

Christ Church, Ipswich
Sunday 6th April 2025
Worship for the Fifth Sunday of Lent
with Holy Communion and welcoming new members
 Minister: The Revd Neil Coulson
 Organist: Mr Stephen Hogger

Hello. I hope all is well. Let us worship God together:

Call to worship

Come into this space of welcome
 where we matter most to the God of love.
 Come into this space of rest
 where we can lay our burdens down.
 Come into this space of peace
 where our suffering can be eased.
 Come and meet the God of love, rest and peace.

Psalm 26

¹ When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
 we were like those who dream.

² **Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
 and our tongue with shouts of joy;**

then it was said among the nations,
 'The Lord has done great things for them.'

³ **The Lord has done great things for us,
 and we rejoiced.**

⁵ May those who sow in tears
 reap with shouts of joy.

⁶ **Those who go out weeping,
 bearing the seed for sowing,
 shall come home with shouts of joy.**

R&S 661 How shall I sing that majesty

1 How shall I sing that majesty
 which angels do admire?
 Let dust in dust and silence lie;
 sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.
 Thousands of thousands stand around
 thy throne, O God most high;
 ten thousand times ten thousand sound
 thy praise; but who am I?

2 Thy brightness unto them appears,
 while I thy footsteps trace;
 a sound of God comes to my ears;
 but they behold thy face:
 I shall, I fear, be dark and cold,
 with all my fire and light;
 yet when thou dost accept their gold,
 Lord, treasure up my mite.

3 Enlighten with faith's light my heart,
 inflame it with love's fire,
 then shall I sing and take my part
 with that celestial choir.
 They sing, because thou art their Sun;
 Lord, send a beam on me;
 for where heaven is but once begun,
 there alleluias be.

4 How great a being, Lord, is thine,
 which doth all beings keep!
 Thy knowledge is the only line
 to sound so vast a deep:
 thou art a sea without a shore,
 a sun without a sphere;
 thy time is now and evermore,
 thy place is everywhere.

John Mason (1646-94)*

Prayer of adoration, confession and grace

We come with our prayers and praises today,
Most Holy Spirit, courage in our darkness.
We know You are solace for the weary,
pardon for the sinner and splendour of the Living God.
We sense your presence as perfume in the air,
as static electricity ready to crack,
as the warmth in our souls,
and we bring You our thanks and praise.

We come with our prayers and praises today, Lord Jesus,
for in the face of death You offer life,
in the face of anger You offer calm.
in the face of gloom You offer light.
We hear Your call to understand and love our world,
even as we try to make sense of all that goes on in it.
We hear Your insistent voice telling us to tell truth,
heal wounds, and stand up for righteousness,
and so we bring You our thanks and praise.

We come with our prayers and praises today, Eternal Majesty,
yet know we have failed:
we have failed to recognise you amongst us
preferring only to see ourselves.
We have failed to see you in the poor and the least,
preferring only to see the great.
We have failed to see you in the gloom,
preferring only to see the shadows.
We have failed to tell Your truth,
preferring the lies of our world.
Forgive us, O God, and wake us up,
that we might bring You our thanks and praise. Amen.

Like a father running to welcome an estranged child,
like a mother gathering her young to herself,
like a rock on which we stand, God is loving and faithful.

Where there is true repentance God forgives our sins;
so turn back to God, accept the love that is offered,
forgive others, and have the courage to forgive yourselves,
that you might be free. Amen.

A prayer of thanksgiving

For homes and food;
for families and friends;
for all that we often take for granted –
generous God:
we give you thanks and praise.

For your loving presence in our lives;
for strength and guidance;
comfort and peace –
generous God:
we give you thanks and praise.

For the gift of Jesus;
for his living and teaching;
for his healing and example;
for his dying and rising –
generous God:
we give you thanks and praise.

For all that you have done for us;
for all that you are for us;
for all that you will be for us –
generous God:
we give you thanks and praise. Amen.

Prayer of dedication for all our giving

God of every good gift,
we thank You for Your extravagant generosity to us,
and pray You teach us to give without counting the cost.
Bless all that is given to our church,
the time, the talents and the treasure,
that we may use these gifts wisely in Your service, Amen.

R&S 41 For the beauty of the earth

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:

*Gracious God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.*

2 For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and stars of light:

3 For the joy of ear and eye,
for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony
linking sense to sound and sight:

4 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above;
for all gentle thoughts and mild:

5 For each perfect gift of thine
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven:

6 For thy people, evermore
lifting holy hands above,
offering up on every shore
their pure sacrifice of love:

Folliot S. Pierpoint. (1835-1917)

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 43:16-21

(OT page 612)

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸ Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.

¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The wild animals will honour me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

Epistle Reading

Philippians 3:4b-14

(NT page 184)

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Pressing towards the Goal

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Reading

John 12:1-8

(NT page 98)

Mary Anoints Jesus

¹² Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' ⁶ (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

Reflection based on today's readings

A moment for reflection as Stephen plays

Our prayers of intercession

Lord of all time, we thank you for the great things you have done for us and your creation over generations. We thank you for all those saints of faith who have worshipped here, running the race of life and faith that you have called them to. We thank you for the great things you have done in many individual lives - when we have seen people healed, given new hope, supported through troubles and helped to grow in faith. We thank you for calling our leaders and those who work quietly behind the scenes to serve others, and their commitment to make a positive difference to our church community. We thank you for being with us in our own joys and challenges, helping us at school, at work, in our homes, and in all we do. We thank you for the great things you have done as we have served and continue to serve and help those in our area, shining the light of Jesus in the darkness of the world.

