



Section 3:

Exemplar Services



The aim of this section is to offer a small selection of service exemplars suitable for those living with dementia, their families and carers. Some of the services are thematic, whilst others follow the church calendar or can be used for the sacrament of the holy communion.

The main idea is to offer these services to those congregations that are, possibly, without a minister, or that need some guidance. A dementia service can be held occasionally in place of the usual Sunday service, or alternatively, as an additional service during the week. It can be a regular or occasional event depending on demand. It would be good for children and young people to be in attendance from time to time, and we would encourage providing an opportunity for members of the congregation to participate.

You will see that there are PowerPoint slides to accompany some of these services are available to download from the Union of Welsh Independents' website. We are grateful to the following (listed in alphabetical order) for preparing services on our behalf: Carys Ann, Owain Llŷr Evans, R. Alun Evans, Gwyn Elfyn Jones, Trefor Jones-Morris, Guto Llywelyn, Sian Meinir, Hywel Wyn Richards, Robin Wyn Samuel and Mererid Mair Williams.

Hymns

The words of the hymns incorporated in these services can generally be found in most standard hymnbooks. The two works we have referenced are *Mission Praise* (Combined Words Edition) [MP] and the English language section of *Caneuon Ffydd* [Cff]. Most of the words are also freely available online at <https://hymnary.org>. However, where the words are difficult to come by, we have incorporated them into the text of the services unless there is an issue with copyright.



What is a Dementia-friendly Service?

A dementia-friendly service will differ from the norm in that it will attempt to tailor the activity for those living with dementia. Quite often, many in the congregation will not be able to focus on one thing for long; some may wish to wander about during the service, and one needs to be prepared for some who will talk loudly from time to time. We will quickly come to accept this as part of the service and that there is no need to feel any awkwardness.

The minister or service leader should aim to be warm, homely and informal.

It is important to use popular hymns, familiar readings, and a short and interesting meditation. Even better would be to draw in the audience with interactive activities and using objects such as a candle, flowers, or a picture as the focus of the worship. A degree of repetition is always a good idea.

This is definitely not the place to preach at length or to introduce complex theological arguments. Simplicity should always be the approach adopted, and this can be achieved without being patronising.



Palm Sunday

[You will need a vase and a bunch of flowers]

LEADER

Today is called Palm Sunday in English, but in Welsh it is known as 'Sul y Blodau' (Flowering Sunday). The probable explanation for the Welsh name is that it is based on a longstanding tradition in many parts of Wales of decorating family graves with flowers on Palm Sunday. What is your favourite flower, I wonder? Bluebells or primroses? Daffodils, perhaps? That is probably the favourite flower of people in Wales. 'No,' said someone, 'My favourite flower is the rose . . . or the violet . . . or daisies or foxgloves.' Can you remember which flower was a firm favourite with the poet, William Wordsworth?

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden [daffodils],

I've got a bunch of flowers here, and I'm going to place them in a vase. But I'm not very good at arranging flowers. I'm hoping to have some help from you to create a beautiful display of flowers and leaves so that we can see them at their best, be amazed at the different colours, and enjoy the various scents.

[Start to place a flower or two]

I told you that I was no good at arranging flowers! We'll sing another hymn whilst some of you come forward to improve on my attempt.



HYMN 9 (Mission Praise) 'All glory, laud and honour' [*During the singing of the hymn, members of the congregation could be encouraged to place flowers in the vase*]

LEADER

Thank you for your help. And now I will be helped by [*naming the reader*] to read a story from the Bible.

READING Matthew 21:1–11

LEADER

Let us sing the refrain of the hymn once again:

*All glory, laud and honour,
To you Redeemer, King
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.*

LEADER

Yes, praise to him. Hosanna to Christ the King. Just think! A king riding a donkey. Christ riding on a donkey to the city. Not a war horse but a donkey – a symbol of peace.

But Jesus is not in a good mood. Irrespective of how the donkey feels, Jesus is at the end of his tether. The deliberate planning against him, the defiant conspiring by inhabitants of the treacherous city, is about to reach its climax. There is no red carpet for the King; no trumpets blaring. Only people spreading palm leaves, flowers and leaves before him. People shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.'

LEADER

How about singing another hymn?

HYMN 580 (Mission Praise); 903 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'Ride on! Ride on in majesty'

LEADER

A Palm Sunday hymn. Is it the first day of the week, or the last? Which day is the first day of the week? Monday. Monday is the first day of the week. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. And which day follows Saturday? Yes, of course, it's Sunday.

The day to wear your best clothes. Did you have new clothes to go to chapel?

This is the day, the Lord has made,
He calls the hours his own;
Let heaven rejoice, let earth be glad
And praise surround the throne.

The day of sacred rest that ended the Jewish week was called the Sabbath. The meaning of the word 'Sabbath' is 'to abstain' or 'desist', and there was a connection between keeping the Sabbath and the moon. In other words, the Babylonians celebrated the day of the full moon. But over time, and the formation of a calendar, the connection between the moon and the Sabbath petered out until, eventually, it was completely ignored. And as for the connection between the Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, this now was the first day of the week, the Day of the Lord.

LEADER

Let us turn to the Lord in prayer.

Lord of Heaven and Earth, you rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, showing your royalty. We know that you wish to rule in our hearts. Lord, knock at the door of our hearts so that you may come in. We want to follow you into the city and share in the rejoicing. Give us the will to serve those whose lives touch our own, so that we may honour one another. Come to your legacy throughout the whole world and rule over it in peace, justice and love. We celebrate and thank you. Hosanna in the highest to the Almighty God.

