

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE



Along with your Order of Service today you will also have been given a Celebration of Life card; please use this to write the names of people who have shared special moments during your lives.

They could be still alive, or they could have died. The important thing is they are people who have shared special and challenging times in our personal or Christian life.

Please write their name on the card.

(Pens are provided in the pews or at the entrance to church)

These will be collected during the hymn as marked.

These cards will be available at the end of the service to take away with you, if you so wish.

The Parish of Worthing, Christ Church
website: www.christchurchworthing.org.uk

*"Faith is putting your hand out in the darkness
and finding it held." Anon*

A SERVICE IN CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Life is a journey of discovery, discovering things about ourselves
and God. It does not always follow the route we expect;
God can be a 'God of surprises'.

Sometimes we can even surprise ourselves and God!!

Leader: Loving God, we have come to worship you.

**All: Help us to pray to you in faith,
to sing your praise with gratitude,
and to listen to your word with eagerness;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**All Praise God who made heaven and earth,
who keeps his promise for ever.**

**All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Hymn

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him, still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless;
Alleluia, alleluia!
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia, alleluia!
widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise with us the God of grace.

Henry Francis Lyte: Public Domain

From Psalm 103

The road to Emmaus by Eddie Askew – read by Joan P

Luke 24:13-16 (NIV)

Now that same day two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognising him.

Adapted from items in 'A Silence & a Shouting' by Eddie Askew

He was a prophet “mighty in deed and word”, said the disciples to the stranger on the Emmaus road. Perhaps it was the shock of radical change which prevented them from recognising Jesus, or the fact that they were still using the past tense about Him..... “was a prophet”. Their failure to recognise their Lord is something we need to think about and relate to our own circumstances. Their experience of Jesus was in the past, and they thought they were alone. The cross had taken Him from them, and their minds had not made sense of the changed situation, or adjusted to it. In this change Jesus was somehow out of context; they couldn't fit Him into the picture. In a way it worries me

that they didn't recognise Him, but that's what the Gospel says, and we have to accept it whether we understand or not.

But do we always recognise Him, beside us? Hard work, routine. tiredness, ill health, can so grind us down that we carry on mechanically, never lifting our eyes - or minds - from the dust of the road, unaware of the glory and strength of His presence with us. Life gets thin and weak, the meaning drains out, leaving us with the dry, washed-out dregs. Yet He is still there, as the "stranger", walking with us, talking to us, listening when we speak. As the two disciples spoke of the cross, He took hold of their bewilderment and sorrow, and beginning with Moses and the prophets, helped them to make sense of it. Sharing their problem with Him brought them towards a solution. There is a more profound truth in it too - Christ isn't there beside us simply to help us find solutions - He is often in the problem itself. The problem for the two disciples was how to make sense of the cross, how to accept it. Jesus helped them to do that, but He also showed them that the cross itself was the creative act of God, and that He was in the problem, as well as in the solution.

Looking back at some of the difficulties I have faced over the past years, I begin to see God's hand in them - pushing the problem at me to stimulate and challenge me to rethink and to reshape my relationships. There are times when a problem looks as though it was sent to break us. but it ends by building us up - Christ in the problem itself, and Christ with us, helping us towards honest thinking; supporting and guiding us to the point where He wants us. "Tried in the fire" — there was a time when I thought of that as an Old Testament attitude which tried to rationalise piously [can you rationalise piously?] the things that were wrong in the world. Now, perhaps, I see a little less dimly, and can, I hope, recognise the presence of the Lord a little more clearly in the problems, as I walk through the dust of the road. Does it help you to look for the presence of Christ IN your problems? Try it; one day you may be able to thank Him for them, although that's harder!

They felt alone, Lord, as they walked towards Emmaus.
The stony ground, the dust,
the road, rutted and rough, meant nothing.
Neither did the stranger, coming from nowhere,
breaking in on their grief.
There was nothing left but memories
and they were still harsh and painful.
Time had had no chance to smooth the rough edges.
Their emotions were raw and bleeding.

Lord, I don't want to dramatise, but I know how they felt.
I've stood in the wreckage of my plans,
seeing nothing but disappointment.
Shrugging my shoulders, trying to pretend I didn't care.
Turned off.

Then you appeared. Unexpected.
And the world was good again.
Not like Cinderella and the fairy godmother,
rags to riches, pumpkin to coach, mice into horses.
(I've always felt sorry for the mice, Lord,
everyone forgets about them.) - Not like that.
The pain didn't suddenly disappear.
Outwardly there was little change,
but the air smelled fresher, the knots relaxed.
I began to function again.
to respond to other people, and to see you.
Lord, it's good to know you are with me,
in all the strains life brings.
In the disappointments and difficulties
let me feel your presence.
And, Lord, help me to share this with others.
Make my presence with them your presence.
May your Spirit in me encourage and strengthen.

And as I recognise Jesus walking beside me,
may others see something of him in me.
Lord, thank you, because you are always here.

OPENING RESPONSE

Leader O God who created the heavens and stretched them out,

All: We praise you!

Leader You fashioned the earth and all that lives therein,

All: We praise you!