The Lord has done great things for us,

The Lord has done great things.

Lord of peace, we join with the psalmist in thanking you for filling us with the joy of knowing you. We thank you for our homes, our safety, our privileges, our peace and our security. So we pray for all those across your created world that do not have those things that we rely on and take for granted. We pray for the millions of refugees who have had to flee their homes in the Sudan as civil war continues and the true horror of brutality is normal. We pray for people whose homes in Gaza and the West Bank have been destroyed, who have nowhere to go, and whose lives are filled with fear and darkness. We pray for the thousands of people in Myanmar who have lost their lives, and the many more who are bereaved, homeless and feeling hopeless. We pray for all the people of Ukraine who look for peace and justice in our ever-changing, confusing world. We pray that you, Lord, will do great things to comfort, heal and bring peace.

The Lord has done great things for us,

The Lord has done great things.

Lord of all good things, we hear the words of Jesus reminding his followers that in this fallen world there will always be the poor. We thank you for the things we have that make our lives good. So at this time of increased prices, costs and bills we pray for all those who live with the daily struggle to find money for food, heating, water and the other essentials of life. We pray for those children who live in poverty and go to school hungry, remembering the work of schools and other agencies that do all they can to help. We pray for those who need extra support through additional needs and disability, that help would be available and they would not feel left out or isolated. We pray for those who feel they are losing hope and have nowhere to turn. Show us what we can do to support and share the joy of faith in generous, practical ways to help

those who despair and feel lost in an expensive and selfish world. Lord, you do great things, so please show us how we can do great things for you.

The Lord has done great things for us,

The Lord has done great things.

Lord of salvation, we thank you that as we look forward to Easter we think of your son who came to save us and all people. We thank you that you do the great thing of knowing and loving each one of us, offering us forgiveness, a way through life and the hope of eternal life. We pray for those we know who are suffering loss, illness or sadness, that they will have the strength to look to you for their help. We pray for those who are struggling on their journey of faith, and reaching out, that you would take their hand and pull them onto safe ground. We pray that we would have the strength and determination to put everything else aside that the world offers, and focus only on you. May our desires, hopes and passion always look to you, so that we may know Jesus fully and serve others as he served. You have done great things, so we look for your greatness to renew us again.

The Lord has done great things for us,

The Lord has done great things. Amen.

R&S 217 When I survey the wondrous cross

1 When I survey the wondrous Cross,
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

3 See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

4 His dying crimson, like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the tree;
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me.

5 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Our children and young people will return from Café Church and join us for Holy Communion

We are delighted to welcome Colin and Dorothy Hammond into membership at Christ Church.

Holy Communion

Gospel Words

Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 6:35

Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking;
if you hear my voice and open the door,
I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.

Revelation 3:20

God proves his love for us in
that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Invitation to the Table

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may,
 not because you are strong, but because you are weak.
 Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come,
 but because you need mercy and help.
 Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.
 Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you.
 Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

We pray together:

**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.**

The Institution

The apostle Paul tells us of the institution of the Lord's Supper:
 For I received from the Lord
 what I also handed on to you,
 that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed
 took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks,
 he broke it and said,
 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'
 In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,
 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
 Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'
 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
 you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11.23–26

Thanksgiving

Loving God,
 we praise and thank you
 for your love shown to us in Jesus Christ.

We thank you for his life and ministry,
 announcing the good news of your kingdom
 and demonstrating its power
 in the lifting of the downtrodden,
 and the healing of the sick,
 and the loving of the loveless.
 We thank you for his sacrificial death upon the cross
 for the redemption of the world,
 and for your raising him to life again,
 as a foretaste of the glory we shall share.

We give you thanks for this bread and wine,
 symbols of our world
 and signs of your transforming love.
 Send your Holy Spirit, we pray,
 that we may be renewed
 into the likeness of Jesus Christ
 and formed into his Body.
 This we pray in his name and for his sake. Amen.

The Breaking of Bread

Jesus said, 'This is my body which is for you;
do this in memory of me'.

Sharing the Bread

Take this in remembrance that Christ died for you
and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The Lifting of the Cup

In the same way,
he took the cup after supper, and said:
'This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood.
Whenever you drink it,
do this in memory of me.' 1 Corinthians 11:25

Sharing the Wine

Drink this and remember that Christ's blood was shed for you and be thankful.

Words of Acclamation and Prayer

Your death, O Lord, we commemorate.
Your resurrection we confess.
Your final coming we await.
Glory be to you, O Christ.
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Father of all,
we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love,
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

R&S 489 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
naught be all else to me, save that thou art—
thou my best thought in the day and the night,
waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
thou ever with me and I with thee, Lord;
thou my great Father, thy child let me be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

3 Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, and thou my strong tower;
raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my
power.

4 Riches I heed not, nor earth's empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5 High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright sun,
grant me its joys after vict'ry is won;
heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Ancient Irish poem
tr. Mary E. Byrne (1880-1931)
and Eleanor H. Hull (1860-1935) altd

The Blessing

May the One who works in our world despite the politics of the age,
 the One whose presence is like sweet perfume in the air,
 and the One who allows us to interpret the signs of the times
 allow you to respond to the movements and powers of the age,
 fill you with the perfume of divine presence,
 and give you the grace to respond to God's call,

and may the blessing of Almighty God,
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 be with you now and always, Amen.

The Grace

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