Our Father . . .

We shall close the service with a hymn praising the grace and love of God.

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.

After singing the hymn, we can enjoy a cup of tea and a chat – and we mustn't forget to finish arranging the flowers.

HYMN 560 (Mission Praise); 890 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'Praise, my soul, the King of heaven'

LEADER

Prayer

Help us to follow you in your modesty, your sacrifice and your love. May your blessings be with us all. Amen



Good Friday

[At the start of the service, a small cross made of straw/wood/paper could be given to all those present]

INTRADA *[a familiar melody played on any instrument]*

LEADER

Welcome to the service, held on a Friday. 'Friday! Friday!' I hear you say. 'We don't usually go to chapel or church on a Friday. Sunday is the day for going to chapel or church. Are you sure you've got the right day?'

Yes, quite sure. But this isn't just any Friday. This is the most solemn day in the Christian calendar. Good Friday. But what can be 'good' about a day that is so profound, so cruel? It's possible that it derives from the words 'God's Friday', as in the German Gottes Freitag. Maybe so. But although we are referring to something dreadful and cruel by speaking of Christ being crucified, we also note that it was on this day the world was delivered from sin.

Look at the symbol of the cross you hold in your hand. Listen to some of the words spoken by Jesus on the cross.

PRAYER

[The voices contribute in turn from their seats. There should be a short pause between each voice.]

VOICE 1 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' [Luke 23:34]

Help us, God, to forgive others. And forgive our world for all the cruelty that happens.

VOICE 2 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.' [Luke 23:43]
Thank you, Father, for this assurance.

VOICE 3 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' [Mark 15:34]
Help us, God, in the darkest and loneliest hours.

VOICE 4 'Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.' [John 19:28]
 Help us, Father, to provide food and drink for the hungry and the thirsty.

VOICE 5 'It is finished.' [John 19:30]
 Thank you, Father, that Jesus achieved the work which he came to earth to fulfil.

[Silence for a few seconds]

LEADER

Christ's cross was raised on the Mount of Calvary by Roman soldiers.

HYMN 674 (Mission Praise); 919 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'There is a green hill far away'

LEADER

This is a hymn about Jesus paying the price; the price for our sins. When we do something wrong, there is a price to be paid for forgiveness. If we were naughty at school, we could be sent out of the classroom and told to stand outside the door. Made to write a hundred lines, '*I must not . . . something or other.*' Being kept in at the end of the school day, when everybody else had gone home.

What was the worst punishment ever meted out to you? Being sent to the headteacher's study, perhaps. And in that room there was a cane. Yes, I know – it was a painful experience. Thankfully, most European countries have now banned the use of the cane. But a few people will still boast, 'It did me no harm. And I learnt my lesson.'

Jesus had to face the cross. With him on Calvary there were two other crosses, and two other criminals who were terrorists. Two sinners. But Jesus was not at fault. Jesus was free of sin. And all four gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – although they recount the same story, some details vary from one to the other. Matthew is the only one that mentions Pilate washing his hands. Pilate had a cane – or rather a whip. As he could not find Jesus guilty of any charge, he said, 'I'll teach him a lesson with the whip.' But the baying crowd were shouting, 'Crucify him!'

Luke is the only one to mention some of Jesus's final words. Mark says that Jesus had refused to answer Pilate's questions – 'but Jesus still made no reply'; John, on the other hand, mentions a dialogue between the two of them. But the outcome is the same. Barabbas, the sinner, was released whilst Jesus was condemned to be crucified. This happened on a Friday, although the Bible does not specifically mention 'Friday'. However, it does state that Jesus had risen on 'the third day,' i.e., Sunday. The next hymn also mentions 'the third day'.

[Someone to introduce the hymn. It could be one of the voices heard previously.]

HYMN 'The strife is o'er, the battle done.'

LEADER

This is how the story of the crucifixion is presented in the Bible:

READING Mark 15:33–39

LEADER

Several well-known paintings of the crucifixion exist – Christ carrying the cross; Christ on the cross; Christ's body being taken down from the cross; the crown of thorns, the nails; Judas betraying Jesus; Peter denying he knew Jesus; the soldiers and the crowd mocking Jesus; Jesus's mother by the base of the cross . . . I wonder, if you had the means, which painting of Christ would you hang on the kitchen wall? Some of them are the work of famous artists from the Middle Ages; others are by modern artists.

Most paintings of the crucifixion are dark and forbidding. The earliest paintings of Christ on the cross can be seen in Cologne cathedral.

But if not paintings, what about the garden? It's a tradition amongst some gardeners to plant early potatoes on Good Friday. Which variety of potato would you choose? Desiree, King Edward, Javelin, Red Thumb, Purple Majesty? They come in all shapes and sizes. The idea behind planting on Good Friday, apparently, is that the vegetables are planted in the spring and are ready to eat in the summer. Potatoes, peas, beans and fruit from the garden – nothing beats the taste. But the garden at Gethsemane was a very different place. It was there that Christ went to pray. He was in that garden when he was betrayed. There too he was arrested, put on trial and then crucified.

Now, *[name – if possible, a child or young person]* will play some music on the *[harp, violin, flute, guitar, piano]* to remind us of Jesus's suffering.

INSTRUMENTAL ITEM *[played by a young person]*

LEADER

[Thank the instrumentalist]

To close, let us sing hymn 315

HYMN 315 (Mission Praise); 923 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'I will sing the wondrous story'

Earlier, we mentioned the garden. On the table, there are a few packets of seeds that can be planted at this time of the year. Please take some home with you. You are most welcome to stay for a cup of tea and a chat before going home.