Leader You give breath to the people upon it,
And Spirit to those who walk on it.

All: We praise and thank you, O God.

Leader That the eyes of the blind be opened,
The broken hearted be healed,
The poor hear the good news,
The captives be brought out of darkness,

**All: Your kingdom come, O Lord,
Your will be done.**

Leader So shall we sing a new song, O Lord,

All and praise your name forever.

Seeking God's forgiveness

Leader God says:

'When Israel was a boy, I loved him.
I called my children out of Egypt,
But the more I called, the further they went from me.

I was the one who taught them to walk;
I was the one who had taken them in my arms
but they did not remember
that I had looked after them,
that I had led them in the bonds of love,
that I had lifted them like a little child to my cheek
that I had bent down to feed them.

(Silence in which we remember how we forget God)

Leader: Jesus Christ Son of God,

All: have mercy on us.

Leader: If we have forgotten you,
forgotten that you made, feed and love us,

Leader: Jesus Christ Son of God,

All: have mercy on us.

Leader: If we have forgotten you,
and in your place imagined a god made in our own
image,

Leader: Jesus Christ Son of God,

All: have mercy on us.

Leader: If we have forgotten that you smile
and thought only that you frown,

Leader: Jesus Christ Son of God,

All: have mercy on us.

Leader: Lord Jesus, here is your body;
It is frustrated and fallible;
It is flawed and gullible;
It is tired,
but through you it can be made as new
as your body, a people of God.
We wait for your word to guide.

(Silence)

Jesus says: Come to me, you who are weary and heavily burdened
and I will give you rest.

Jesus says: In the world, you will have troubles.
but don't be afraid. I have overcome the world.

Jesus says: I love you, I want you as mine,
and I will be with you always.

(Silence)

In the name of Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

Song

Make me a channel of your peace
where there is hatred let me bring your love
where there is injury, your pardon Lord
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy. *Chorus*

Make me a channel of our peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all men that we receive;
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

CCLI 2765 Sebastian Temple©1967 Franciscan Communications

Reading Deuteronomy 34:1-12 – read by Pat B

Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land – from Gilead to Dan, all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.”

And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no-one knows where his grave is. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over.

Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt – to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. For no-one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

*Muriel will lead a short reflection and silence
to allow God to speak to us.*

Song

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.
Come, bow before him now,
with reverence and fear.
In him no sin is found,
we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire,
with splendour he is crowned.
How awesome is the sight,
our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place;
he comes to cleanse and heal,
to minister his grace.
No work too hard for him,
in faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

CCLI 2765 David J Evans ©1986 Thankyou Music

Reading **John 14: 1-14** read by Ann P

Jesus said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

*Muriel will lead a short reflection and silence
to allow God to speak to us.*

Song

How deep the Father’s love for us,
how vast beyond all measure,
that He should give His only Son
to make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss –
the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the Chosen One
bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,
my sin upon His shoulders;
ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
until it was accomplished;
his dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,
no gifts, no power, no wisdom;
but I will boast in Jesus Christ,
his death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
but this I know with all my heart –
his wounds have paid my ransom.

CCLI 2765 Stuart Townend ©1995 Thankyou Music

A reading from 'The Pilgrim's Progress' by John Bunyan

– read by Tony S

Background:-

The Pilgrim's Progress from This World, to That Which Is to Come is a 1678 Christian allegory written by John Bunyan. It is regarded as one of the most significant works of religious English literature, has been translated into more than 200 languages, and has never been out of print. It has also been cited as the first novel written in English. Bunyan began his work while in the Bedfordshire county prison.

I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are ended.
I am going now to see that head that was crowned with thorns, and
that face that was spit upon for me.

I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall
live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself.

I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the
print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too.

His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes, His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they have most desired the light of the sun. His word I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He has held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath he strengthened in his way.

Now, while he was thus in discourse, his countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him; and after he had said, lake me, for I come unto thee, he ceased to be seen of them.

But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the pilgrims as they went up and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city.

Talk The Revd. David Renshaw

During the following Hymn, the cards on which you have (if you wish,) written the names of those who have shared life's journey with you, will be collected in baskets and brought forward asking God to keep them safe either in this world or in the world to come.

Hymn

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

CCLI 2765 Richard Gillard ©Kingsway's Thankyou Music

Minister: In our hearts and on each of these cards we have named before God those who we know and love in this world and those who have loved and whose memory we treasure, although we see them no longer.

Jesus said, "This is the will of him that sent me I should lose nothing that He has given me."

All: **"And I will raise them up at the last day."**

Father, may we look backward with gratitude, forward with courage, and upward with confidence.

Give to us all such a vision of Christ's risen glory that we, too, may trust his power, that we, too, may know nothing can separate us from your loving purposes or finally defeat your will.

So may we rise up from all our distress and despair and take heart again; walk with Christ, the companion of our souls, to whatever lies in store for us, to find at last that faith has its own reward, that we have not lost our way, that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which seemed lost forever.

We ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Intercessions – led by Val G

Sovereign Lord, your Son has revealed you as our heavenly Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

Leader: Father of all:

All: **hear your children's prayer.**

You have made your Church a spiritual family, a household of faith. Through baptism we are reborn as brothers and sisters of Christ. Deepen our unity and fellowship in him.

Leader: Father of all:

All: **hear your children's prayer.**

You sent your Son to give his life as a ransom for the whole human family. Give justice, peace and racial harmony to the world he died to save.

Leader: Father of all:

All: **hear your children's prayer.**

You gave your Son a share in the life of a family in Nazareth. Help us to value our families, to be thankful for them, and to live sensitively within them.

Leader: Father of all:

All: **hear your children's prayer.**

Your Son drew around him a company of friends. Bring love and joy to all who are alone. Help us all to find, in the brothers and sisters of Christ, a loving family.

Leader: Father of all:

All: hear your children's prayer.

You are the God of the dead as well as the living. In confidence we remember those in the household of faith who have gone before us. Bring us with them to the joy of your home in heaven

Leader: Father of all:

All: hear your children's prayer.

Merciful Father,

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

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

There will now follow an opportunity to light a candle if you would like to; the candle can be lit for yourself or someone special who needs God to encompass them with His Love, or someone you have known and loved and by death you see no longer but you treasure their memory.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES

(Symbols of Life, Remembrance and Hope) – Elliott A

We find it hard to let go of our loved ones and leave them in God's keeping, or grieve for loved ones that we are separated from in many ways in our world today. Come light a candle in their memory, and place them in the light and love of God.

A Candle Prayer from Gloucester Cathedral

Jesus said:

*I have come as a light into the world
that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.*

Lighting a candle is a prayer:

Its light kindles in our hearts the prayers we offer for our loved ones, and for all who are bereaved.

Lighting a candle is a parable:

Burning itself out, it gives light to others.

Christ gave himself for others. He calls us to give ourselves.

Of love and hope, of light and warmth.

Our world needs them all.

*Christ shows us how to live, so that we may shine as lights in
the world*

Leader: Eternal Lord God, you hold all souls in life:
shed forth, we pray,
upon your whole Church in paradise and on earth
the bright beams of your light and heavenly comfort;
and grant that we,
following the good example of those who have loved
and served you here and are now at rest,
may at the last enter with them
into the fullness of your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

All: May the light of our loved ones burning in our hearts and minds, may our memories of them and our love for them not be extinguished by the darkness of our loss ~ may these lights be a symbol of our hopes for now and for the future. Amen.

Offertory Hymn

God is our strength and refuge,
our present help in trouble,
and we therefore will not fear,
though the earth should change!
Though mountains shake and tremble,
though swirling floods are raging,
God the Lord of Hosts is with us evermore!

Lord, may the light of your presence
Shine ever in our darkness,
Comfort and sustain us.
Through our earthly strife.
Thus, with your hand to guide us,
May we, when strength is failing,
Know your love, and peace, and joy, O Lord of life!

There is a flowing river,
within God's holy city,
God is in the midst of her,
she shall not be moved!
God's help is swiftly given,
thrones vanish at His presence,
God the Lord of Hosts is with us evermore!

Come, see the works of our Maker,
learn of His deeds all powerful;
wars will cease across the world
when He shatters the spear!
Be still and know your Creator,
uplift Him in the nations
God the Lord of Hosts is with us evermore

From Psalm 46, CCLI Licence No. 2765 Richard Bewes ©1982 The Jubilate Group

(The 2nd verse of this hymn was written by Margaret Marsh at Stoneleigh in 1997 as a her way of thanking God for being with her; she passed through 'the valley of the shadow of death' after the death of her 21 year old son - it is reproduced with her permission in the hope it will bring comfort to others)

BLESSING

The Lord God almighty is our Father:

All: he loves us and tenderly cares for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Saviour:

All: he has redeemed us and will defend us to the end.

The Lord, the Holy Spirit, is among us:

All: he will lead us in God's holy way.

**To God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be praise and glory today and for ever.**

Amen.

One in heart and one in mind, and empowered by the Spirit,
go in the peace of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

The organ voluntary following the service is:
Ricerca Terza (1615) by Gerolamo Frescobaldi 1583-1643 Rome

Please stay for coffee and a chat after the service!



all those whom we know that are sick, lonely, troubled or grieving, as well as church family members and residents in local nursing & care homes whom Muriel and the pastoral team visit.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY !

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL. We will be putting up our annual display of trees all day on Tuesday 4th and during the afternoon of Thursday 6th December.



Wednesday, 5th December

Heene School Choir join us for their annual Carol Singing for the Bible Society Coffee Morning: 10.30am to 12 noon.

Keeping in touch!

Christ Church operates a taxi service for those who find it difficult to get to church on a Sunday, or through the week. If you would like to use the service, please talk with Joan, Sylvia or Lorraine. **You do not then have to pay the driver. This is not dependent in any way on ability to pay**, this is to help people get to church, without worrying. If people feel they would like to contribute towards the cost of the fares, they merely place their donation in a Gift Aid envelope, marked 'Taxi'.

**** Please note there will be no Coffee served at the church at 10.30 am to 12 noon on Saturday, 8th December 2018 ****