



# Team Service 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Hymn

To God be the glory great things He has done  
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son  
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin  
And opened the life gate that all may go in

*Praise the Lord praise the Lord  
Let the earth hear His voice  
Praise the Lord praise the Lord  
Let the people rejoice  
O come to the Father through Jesus the Son  
And give Him the glory great things He has done*

O perfect redemption the purchase of blood  
To every believer the promise of God  
The vilest offender who truly believes  
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives

Great things He has taught us  
Great things He has done  
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son  
But purer and higher and greater will be  
Our wonder our transport when Jesus we see

## Opening Words

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Way beyond all journeying,  
Truth behind all mystery,  
Life within all living:  
**We praise you.**

Salve for every soreness,  
Mender of every brokenness,

Midwife of a better future:

**We praise you.**

Ground of all being,

Judge of all nations,

Conscience of the universe:

**We praise you.**

Maker, Redeemer,

Confessor, companion,

Befriender, inspirer,

God beyond all names:

**We praise you.**

### **Confession**

Trusting in God's forgiveness,

let us in silence confess our failings

and acknowledge our part in the pain of the world.

**Before God, with the people of God,**

**We confess to our brokenness**

**to the ways we wound our lives,**

**the lives of others,**

**and the life of the world. Amen.**

### **The Collect**

Almighty God,

who called your Church to bear witness

that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:

help us to proclaim the good news of your love,

that all who hear it may be drawn to you;

through him who was lifted up on the cross,

and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

### **Hymn**

Open my eyes, Lord.

Help me to see your  
face.

Open my eyes, Lord.

Help me to see.

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear your  
voice.

Open my ears, Lord.

Help me to hear.

Open my heart, Lord.

Help me to love like  
you.

Open my heart, Lord.

Help me to love.

## **Gospel Reading: Luke 10.1-9**

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

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

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

## **Sermon: Revd Canon Alison Myers**

Jesus sent them out into the towns and villages, to every place where he was about to go. He sent them to lay the groundwork, to open the doors, to create the networks and partnerships with people of peace, to say to those who had ears to hear, 'the kingdom of God has come near'.

I wonder what stories they would have told their hosts as they sat around the table in the households that welcomed them. And when they returned with joy, as it puts it a little later in the gospel passage, I wonder what stories they would have told Jesus. Perhaps there were stories of the people who wanted to become followers; stories of breakthroughs, of change and new life; stories of people taking just a step or two on a long spiritual journey; stories of inner, perhaps outer, healing; of people blessed; stories of curiosity; of apathy; of antagonism; stories of bewilderment; stories of distractions and false starts; stories of their own learning and of being blessed by their adventures in turn.

When it comes to stories, the Lordsbridge Team of Churches is no different. So, what if we, rather than the original 72, are taking stock in conversation with Jesus. What stories would we share of mission and ministry of the Lordsbridge Team?

Do you remember that dark November night when we met for a service at Childerley barn with Bishop David, and with Mike Booker and Michael Matthews, before it had been turned into a swanky venue and we had to bring our own lights? That was the moment when we formally acknowledged that the 11 parishes were now both the legal benefice of Lordsbridge and a team ministry, a team not just of clergy but of churches.

Do you remember when we began to talk about the structure of this team? From the start we wanted each village to know who its vicar was, and each vicar to know which villages they serve. We wanted each to have the space to develop and work with the local lay and ordained ministry team in each village, and the freedom to respond to each context differently, without lots of intermediate organisational layers.

Do you remember beginning to talk about a network of worshipping communities, as well as 11 parishes as we were deliberately becoming more people- and community-led in our thinking, rather than defined first by the requirements of our governance.

Do you remember Coton parish room being refurbished with donations from a range of parishes, to create a place for the area-wide meetings of the Team Council and others that were now necessary?

Do you remember how a few of us met to pray across one hot summer to explore how to connect and underpin the communities of Lordsbridge in prayer? Out of that came Sacred Space, a series of termly evenings, until the pandemic, of contemporary contemplative prayer around prayer stations that refreshed those who came, and created a new kind of spirituality network across the villages.

Do you remember the first Lordsbridge Prayer Pilgrimage one autumn - a week-long encouragement to connect the sacred places of Lordsbridge with visits and mutual prayer for each other there? Here in Lordsbridge, we were doing this before the national movement of 'thy kingdom come' emphasised a focused week of prayer each year.

Do you remember the grandly named Lordsbridge School of Theology - monthly Sunday evening seminars, set up to meet a demand for more theological study, and to nourish those in various forms of leadership, drawing on speakers in Cambridge and across the diocese? This was again connecting us to do together what we could not do separately in our parishes.

Do you remember celebrating our diversity at Candlemas, a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday like today but on that occasion we held two services, a high catholic mass in one place and a messy church in another?