Let us all say grace together:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and evermore, Amen

Easter Sunday

[A small chocolate Easter egg can be given to everyone as they arrive, or fruit for those living with diabetes. A candle should be placed in a prominent position.]

LEADER

Welcome to the Easter Sunday service. The first task is to light the candle. Is anyone willing to help me?

[Care should be taken when deciding who should light the match]

Thank you *[naming the person who lit the candle]*. Lighting a candle on Easter Sunday morning is a very old tradition in the Jewish faith. The flame represents 'light'. Jesus said to his followers, 'Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.' [John 12:35, 36]

And you've all got an Easter egg to eat at the end of the service or at home later. The eggs are very colourful. How many colours are there? – red, blue, yellow, green, purple – all the colours of the rainbow. But these are the colours of the wrapping paper. When you unwrap the egg you will see another colour: the colour of chocolate. That is the eggshell.

At Easter we crack open the eggshell and free the contents inside the shell. Think of a hen laying an egg. When a hen is broody and sits on the egg for a long time, she does this to keep the egg warm – because inside the egg there is a chick. It takes three weeks for the egg to hatch. And then we have a new life. In the world of birds, the chick breaks through the shell and creates a new life – a life that will, in the fullness of time, be able to fly. It can fly high. It can fly long distances.

The egg is a symbol of new life; a new hope; a new opportunity. And that is something to celebrate. Christ being put on trial and found guilty. Christ being crucified and killed. Christ being placed in a tomb. That is the shell. That is the prison. But Christ breaks free from his captivity. And that's a very good reason for us to celebrate.

Today is the 'third day'. The tomb is empty. Christ is risen!

[A child or young person to lead the hymn]

HYMN 76 (Mission Praise); 928 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'Christ the Lord is risen today, Hallelujah!'

LEADER

Across the world – Asia, Africa, America, Australia, Antarctica and Europe – people are celebrating. They are paying thanks. The tomb is empty.

How did that happen? The account of Christ's resurrection is told in many ways. We hear of angels – one angel, two angels. Some people believe that Christ's body was stolen either by his enemies or by his supporters. His enemies would have stolen the body to prevent the tomb from becoming a place of pilgrimage.

If they had stolen the body, one side or the other would have displayed it to prove that it was all a lie and a fraud. But they couldn't. There was no body. The tomb was empty.

The important point is not what happened. We don't know exactly what happened. The important thing is the effect the empty tomb had on people. What does that mean?

To remind us, this is how Mark tells the story.

[The readings can be used as required – one or more]

READER 1

Mark 16:1–8

LEADER

This is the story as told in Matthew.

READER 2

Matthew 28:1–8

LEADER

This is the story as told in Luke.

READER 3

Luke 24:1–12

LEADER

And again, the story given in John.

READER 4

John 20:1–10

LEADER

I'm sure those Easter eggs you were given are delicious. If you like, you can eat yours now. And here is another tasty morsel for you, something for you to enjoy.

[A child or young person to play a suitable piece of music, or sing, or use a CD or mobile phone to the same end]

MUSIC

HYMN 708 (Mission Praise); 926 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'To God be the glory!'

LEADER

There are two themes to the Easter story, and both summarize the meaning of the Easter Festival. The first theme is the phrase, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.' [Galatians 2:20] Jesus is no longer a living person, restricted by time. 'I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world.' [Matthew 28:20] Jesus can enter a locked room; he can walk with us without us recognising him; he can disappear from our sight in an instant. Luke warns us against searching for Jesus in his tomb. 'Why do you seek the living among the dead?' [Luke 24:5] Jesus does not belong in the distant past. He belongs to the present. And we are familiar with the feeling that Jesus is near us.

The second theme is that God is justifying and defending Jesus. He says 'Yes' to Jesus and 'No' to the powers that caused him to be crucified. The Easter story is not one that ends with the comforting words 'and they all lived happily ever after'; rather, it is a story about God giving the authority to Jesus and his followers.

'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.' [Matthew 28:18, 19]

We shall end the service with a short prayer and another hymn to follow.

PRAYER

[Led by one of the congregation or by the Leader]

O God, our heavenly Father, we praise you for the morning of the third day, for the great hour of your son's triumph over sin and the grave. May the rejoicing of Easter be in our hearts for evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to say the Lord's prayer . . .

HYMN 357 (Mission Praise) 'Jesus Christ is risen today'

LEADER

Let us all say grace.

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

Thanksgiving

[Everyone to sit in a half circle around a table covered with a white cloth]

[Various foods should be placed on the table beforehand – bread, a selection of vegetables, dry foods and a variety of tinned foods]

As many people living with dementia often spend many hours turning the pages of books and magazines, listening to the radio or watching television, books and magazines, a radio and a laptop (to represent a television set) can also be placed on the table.

or

Whilst suitable music is played in the background, the congregation could be asked to place their 'gifts of thanks', including books and magazines, on the table as they arrive.

The Leader then places a radio and laptop on the table – or this can be done beforehand.

LEADER

HYMN Hymn Tune – Morning Hymn

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow!

Praise Him, all creatures here below!

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host!

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

PRAYER

Praise the Lord for times and seasons,
 cloud and sunshine, wind and rain;
 spring to melt the snows of winter
 till the waters flow again;
 grass upon the mountain pastures,
 golden valleys thick with grain.
 Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
 peace and plenty crown your days!
 Love his laws, declare his judgements,
 walk in all his words and ways;
 he the Lord and we his children,
 praise the Lord, all people, praise!

