

Lord have mercy *All* **Lord, have mercy.**

When we allow our minds to be preoccupied with complaint and criticism.

Christ, have mercy. *All* **Christ, have mercy.**

When we exert our will to insist that we serve you on our own terms.

Lord have mercy *All* **Lord, have mercy.**

Absolution

May 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.

All **Amen.**

Sung Gloria (Coventry)

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father.

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

We worship you, **glory in the highest,**
give you thanks, **glory in the highest,**
praise you for your glory.

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us, **have mercy on us;**

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer, **receive our prayer.**

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, the glory of God the Father.

Glory to God, glory in the highest, peace to his people, peace on earth.

Amen, **amen.**

Collect

Almighty God,
to whose glory we celebrate the dedication of this house of prayer: we praise you
for the many blessings you have given to those who worship you here:
and we pray that all who seek you in this place may find you, and, being filled with
the Holy Spirit, may become a living temple acceptable to you;
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.

All **Amen.**

Reading: (Philippians 4:1-9)

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians

So then, my friends, how dear you are to me and how I miss you! How happy you
make me, and how proud I am of you! - this, dear friends, is how you should stand
firm in your life in the Lord.

Euodia and Syntyche, please, I beg you, try to agree as sisters in the Lord. And you
too, my faithful partner, I want you to help these women; for they have worked hard
with me to spread the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers,
whose names are in God's book of the living.

May you always be joyful in your union with the Lord. I say it again: rejoice! Show a
gentle attitude toward everyone. The Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about
anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with
a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will
keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that
deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honourable. Put
into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from
my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Hymn: Rejoice the Lord is King (580)

Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia.

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our minds,
so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.

All **Alleluia.**

Gospel: (Matthew 22:1-14)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus again used parables in talking to the people. “The Kingdom of heaven is like this. Once there was a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son. He sent his servants to tell the invited guests to come to the feast, but they did not want to come. So he sent other servants with this message for the guests: ‘My feast is ready now; my steers and prize calves have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!’ But the invited guests paid no attention and went about their business: one went to his farm, another to his store, while others grabbed the servants, beat them, and killed them. The king was very angry; so he sent his soldiers, who killed those murderers and burned down their city. Then he called his servants and said to them, ‘My wedding feast is ready, but the people I invited did not deserve it. Now go to the main streets and invite to the feast as many people as you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, good and bad alike; and the wedding hall was filled with people.

“The king went in to look at the guests and saw a man who was not wearing wedding clothes. ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ the king asked him. But the man said nothing. Then the king told the servants, ‘Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him outside in the dark. There he will cry and gnash his teeth.’”

And Jesus concluded, “Many are invited, but few are chosen.”

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

The Peace

Jesus brings a peace beyond understanding to hearts that are open to him. We welcome this precious gift and share his peace with one another, expressing our unity as his people.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All **and also with you**

We share a sign of peace.

When you have finished, please sit in groups of 6-8, and try not to sit with people you always sit with!

Looking into the future exercise

Intercessions

Between the prayers we say

Lord, in your mercy
All hear our prayer.

At the end of the prayers we say

Merciful God, accept our prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Hymn: Rock of Ages Cleft For Me (584)

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here. **All His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts. **All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Father, we give you thanks and praise
through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, your living Word,
through whom you have created all things;
who was sent by you in your great goodness to be our Saviour.

And now we give you thanks
for your blessing on this house of prayer,
where through your grace we offer you the sacrifice of praise
and are built by your Spirit into a temple made without hands,
even the body of your Son Jesus Christ.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and *saying*:

**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.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, 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.

Great is the mystery of faith:

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

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of St. Christopher and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, 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.

Distribution of Communion

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

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

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Holy Communion is distributed to those in the Church.

Chant: Laudate Dominum (933)

Prayer of Spiritual Communion (for private prayer)

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now
receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O
most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

Closing Prayer

Father in heaven, whose Church on earth is a sign of your heavenly peace,
an image of the new and eternal Jerusalem: grant to us in the days of our
pilgrimage that, fed with the living bread of heaven, and united in the body of your
Son, we may be the temple of your presence, the place of your glory on earth,
and a sign of your peace in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen**

Notices

Litany for the Parish Anniversary Celebration

For the Church universal, of which these buildings are a visible symbol,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For your presence whenever two or three have gathered in your name,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For this place where we may be still and know that you are God,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the fulfilling of our desires and petitions as you see best for us,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For our past and a vision of the future that lies ahead,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the gift of the Holy Spirit and new life in baptism,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the pardon of our sins when we have fallen short of your glory,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the holy Eucharist in which we have a foretaste of your eternal kingdom,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the blessing of our vows and the crowning of our years with your goodness,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the faith of those who have gone before us and for our encouragement by their perseverance,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For all the benefactors of this place who have died in the peace of Christ and are at rest, especially those who in our Garden of Remembrance.

All **We thank you, Lord.**

For the fellowship of all your saints, and especially for St. Christopher, our patron,

All **We thank you, Lord.**

O God, from living and chosen stones you prepare an everlasting dwelling place for your majesty. Grant that in the power of the Holy Spirit those who serve you here may always be kept within your presence. This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever.

All **Amen.**

Hymn: Lord of the Church (Tune: Londonderry Air)

Lord of the church, we pray for our renewing:

Christ over all, our undivided aim.

Fire of the Spirit, burn for our enduing,

wind of the Spirit, fan the living flame!

We turn to Christ amid our fear and failing,

the will that lacks the courage to be free,

the weary labours, all but unavailing,

to bring us nearer what a church should be.

Lord of the church, we seek a Father's blessing,
a true repentance and a faith restored,
a swift obedience and a new possessing,
filled with the Holy Spirit of the Lord!
We turn to Christ from all our restless striving,
unnumbered voices with a single prayer:
the living water for our souls' reviving,
in Christ to live, and love and serve and care.

Lord of the church, we long for our uniting,
true to one calling, by one vision stirred;
one cross proclaiming and one creed reciting,
one in the truth of Jesus and his word.
So lead us on; till toil and trouble ended,
one church triumphant one new song shall sing,
to praise his glory, risen and ascended,
Christ over all, the everlasting King!

Blessing and Dismissal

May the Father enfold you in mercy,
the Son encourage you in love, and
the presence of the Spirit enliven you.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Go in the light and peace of Christ.

All Thanks be to God

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