

PARISH OF ESHER
Christ Church, Esher with St George's, West End

A Service for All Souls



*'The eternal God is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.'*

Deuteronomy 33.27

Christ Church, Sunday 31 October 2021, 4pm

Welcome to our annual service for All Souls.

The service offers an opportunity to remember those whom we love but see no longer. As we treasure their memories and give thanks for all they have meant to us, we also entrust them to God, the One in whom the bond of love is never broken.

Music before the service

Tosturi Duw / *There's a wideness in God's Mercy*

Welsh words by Robert Davies, translated by FW Faber. Music by WS Gwynn Williams

Silence is kept before the service begins.

Choir Introit

Within our darkest night (Taizé chant)

Within our darkest night
you kindle the fire
that never dies away,
that never dies away.

Welcome

In the name of Christ, who died and was raised by the glory of the Father, we welcome you; grace, mercy and peace be with you all.

We meet this day to remember our loved ones who have passed through the valley of the shadow of death; to renew our faith and trust in God, to comfort those who are grieving, and to receive help and strength as we continue together along the journey of life.

Words of welcome or introduction may be said.

Hymn

Be still, my soul: the Lord is at your side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain.
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In every change, He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly Friend,
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul: your God will undertake
To guide the future, as He has the past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be clear at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.
Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on
When we shall be forever with the Lord:
When disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgotten, love's pure joy restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Reading

A first scripture reading precedes the psalm.

Isaiah 49.13b-16a

For the Lord has comforted his people,
and will have compassion on his suffering ones.
But Zion said, 'The Lord has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me.'
Can a woman forget her nursing-child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.

Psalm 23

Sung by the choir to the setting by Richard Coulson.

The Lord is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;

and leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul;

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death

I fear no evil; for Thou art with me;

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;

Thou anointest my head with oil;

my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Amen.

Reading

Romans 8.35-39

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Anthem

I heard a voice from heaven (John Goss)

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,
"Write: 'From henceforth, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord'.
Even so, saith the Spirit: for they rest from their labours."

Revelation 14.13

The Address

Motet

Give rest, O Christ

From the Russian Orthodox Funeral Rite, translated by W J Birkbeck

Sung by the choir

Give rest, O Christ,
To thy servant with thy saints,
Where sorrow and pain are no more;
Neither sighing, but life everlasting.
Thou only art immortal,
The Creator and Maker of man;
And we are mortal, formed of the earth,
And unto earth shall we return;
For so thou didst ordain
When thou createdst me, saying:
'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'
All we go down to the dust,
And, weeping o'er the grave we make our song:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Give rest, O Christ,
To thy servant with thy saints,
Where sorrow and pain are no more;
Neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Act of Remembrance

Let us pray.

Father of all, by whose mercy and grace your children remain in everlasting light and peace; we remember with thanksgiving those whom we love but see no longer; including ...

The names of those to be remembered are read aloud and then a short silence is kept.

The lights will be dimmed. You are invited to light your candle to commemorate those we remember today (perhaps as their name is read out). Please place the candle on the ledge of the pew in front of you, where it can remain lit until the end of the service. You are then most welcome to take the votive candle and glass holder home with you.

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord:
and let light perpetual shine upon them.

Contemplative Chant

Eli Jenkins' Prayer

Set to a chant by AHD Troyte. English words by Dylan Thomas

Sung by Catherine Powell

Every morning when I wake,
Dear Lord, a little prayer I make,
O please to keep Thy loving eye
On all poor creatures born to die.

And every evening at sun-down
I ask a blessing on the town,
For whether we last the night or no
I'm sure is always touch-and-go.

We are not wholly bad or good
Who live our lives under Milk Wood,
And Thou, I know, wilt be the first
To see our best side, not our worst.

O let us see another day!
Bless us this night, we pray,
And to the sun we all will bow
And say goodbye – but just for now!

Prayers

O God our Maker,
we give you thanks for the gift of our earthly life
and the rich blessings you gave to those we remember today.
Thank you for the years we shared with them
and the love we received from them.
For every memory of love and joy,
every memory of life well lived
and every sorrow shared with us,
we give thanks.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all consolation,
you pursue us with untiring love
and dispel the shadow of death
with the bright dawn of life.

Look in mercy on those who mourn.
Lead them gently in their grief.
Give them patient faith in times of darkness,
strength to meet the times to come
and courage to leave their loved ones in your care,
confident in your promise of eternal life and peace.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of compassion,
you are tender towards your children
and your mercy is over all your works.
Heal any memories of hurt and failure,
and give us the wisdom and grace to use aright
the time that is left to us here on earth,
to turn to Christ and follow in his steps,
in the way that leads to everlasting life.

Lord in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

We join our prayers together in the words of the Lord's Prayer.

**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.**

Hymn

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold now thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies!
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

The Blessing

May God be a bright flame before you,
a guiding star to lighten your darkness.
May God smooth the way for you
and when it is hard to see, lead you with outstretched arm.
May God shield you and surround you,
hold your sorrows, wipe your tears,
and when you are ready, lift your faces
and walk with you into the light of a new day.

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

Amen.

Closing Music

Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*

Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945)

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