WELCOME

A warm welcome to you all to the service. Thanks for your company, and for your generous gifts. Thanksgiving may no longer be such an important occasion now as it was years ago, but the variety of food on the table shows us how much there is to thank for. Of course, we have so much to be grateful for every day of our lives, but holding a 'thanksgiving' service is an opportunity for us to realise how indebted we are, and to acknowledge the fact that, behind it all, is the work of God, Creator of all things. This is Cecil Alexander's message in our first hymn.

HYMN 23 (Mission Praise) 'All things bright and beautiful'

LET US JOIN TOGETHER TO READ PSALM 100

READING Deuteronomy 8:7–14; 17–18

Verses from Psalm 104

Praise the Lord, my soul.
 Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendour and majesty.
 He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.
 He makes springs pour water into the ravines;
 it flows between the mountains.
 They give water to all the beasts of the field;
 the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches.
He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.

He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate –
bringing forth food from the earth:
wine that gladdens human hearts,
oil to make their faces shine,
and bread that sustains their hearts.

Litany of Thanks

For the beauty of the creation:

We thank you, God.

For the radiance of the sun and cleanliness of the air, and for health to enjoy:

We thank you, God.

For the shapes of the hills and mountains, for the colour of the flowers and trees,
and for eyes to see and admire them:

We thank you, God.

For the song of the birds, and the music of voices and instruments, and for ears to hear them:

We thank you, God.

For those who love and care for us, for their company and friendship:

We thank you, God.

For the family and community of your church, and the blessing of worship
and prayer:

We thank you, God.

For Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and for lives devoted to love and service:

We thank you, God.

HYMN 153 (Mission Praise); 886 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'For the fruits of his creation'

LEADER

One of the most cruel and bloody wars ever seen in Europe was the Thirty Years' Wars that lasted between 1618 and 1648. At the centre of the fighting in Saxony was the walled town of Eilenburg, where people would flee for their lives as the fighting intensified.

One of the children of Eilenburg was Martin Rinkart, a talented musician who won a scholarship to St Thomas School, Leipzig, where he was trained as a chorister and priest.

In 1617 he was appointed archdeacon of Eilenberg – one of four pastors in the town of his birth – and he spent the rest of his life there. War broke out a year after he returned to the town, and Martin Rinkart spent half his life in a war zone.

In 1637 the first case of the plague was detected in Eilenberg, and it spread like wildfire. One of the four pastors fled to safety, and the other two died – leaving Martin Rinkart alone to deal with the aftermath. Very soon he was holding as many as 50 burials a day, and almost five thousand people died – including his wife.

In 1638, following the plague came a period of famine and then a siege by Swedish soldiers. It was Martin Rinkart who persuaded the head of the army to raise the blockade, and he did so again in 1639.

But, today, he is not remembered for his sterling work during the plague, but rather for one of his hymns.

Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

The three verses of the hymn are full of gratitude, and considering the context, it is indeed a remarkable hymn.

What reason did Martin Rinkart have to pay thanks? Many would ask that question. He lived for half his life under wartime conditions, he lost his wife and thousands of others to the plague, he shouldered the burden of holding countless funerals and comforting grieving families; he also led civic life in Eilenburg in the face of threats from the Swedish army.

What on earth inspired him to write such a wonderful hymn of praise and thanksgiving?

But to ask this question is to fail to understand the secret of his life. Because Martin Rinkart was of the same nature as Paul the Apostle, thanking not *for* everything, but *in* everything. And there is a world of difference between the two.

There is a limit to thanking for everything and there are many things that we, or anyone else, would not dream of thanking for. But the mindset and the spirit that pays thanks in everything makes it possible for us to continue to do so, even when our most important and dearest things start to slip from our grasp.

These are the words of Paul the Apostle in Romans 5:3–5:

‘And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.’

This gives us hope that he will never disappoint us, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that he has given us.

And Paul, in his letter to the Philippians to thank for the church’s generous gift (Php. 4:11–13), said:

‘. . . I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things, I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.’

We have so much to thank for – as the contents of the table show us; from the various fruits and vegetables to kitchen and factory produce; books and magazines; radio and television, and the whole range of equipment that make our lives so much easier; for our comfortable homes, our family and friends, and for the tender care when we are most in need from doctors, nurses and carers. Thanks indeed. But more important is to show our gratitude to the one who is always there to give us strength when it is most needed, when the seasonal and material gifts, and the greatest gift of all – our health – slip from our grasp. The one who has ensured that there is nothing, nothing at all, that can separate us

from his love in Jesus Christ. And that is the greatest reason of all to pay our thanks.

LET US PRAY

As we celebrate our abundance and pay thanks for our food, we praise thee, our Father, for all you have done and for everything you have given us. For our laden shelves, and cupboards filled to the brim. For the variety of food that is on offer, a healthy appetite, and the means to satisfy it. For everything that is represented in this thanksgiving service.

Creator and upholder of all, we praise and thank you.

For those who produce and prepare food, the farmers and gardeners who act in harmony with you, and all those in the food chain from the field to the factory. From small retailers to suppliers and end users, who are all dependent on one another.

Creator and upholder of all, we praise and thank thy name.

For our fruitful country in all its variety and beauty, that provides so many of our needs – our food, our water, resources for industry and energy – as well as places for relaxation and leisure activities to recharge and revive us.

Creator and upholder of all, we thank and praise thy name.