Do you remember the autumn when we ran the home-grown 'Call of the Kingdom' series of sermons and group sessions, exploring gifts and calling, to build up the church and work with God beyond it? And do you remember how, after that, more people came forward for lay ministry and other roles?

Do you remember recruiting Becca, then David, then Claire to join the core team, each minister bringing their own style and experience to enrich not just the named parishes they serve but the rest of us as well? Do you remember how, in each vacancy, we have worked together to support the local teams and church wardens?

Do you remember welcoming Charles to the Eversdens as a self-supporting minister and also, unusually, as an incumbent in the Team Ministry, pioneering an approach that is only now gaining more mainstream recognition?

Do you remember the curates of the last 11 years - Corin then Beth and now Paul? Do you remember all the students who have valued placements here, as we gained a reputation as a training benefice for innovative and faithful rural and team-based ministry? Our contribution to their training has been one of our gifts to the wider church.

Do you remember the mission network for prayer and discussion about 'Fresh Expressions of Church' and what that approach might offer to those who just don't relate to Sunday mornings in our parish churches? From that came the experiment with Gateways in Highfields Caldecote and an increasing understanding of an approach which *multiplies* congregations, encouraging them to be different shapes, to adapt to different contexts and people. We were learning from the practicalities on the ground way before the Church of England started describing this as a 'mixed ecology' and before the pandemic forced so many churches to diversify into different ways of gathering people. Lordsbridge has contributed to the national discussion about different models of ministry and now we are the subject of research into our village based, mixed mode approach. These days across the villages, alongside the congregations that meet largely on Sunday mornings in ancient buildings, our mixed ecology includes Wild or Forest churches, a weekday congregation of toddlers and their carers, an ecumenical youth community and a Zoom congregation.

Do you remember how many of us learned from Beth about listening posts at fetes and events, and community prayer stations and trails such as All Souls memory cairns, Advent windows and Mothering Sunday trees, and all those other ways we are there for our communities, particularly in the last 18 months, to help them find moments of spiritual reflection and words of prayer outside the walls of our buildings?

Do you remember the planning and sharing of community projects, to meet local need and bless our villages - the community cafes and seasonal café events; the school based hamper schemes addressing local food poverty, even before Marcus Rashford brought it to national attention; the pandemic community support programmes; the pilot listening service based out of Comberton medical practice?

Do you remember how we learned from each other as we negotiated a range of church building projects? Haslingfield and Dry Drayton are now beautiful, flexible spaces. Toft acquired a toilet, as did Comberton and Barton. Great Eversden discovered wall paintings and the beauty of underfloor heating. Comberton and Hardwick have built church halls. And there were other projects in other places. And now, with our greater environmental consciousness, I am proud that some of our church communities are leading the way again, becoming eco-churches and gaining awards for churchyard biodiversity.

Do you remember first working with our primary schools on the yr 6 transitions project, now running annually in almost all 7 of them? Do you remember the experiments in area-wide youth work in church and secondary school, first by employing Emma, a shared youth worker, and now through our active involvement in West Cambridge Christian Youth Ministries?

Do you remember our almost unique annual area wide services with our ecumenical partners – with speakers like Methodist Rachel Lampard of the national Joint Public Issues Team, with evangelist Chris Duffett, then Baptist Union President, and with Rowan Williams?

Do you remember developing the role of a shared administrator with Kathma which, thanks to a project grant from the diocese has evolved into a more robust Resource Hub, with Robbie and now Becca, to deliver administrative support services out to parishes and worshipping communities?

Do you remember the ideas and expertise, policies and services sheets that have been shared between ministers via Dropbox and our email communication network? These ministers will soon be further supported by the software package iKnowChurch being rolled out in the next few months.

Do you remember how our resource sharing and networked approach made it easier to pivot to supporting Worship at Home across all our church communities, with resources in print, on Youtube, as podcasts and on Zoom during the pandemic?

Do you remember lighting the candles in our united services, at the times when we come together to celebrate and pray for all our different gatherings and communities who meet around Jesus Christ? There are always 11 for the worshipping communities who meet in the ancient buildings on Sunday mornings or evenings. And there are always a few more to represent each of the more fragile and harder to define communities who nevertheless gather around a relationship with the numinous and with each other. And there is always one more, for the as yet unknown new worshipping community that God is just about to call us to grow. These candles represent the lights of Christ across this area, the beacon flames of the Spirit, places where I pray we also can say 'the kingdom of God has come near', just as those first disciples did.

And so here we are at the end of a chapter and the start of a new one for the Lordsbridge Team of Churches, And here and now Jesus sends you out again into the towns and the villages, the schools and the workplaces, the community groups and the footpaths, the households and the cafes and the meeting places; he sends you out amongst those who don't yet know him and those who do; to go before him, to lay the groundwork, to tell, enact and pray the stories of God's love expressed in Jesus Christ, to say, in so many different ways 'the kingdom of God has come near', and, I pray, with the Spirit's help to make it true.

