

Welcome:

Good morning and welcome. Thank you for joining us this morning.

A special welcome to the members of the Cup Cake Choir their family and supporters. We look forward to hearing from them later in the service.

The Kids time with God children will also be contributing to our worship and we look forward to their participation.

This morning we are celebrating Refreshment or Mothering Sunday. In England during the industrial revolution working children were allowed to return to their home towns in the middle of Lent to visit their parish church and their Mothers.

Which is why today in the middle of Lent we thought it appropriate to invite children to join us for worship.

We are simplifying what we normally do on a Sunday and I will attempt to explain what we are doing as we go along.

At the end of the service we will receive some simnel cake. When the children visited their mother church they also visited their mother often taking flowers and cake as a gift.

We will have an opportunity to place money in a plate as we leave the service this morning to assist the work of Mother's Union in Cuba.

In this part of the service we are getting ready. The service began with a song that spoke about God's spirit. The first part of the service speaks about us coming into the presence of God.

Our service begins on page 119 in our order of service with a greeting, a sentence from scripture and some prayers that acknowledge that we aren't always the people we and God would like us to be.

Collect

Having prepared ourselves as best we can we now try to listen to what God might want to say to us. The president of the Eucharist (today that's me) prays a prayer that gathers up or collects the thoughts we will encounter in the passages from the bible we are about to hear read.

This morning we will have a psalm, a New Testament reading and a gospel reading.

Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life.

Sermon

Having listened to the readings we now have the opportunity to reflect on what they mean. This is the role of the preacher in what is called a sermon or homily. The preacher helps us to understand what was said and done in the stories and encourages us to think about how they might relate to folk like you and me.

For example the preacher might draw our attention to the New Testament reading where it talks about how, when we follow Jesus, we are new people. Many of us are not too happy with how we are living our lives. This scripture reminds us that we can be different.

The preacher might mention the psalm that tells us that God wants to be our friend. And encourage us to have a good relationship with God.

Often the preacher will focus on the gospel story because there we get closer to Jesus and his teaching. In today's gospel we have Jesus telling his friends a story about the son who left home and then came back.

It reminds us of God's love for each and every one of us. The father in the story represents God. Each of us is the son and the point is that God loves us and wants to welcome us home.

Once we have listened to the readings and reflected on what they mean for us we affirm what we believe in the words of the creed. The creed is statement that sets out what Christians believe. It brings to a close this period of listening to God.

Prayers

Now it's our turn to talk to God. We do this in what is called the intercessions. When we intercede we speak on behalf of others. A member of the congregation will come and talk (or intercede) with God on our behalf or on behalf of people throughout the word.

Preparation

Having readied ourselves, listened to and spoken with God; we now prepare to be with God. We listen to a bible passage, and remember that we are able to be with God because God loves us and wants to be our friend. God also wants us to be friends with one another so we greet one another with a handshake or embrace.

The Great Thanksgiving

At this stage of the service bread, wine and our offerings of money are placed on the altar. These represent our lives. In the prayers we say thanks to God for:

- the gift of life and all that sustains it and
- for God's coming into the world as Jesus so that we can know how much God loves us.

In a mysterious way, few of us fully understand, we believe that when we do these things God is present.

Those who have been baptised and admitted to Holy Communion and those who have been confirmed are then invited to come and receive the bread and wine.

That applies even if you were baptised and admitted to communion in a church that is not Anglican. Those who have not been admitted to Holy Communion are invited to come to the altar

reach out when people come forward to receive communion, to receive a blessing. Just place your hands behind your back and you will receive a blessing instead of bread or wine.

The sending out of God's people

We are close to the end of our service. We will shortly give thanks to God for what we have received. We are then invited to commit ourselves to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

This may be followed by some notices about what is happening in the parish before we sing a hymn. As a parish community we are presently then praying the parish prayer and a prayer for mission before receiving the final blessing and the dismissal to go and serve the Lord.

Notices

Thank you for worshipping with us this morning. We trust that you found the service helpful. Our regular service follows the same pattern but we usually sing some parts, we normally have another reading and the children usually have the opportunity to have their “Kids time with God” while the adults think a bit more fully about the reading than we did this morning.

Do join us for morning tea on the veranda of the parish centre.