For the communal spirit of the church and the community in which we live. For friends and neighbours and acquaintances whose interest, support, generosity and care enrich our lives and make living so enjoyable. We are also grateful for the grace of the gospels and Christ our Saviour, and your never-ending love in him.

Creator and upholder of all, we praise and thank thy name.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us all recite the Lord's Prayer:

'Our Father . . .'

Let us close this service by singing Martin Rinkart's hymn.

HYMN 'Now thank we all our God'; Hymn tune: Nun Danket

Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
through all our lives be near us,
with ever joyful hearts,
and blessed peace be with us,
to keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills,
of this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be ever more.

GRACE

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

Theme: Light

[Everyone to sit in a semi-circle around a table that has one large white candle on it. You should ensure that the table and the candle are in a prominent position.]

[Soft music to be played in the background representing the dawn or light.]

HYMN 399 (Mission Praise); 954 (Caneuon Ffydd) ‘Lead, kindly light’

LEADER

A warm welcome to you all; it’s lovely to see you and to have your company. As you can see, we have a white candle in the centre of the table, and very soon we will be lighting it.

We have come together to worship God, and to praise his name, and one way of doing that is by reciting a psalm. Let us join together to recite the psalm we learnt as children, the one-hundredth psalm.

Recite Psalm 100

LEADER

Lighting a candle is an ancient tradition in the church – not only as a source of light but also as a way of sharing the message that God is light, and as a sign of God’s presence with his people. The lighted candle tells us that God is with us at all times – however dark our circumstances may be at times.

[The candle should be lit whilst the verses are being read]

VERSES

‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth . . . And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good.’
(Genesis 1:3–4)

‘God is light, and in him is no darkness at all . . . But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.’ (1 John 1:5b;7)

PRAYER

Thank you, O God our Father, for this opportunity to worship and enjoy each other’s company whilst remembering also that you are with us, joining us together as one family in you.

Bless our community and lead us, through your Spirit, to worship in spirit and truth. Hear our prayer in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray by reciting ‘Our Father . . .’

HYMN 467 (Mission Praise); 882 (Caneuon Ffydd) ‘Morning has broken . . .’

READINGS

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.’

John 1:1–5

‘Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life”.’

John 8:12

‘So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light”.’

John 12:35–36a

LEADER

[If possible, try to obtain the ‘saucer’ type of candle holder that has a handle attached, and a large copy of Holman Hunt’s ‘Light of the World’, or a PowerPoint image of the painting.]

When the electricity supply fails, it inevitably leads to a state of panic in our house – not because of a fear of the darkness, but because we can't find the candles and matches!

During the childhood and adolescence of many of us, the candle, the oil lamp and the matches were always to hand, and we would carry a candle holder such as this to light our way to bed.

And what a difference one small candle can make. There is an old Chinese proverb that says, 'One candle can banish the night'.

And indeed, during our childhood, before we had electricity installed in our homes, we were all thankful for the candle and its light.

One of the best-known paintings, which was very popular at one time, is Holman Hunt's depiction of Jesus knocking on a door with his right hand, whilst holding in his left hand a lantern containing a candle. The painting's title is 'Light of the World'.

[Show a copy of the painting]

There is an interesting history to the painting. In Holman Hunt's own words, he painted 'on divine command,' believing in his heart that God wished him to create the portrait; the original version is in the chapel of Keble College, Oxford. Hunt then painted a second, smaller version, which is now in the Manchester Art Gallery.

The painting became famous, and people flocked to see it in Oxford. But because the college charged a fee to view the painting, Holman Hunt painted a third, full-size, version which was toured around the world between 1905 and 1907 and was later presented to St Paul's cathedral in London.

The painting is based on words from Revelations:

'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.'

There are several interesting details in the painting; the door is covered with ivy, showing that it had not been opened for a long time; there is no handle or latch on the door – it can only be opened from the inside – but the striking thing is that the light shines not only from the lantern, but from the figure of Jesus himself.

And that is exactly what Holman Hunt wanted everyone looking at the painting to see and understand – that Jesus is the light of the world.

The words of Jesus light the path of life – ‘Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.’ Jesus’s actions are full of light – and they can transform all our lives.

But Jesus himself is the light, and however dense the darkness, in his company all is light. And it is our privilege to share the light to illuminate the path for others.

In the words of Paul:

‘For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.’

(Ephesians 5: 8–10)

PRAYER

O God, our Father, we thank you for the blessing of light so that we may see the light of the sun, the moon and the stars, and the beauty that their light displays for us in your wonderful world. Let us remember those whose world is in darkness because they are unable to see the blue skies and the clouds, the colours of the trees and flowers, a child’s smile and the faces of loved ones. But as we know, Father, for many people who are not blind their life can be very dark. Let us not forget the suffering of those who are in the darkness through wars and violence, poverty and hunger, disease and illness, in mourning and longing. Thank you for those who are striving to shed light on their plight, such as those working for humanitarian charities who distribute food and support those seeking refuge, those maintaining food banks, nurses and doctors and the staff of the health service, carers in care homes and in our homes.

Thank you for those who lighten the burden of those who are suffering with expressions of concern, compassion, and love of Jesus. Bless all those who strive to create a fairer and more just world and open our eyes so that we see anew the one who is the true Light of the World, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN 275 (Mission Praise) 'I heard the voice of Jesus say'

LET US PRAY

God of light,

The dark is not darkness to you.

Shine the light of life into our darkness.

Wherever it is dark, may your light bring hope and healing.