May God bless you this new chapter of the story of the Lordsbridge Team of Churches.

### **The Apostle's Creed**

**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 of Intercession**

*We pray for the needs of our communities and the wider world*

*We pray for the worshipping communities and missional activities of the team, lighting a candle for each one, and one for all that might lie ahead.*

*We conclude our prayers with the Team Collect*

**Lord God,  
in your love you sent your Son.  
In your grace you called us back to you.  
In your mission you placed us where we are  
and formed us into a team.  
Call us onward into your purposes and growth.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

### **The Peace**

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

### **Hymn**

1. God is here as we His people  
Meet to offer praise and prayer  
May we find in fuller measure  
What it is in Christ we share  
Here as in the world around us  
All our varied skills and arts  
Wait the coming of His Spirit  
Into open minds and hearts

2. Here are symbols to remind us  
Of our lifelong need of grace  
Here are table font and pulpit  
Here the cross has central place  
Here in honesty of preaching  
Here in silence as in speech  
Here in newness and renewal  
God the Spirit comes to each

3. Here our children find a welcome  
In the Shepherd's flock and fold  
Here as bread and wine are taken  
Christ sustains us as of old  
Here the servants of the Servant  
Seek in worship to explore  
What it means in daily living  
To believe and to adore

4. Lord of all of Church and Kingdom  
In an age of change and doubt  
Keep us faithful to the gospel  
Help us work Your purpose out  
Here in this day's dedication  
All we have to give receive  
We who cannot live without You  
We adore You we believe

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### **Holy Communion**

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our  
God.

**It is right to give thanks and  
praise.**

*We praise God for his goodness*

...forever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your  
glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*We re-tell the story of the Last  
Supper*

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*We pray for the Holy Spirit*

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.**

We break this bread to share in the  
body of Christ.

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

**Jesus, Lamb of God,  
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
grant us your peace**

## Post-Communion Prayer

**O God who brought us  
from the rest of last night  
to the new light of this day,  
bring us in the new light of this day  
to the guiding light of the eternal.  
Lead us, O God, on the journey of justice.  
Guide us, O God, on the pathways of peace.  
Renew us, O God, by the wellsprings of grace  
today and for ever.  
Amen.**

## Hymn

Hope of our calling: hope through courage won;  
By those who dared to share all Christ had done.  
Saints of today, Christ's banner now unfurled,  
We bring his gospel to a waiting world.

Hope of our calling: hope with strength empowered,  
Inspired by all that we have seen and heard;  
This call is ours, for we are chosen too,  
To live for God in all we say and do.

Hope of our calling: hope with grace outpoured,  
From death's despair the gift of life restored;  
Our call to serve, to wash each others' feet,  
To bring Christ's healing touch to all we meet.

Hope of our calling: hope by faith made bold;  
To sow God's righteousness throughout the world;  
Bring peace from conflict, fruitfulness from weeds,  
The kingdom's harvest from a mustard seed.

Hope of our calling: Spirit-filled, unbound,  
Old joys remembered and new purpose found,  
Our call refreshed by sacrament and word,  
We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

### Closing Words

May our communities be places of celebration and recreation,

**Joyful places to find the Lord.**

May our communities be places of truth,

**Safe places to be ourselves before God.**

May our communities be places of love,

**Trusting places, nurturing places, learning places.**

May our communities be places of transformation and change,

**Places to make us new, cleansing the doors of our perception.**

May our communities be places of protest,

**Places to challenge the world in which we live.**

May our communities be places of intercession,

**Thoughtful places, where others are lifted up to God.**

May our communities be places of experiment

**Places of risk, places where thought and activity meet.**

May our communities be places of contemplation,

**Places for vision, and a glimpse of God.**

### Blessing and Dismissal

*On behalf of the Lordsbridge Team, David says:*

We have worked together, prayed together, hoped together, laughed together, we say goodbye with gratitude and sadness. Alison, we release you from your role and responsibilities as Team Rector in the Lordsbridge Team.

May your hands be open  
to receive what God has in store  
by way of new colleagues and friends  
and by way of new projects.

May you embrace the future  
with all that you have and are.

**Amen**

*Alison blesses us and the work of all the churches in the Lordsbridge Team Ministry*

May you hold fast to the vision  
that brought you to work and witness together  
as the Lordsbridge Team of Churches.

May you know the Father's calling and his gifting  
for this particular time, and in each of your places.

May you be enriched and strengthened in your faith

by your companionship as the people of Jesus Christ.

By the Spirit's work amongst you and beyond you,  
may the kingdom of God come near.

May you embrace the future for Lordsbridge with all that you have and are.

And the blessing of God...

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

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