Reflect in our darkness the light of our life

So that the light of Christ's love will shine across the entire world.

Amen

Theme: Hands

[Everyone to sit in a half circle around a table]

[Place a photograph or image of 'Praying Hands' by Albrecht Dürer on the table so that it can be seen by all. PowerPoint slides are available on the Union's website to be used with this service.]

LEADER

HYMN 449 (Mission Praise) 905 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'Love divine, all loves excelling'

'Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.'
(Psalm 47:1–2)

'But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.'
(Isaiah 64:8)

'But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hand . . .'

(Psalm 31:14–15a)

WELCOME

A very warm welcome to you all to the service. It's good to see you, and to spend time in your company. One of the first things we do when we meet together is to shake hands or embrace one another; that simple use of our hands conveys so much – it's a way of being welcoming and friendly, and a symbol of our relationship with one another.

In today's service, we're going to think about the importance of hands in the lives of us all.

The psalmist calls on us to clap our hands in praise of God.

In the 8th psalm, the psalmist is also amazed at the work of God's hands, and even more amazed that he remembers every one of us, making us his partners in his world.

Let us join together to recite the 8th Psalm: 'O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens . . .'

Let us now do as we used to in our childhood, and place our hands together to pray.

PRAYER

Thanks be to you, God our Father, for this opportunity to come together once again.

We ask you to reach out your hand to us, to bless our community, to lead our worship and protect us with your love.

We ask this in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray together, 'Our Father . . .'

HYMN Hymn Tune: Au Clair de la Lune

Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all,
healing pain and sickness, blessing children small,
washing tired feet and saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.

Take my hands, Lord Jesus, let them work for you;
make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do;
let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

READINGS

'And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.'

(Mark 1:40–42)

'They came into Bethsaida. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had put spittle on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see men, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.'

(Mark 8:23–26)

'And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever.

He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases".'

(Matthew 8:14–17)

'And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.'

(Mark 10:13–16)

LEADER

We're all familiar with the picture or image of hands clasped together in prayer. 'A Study for the hands of an Apostle' is its official name, but for many years it has been known as 'Praying Hands' – hands clasped together in prayer.

Think of the ways in which we use our hands: waving and shaking hands to greet someone; clapping our hands to applaud; extending our hands to serve; opening our hands to help and care, to embrace and hug.

Just think of the hands we depend on every day of our lives: the hands of farmers and gardeners who produce our food; the hands of sailors and drivers that transport goods across the world; the hands of shopkeepers and sellers of all kinds of goods; the hands of builders, architects and designers; carpenters and stonemasons; electricians and plumbers; the hands of those who enrich our lives by means of their creativity: poets, authors and playwrights, actors and performers on stage and screen; and all those who have consecrated their hands to serve us in surgeries and hospitals, doctors and nurses, physiotherapists and pharmacists, cleaners and porters, and the wide range of workers in the health service.

In his book *Ysgrifau yr Hanner Bardd*, that won the Prose Medal for Dafydd Rowlands in the National Eisteddfod in 1972, the title of one of the essays is 'Y Ddau Grwt' ('The Two Boys'). The author describes how he was in his car on the way to work in Carmarthen one morning when he saw two young boys moving to the safety of the grass verge as he sped by. Although he never saw them again, that single glimpse stayed with him for a long time:

'Each was holding the hand of the other, the oldest holding the hand of the youngest, each one caring for the other . . . it was not the hands that affected me as much as the hold itself, the fingers closely entwined, the symbol of the relationship between them, the care . . . Even though they were only young, in their hands was the warmth of the relationship that fills the void of every loneliness and heals the sadness of every breach.'

There are numerous accounts in the Gospels of Jesus extending his hand to people. All types of people under every circumstance under the sun – even those suffering from leprosy, who were the 'untouchables' in Jesus's day. Jesus was not one to shy away from anyone or maintain his distance.

I like to think that Jesus did not only extend his hand and touch the people that asked him for help. Matthew and Mark tell us that he would take children into his arms and embrace them. That is how I too imagine him to be with people; an arm on the shoulder, an embrace, a hug for some, and in his hands – to quote Dafydd Rowlands – ‘the warmth of the relationship that fills the void of every loneliness and heals the sadness of every breach’.

That is exactly how I imagine Jesus to be. A simple act such as the touch of a hand can say and mean so much.

We are all aware of the importance of hands. Our own hands, and those of other people. And throughout our lives we have depended so much on the work of hands that have turned into a blessing for us.

I sincerely believe that this is how Jesus wishes our hands to be.

PRAYER

God our Father, accept our thanks for the blessings of this day,
the blessing of a cosy, comfortable home,
of food and clothes and life's comforts,
the blessing of the company and care of loved ones, friends and carers,
and above all, the blessing of health that has allowed us to be here together.

Thank you for being able once again to share the stories about Jesus using his hands to extend blessings to others, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and health to the sick, to receive young children, to welcome the lonely and sad, and to provide for the needy and poor.

We thank you for all those who follow Jesus by extending a hand to others facing difficult circumstances, their touch turning into a blessing for many of the neediest of your children.

We will always remember, our Father, that our hands are your hands in today's world, and by giving them to you, our hands can be a blessing for others just as Jesus's hands were.

We pray for your blessing on kind and caring hands wherever they are, that maintain Jesus's ministry and highlight your love. Receive our prayer in His name and glory. Amen.

HYMN 'Loving Shepherd of your sheep'

Loving Shepherd of thy sheep,
all your lambs in safety keep;
nothing can your power withstand,
none can pluck them from your hand.

Loving Shepherd, ever near,
teach your lambs your voice to hear;
suffer not their steps to stray
from the straight and narrow way.

May they praise you ev'ry day,
gladly all your will obey,
like your blessed ones above,
happy in your precious love.

Where you lead them may they go,
walking in your shoes below;
then, before your Father's throne,
Saviour, claim them for your own.

GRACE

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



Theme: Knowing

LEADER

[Greet everyone and extend a warm welcome to all]

My name is *[state your name]* and I will be leading the service today.

A name is important, isn't it? Our parents gave us our names, and they have been a part of us from birth. Those closest to us know us by our names, and we of course know them by theirs.

In the Story of the Creation in the Book of Genesis, God permits Adam to name all the creatures that he had created, and they would be known by those names for ever more. The psalmist also said of God, 'I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine.' (Psalm 50:11)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.' (Luke 12: 6–7)

God knows us. We shall now sing a hymn that tells an important truth for us all as we think of God and his relationship with us.

HYMN 'There are hundreds of sparrows . . .'

[Verses 1, 2 and 4, and the refrain]

LEADER

The verses speak of God's relationship with all his creatures, and his concern for them, and the refrain reminds us of the depth of his care over us.

We shall now listen to a psalm that tells of the depth of God's knowledge of us.

It's Psalm 139, and [*name the person*] will read it to us.

God knows and understands all about us, and this is not something we should fear. According to the well-known verse, 'God is love,' and all God's dealings with us are done in the name of love.

HYMN 449 (Mission Praise); 905 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'Love divine, all loves excelling'

LEADER

We shall now listen to a story from the New Testament, with [*stating the name*] reading it to us.

READING Luke 10: 38–42, Martha and Mary

LEADER

The story introduces us to some of Jesus's closest friends, Martha and Mary, two sisters who lived in the village of Bethany, not far from Jerusalem. They also had a brother, Lazarus.

The very fact that Jesus would call there and stay with them showed how close their friendship was, and several other stories of the relationship between Jesus and the family support this theory.

We have all heard the story of Mary showing her love for Jesus by pouring expensive ointment over him and drying his feet with her hair. And how about that time when Lazarus was taken seriously ill? His sisters sent a message to Jesus saying, 'Your friend, Sire, is very ill.' Although Jesus knew that his own life would be in danger, he insisted on travelling to Bethany, and when he learned that Lazarus had died he was devastated. Yes, there is plenty of evidence to show that Jesus and the family in Bethany were very close.

Having several close friends is important to us. People whom we hold in high regard, and whose friendship enriches our lives. People who know us well and who care deeply for us.

Let us pause for a moment and think of those people who play an important place in our lives [*allow a few moments of silence*]. We pay thanks for them in prayer.

LET US PRAY

God our Father, we thank you for our friends, and for every relationship of love and trust between us and others. Thank you for those who know us well, who are aware of our strengths and weaknesses, and who continue to love us through everything.

Thank you for those on whom we can rely
to understand,
to sympathise,
to support,
to help,
to share company,
to care.

Thank you to all those who show Jesus's friendship and are the vessels of thy divine friendship.

Amen

LEADER

Let us return to the story. We see that the two sisters react in different ways to Jesus's visit. Mary believes that the best way of conveying her welcome and love for Jesus is to spend as much time as possible in his company. She wants to get to know him better by sitting near to him, listening and learning.

Martha, on the other hand, believes that making preparations is the best way to show her friendship. She wants to make Jesus feel welcome. Moreover, Martha cannot understand why Mary doesn't see things in the same way, and she begs Jesus to rebuke her sister for refusing to help.

I like the way in which Jesus addresses Martha – 'My dear Martha'. It says everything about his relationship with her. Jesus goes on to say, 'you are worried and upset about many things', but these words are not uttered as a criticism or rebuke. He knows and understands the nature of the person with whom he is speaking; in the same way, he knows and understands every one of us, and deals with us with the same tenderness and endearment as he showed towards Martha.

In the psalm we have just read, the psalmist says: 'you discern my thoughts from afar . . . and are acquainted with all my ways'.

Note, 'All my ways'. This is interesting, because all of us have different ways. At times we have no problem with keeping to the straight and narrow path. But it's just as easy to wander off the path; to lose our way; to take the wrong turning; to reach a crossroads; to come to the end of the road, and so on. Whichever road we find ourselves traversing, Jesus understands and directs us back in love towards him and his way. And that is what is happening here with Martha.

Martha was overwhelmed by the various tasks she felt had to be done to make Jesus feel welcomed. We're all familiar with this experience. So much to do, and so little time to do it! Responsibilities, chores, demands, troubles, concerns – they all pile up in our lives and we hardly know where to start tackling them.

At times like this, Jesus – who knows us well – speaks to us affectionately and tenderly, easing our fears and inviting us to share his company.

As he once said to his disciples, 'Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

LET US PRAY

O God, we commend to you today all those who seek peace of mind;
 all those who are worried and anxious;
 all those who are sad and disheartened;
 all those under pressure of work with their responsibilities weighing heavily on them;
 all those who are feeling ashamed or guilty;
 all those in weakness and pain.
 God, surround them with your love
 And bless them with your tranquillity,
 In the name of Jesus who taught his disciples to recite the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father . . .

HYMN 746 (Mission Praise); 920 (Caneuon Ffydd) 'What a friend we have in Jesus'

BLESSING

Lord Jesus,
Bless us
and keep us always
in the joy of your presence
and in the bond of your friendship.
Amen.



Home Communion Service

(A) 'The Large and the Small'

[A few words could be spoken whilst setting out elements of the communion. The easiest way to begin is to invite everyone to join together to recite the Lord's Prayer, or one of the company could read a hymn, e.g. 723 [MP] 'We come as guests invited'; 214 [MP] 'He gave his life in selfless love'; or 939 [Cff] 'I come with joy, a child of God'. Following this, a reading from the scriptures.]

READING 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and Matthew 6:25–34

[After the reading, the following meditation can be read]

MEDITATION

Regarding the words of Jesus, 'But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you,' it is said that another form of wording was used by the Early Church, namely: 'Seek what is great, and the lesser things will be given to you in addition.'

In my opinion this wording does full justice to the point raised by Jesus as found in the closing verses of Matthew Chapter 6. Jesus contrasts the Kingdom of God and his righteousness with the materialistic requirements of life, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

Jesus would be the last one to suggest that we must choose between the two – between the spiritual and the materialistic.

In our world, there is little sense in a choice such as this. No, this is not a matter of choice, but deciding what is great, and therefore demands priority, compared with the lesser things of life. Be careful, he said, that you don't make the great small and the lesser things great. 'Seek what is great, and the lesser things will be given to you in addition.'

The other form of wording has a special message to convey to today's world. We have been attempting to measure all greatness, neatly explaining and computing it, but eventually belittling it. The great is no longer important, and for many people life is no more than a collection of trivia. Piling up the trivia is the only pinnacle that is possible. We must learn once again to 'Seek what is great, and the lesser things will be given to you in addition.' When discussing the Kingdom of God, Jesus's greatest contribution was not to define it, or to measure or compute it, but rather to express its great splendour and to uplift our spirits and sing his praise:

[Then, before distributing the bread, invite everyone to pray together, followed by one of the company reading the following prayer]

PRAYER FOR THE CONSECRATED BREAD

Lord Jesus, our Saviour and king, thank you for your blessings during these few minutes at your table in each other's company.

We thank you for being able to come to you in our sadness and distress to receive comfort and support.

We thank you that we can come to you uncertain in our faith and low in spirit and receive your strength to make us strong.

We thank you that we can come to you in happiness and receive your blessing and guidance.

We thank you that we can come to you to hear your voice talking to us.

[Distribute the bread, and then say:]

Jesus took the bread, and having thanked God for it he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

[Those present to partake of the bread]

[Before distributing the wine, invite everyone to pray together, and then one person can read the prayer below:]

PRAYER FOR THE CONSECRATED WINE

Lord Jesus, our Saviour and king, we thank you for your love and grace and for the honour bestowed upon us through your life and death:

You came in poverty so that we could be enriched.

You were born in Herod's kingdom so that we could be born again in God's kingdom.

You had nowhere to rest so that we could claim the place you had prepared for us.

You drank from the cup of our sorrows so that we could drink from the cup of your jubilation.

You wore a crown of thorns so that we could wear a crown of glory.

You were raised on a cross so that we could be raised on your throne.

You rose from the dead so that we can now, and in the end, join you in the presence of the Father.

For all that you have bestowed upon us, accept our thanks.

[Distribute the wine, and then say:]

Jesus took a cup and poured wine into it saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

[Partake of the wine]

[After a few seconds of silence, announce Grace]

GRACE

O! God, author and giver of all goodness, help us through your Spirit to grow more like Jesus Christ, our living Lord.



(B) 'I will Sup with Him . . .'

[A few words could be spoken whilst setting out elements of the communion. The easiest way to begin is to invite everyone to join together to recite the Lord's Prayer, or one of the company could read a hymn, e.g. 723 [MP] 'We come as guests invited'; 214 [MP] 'He gave his life in selfless love'; 939 [Cff] 'I come with joy, a child of God'. Following this, a reading from the scriptures.]

READING 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and Revelations 3:20–21

[Following this, the meditation below can be read]

MEDITATION

'I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.' Supper, note, not breakfast. At breakfast time, people are faced with all the cares of the day. Not lunch either. At lunch time, everyone is in a hurry. But supper time is the part of the day when a person has left work and the daily grind behind; at last, there is an opportunity to relax and enjoy a heart-to-heart chat with friends and family.

We are all familiar with the pleasant experience of having a friend or friends over for supper. I really enjoy the animated conversation that follows the meal – everyone is happy and content in the warm light that radiates between friends. Being in Jesus's company is a similar experience.

[Then, before distributing the bread, invite everyone to join together in prayer, and ask one of the company to read the following prayer:]

PRAYER FOR THE CONSECRATED BREAD

With this bread help us, O Lord, to hear your heartbeat, to listen to your voice and to open the doors of our lives so that you may come in and abide within us. Amen

[Distribute the bread and then say:]

Jesus took the bread, and having thanked God he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

[Partake of the bread]

[Before distributing the wine, invite everyone to join together in prayer, then ask one of the company to read the following prayer:]

PRAYER FOR THE CONSECRATED WINE

With this cup, in the secret recess of our heart, we reserve a place to meet up with you. Come to us, and turn this room into a temple, and our hearts into an altar, and in these moments we offer a prayer to you. Amen

[Distribute the wine and then say the following words:]

After supper Jesus took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

[Partake of the wine]

[After a moment of silence, the Leader to end the service with the Blessing]

BLESSING

May my heart form a temple and a nest for you,
And within this dwelling, Jesus, may you stay for ever more.
Amen