The Feast of Corpus Christi
Thursday 11 June
Preparing for Worship

A very warm welcome to this service from Christ Church. Although we gather virtually and around screens, we share together in this space of prayer and worship.

On this Feast of Corpus Christi, it is especially difficult not to be able to gather together as the people of God, the body of Christ; and not to be able to receive together the bread and wine, the Body and Blood given for us. Yet the Church has always taught that the Eucharist in which we share is only a means for the sacramental grace that God confers: cut off from our churches, from one another and from the Sacraments, we are still one in Christ and God still strengthens, sustains and blesses us with his presence.

Although the Church teaches that the Eucharist is given for the faithful to eat, as the food which nourishes us for our journey in faith, there is also a long tradition of praying in the presence of the consecrated bread, the Reserved Sacrament, which is the presence of Christ. We enter into this tradition as the service comes to an end, as we spend time gazing on the Sacrament reserved on the altar, which becomes an icon of Christ, a window into heaven. May the presence of Christ be truly with us, although mediated by our screens.

The President is the Succentor, the Revd Philippa White; and the preacher the Revd Canon Sarah Foot, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History. The Mass setting is the Mass for Four Voices by William Byrd (c.1540–1633). The Mass and Anthem were recorded by the Cathedral Choir in 1991 under the direction of Stephen Darlington, and are available on the CD Byrd: Mass for Four Voices (Nimbus).

May God bless you as we worship together.

You can find our regular worship, alongside other resources for worshipping at home, at www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship

Music before the service

recorded by the Sub Organist, Benjamin Sheen, at home

Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele, Op. 122, no. 5

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you

and also with you.

You may like to adopt a prayer posture such as sitting with your head bowed, as we remember our brokenness and call to mind our sins.

As we prepare to encounter the mystery of God’s love, revealed in Word and Sacrament, let us call to mind and confess our sins.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name.

Amen.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax
hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens!

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

The Collect

**President**  Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ,
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament
you have given us the memorial of your passion:
grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries
of your body and blood
that we may know within ourselves
and show forth in our lives
the fruits of your redemption;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

**All**  Amen.
Sit comfortably to listen to God speaking through the Scriptures.

First Reading

Genesis 14:18–20 (NRSV)
read by Miranda Hockliffe, Cathedral Visitor Officer

A reading from the Book Genesis.

   King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. He blessed Abram and said,

   ‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth;
   and blessed be God Most High,
   who has delivered your enemies into your hand!’

And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

   Reader  This is the word of the Lord.
   All    Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

John 6:51–58 (NRSV)
read by the Venerable Jonathan Chaffey
Archdeacon of Oxford

   Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
   All    Glory to you, O Lord.

   Jesus said: ‘I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.’

   The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’ So Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.’

   This is the Gospel of the Lord.
   All    Praise to you, O Christ.
Reflection
The Revd Canon Sarah Foot
Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History

You can find the text of the reflection at www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship.

Affirmation of Faith
recorded by the Clerks of the Choir

As the Affirmation of Faith, we use the first section of the ancient hymn by St Thomas Aquinas for this feast.

Of the glorious body telling,
O my tongue, its mysteries sing,
And the blood, all price excelling,
Which the world’s eternal King,
In a noble womb once dwelling,
Shed for this world’s ransoming.

Given for us, for us descending,
Of a virgin to proceed,
Man with man in converse blending,
Scattered he the gospel seed,
Till his sojourn drew to ending,
Which he closed in wondrous deed.

At the last great supper lying
Circled by his chosen band,
Duly with the law complying,
First he finished its command,
Then, immortal food supplying,
Gave himself by his own hand.

Word-made-flesh, by word he maketh
Bread his very flesh to be;
Man in wine Christ’s blood partaketh:
And if senses fail to see,
Faith alone the true heart waketh
To behold the mystery.

Words: St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274),
translated JM Neale (1818–1866)
Music: Pange lingua (Mode III)
The Peace

President  We are the Body of Christ.
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

We know that Christians have shared a sign of peace since the very earliest days of the Church. In these times, it may seem strange to ‘share the Peace.’ But peace is from the heart and from God. God’s peace in the Spirit moves among us and unites us, physically distanced yet one in the Body of Christ.

Anthem

O salutaris Hostia,
Quæ cæli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.
Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen.

O saving Victim, opening wide
The gate of Heaven to man below;
Our foes press hard on every side;
Thine aid supply; thy strength bestow.
To thy great name be endless praise,
Immortal Godhead, One in Three.
Oh, grant us endless length of days,
In our true native land with thee.
Amen.

Words: St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274),
Music: William Byrd (c.1540–1623)

Preparation of the Table

President  God our sustainer,
receive the gifts we bring before you,
and feed us continually with that bread which satisfies all hunger,
your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.
The Eucharistic Prayer

President  The Lord be with you
All  and also with you.

President  Lift up your hearts.
All  We lift them to the Lord.

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

President  It is indeed right and good,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our great high priest.
He offered himself to you as the Lamb without blemish,
the acceptable gift that gives you perfect praise.
At the Last Supper, seated with his apostles,
he left this memorial of his passion
to bring us its saving power until the end of time.
In this great sacrament you feed your people by your Spirit;
by your grace revealed in broken bread and wine outpoured
you meet us in our hearts and strengthen us in holiness,
that the whole human family that shares the earth
may be enlightened by one faith
and joined together in one bond of love.
By this sacrifice of praise that we offer
you promise to meet us in your love
enfold us in the sweetness of your grace
and transform us into the likeness of heaven.
Therefore earth unites with heaven
to sing a new song of praise;
we too join with angels and archangels
as they proclaim your glory without end:
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:
pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of hosts:
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

President
Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith.

All
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.
President

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.
Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Frideswide, Birinus, Lucy and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All

Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

President

In times of hope, in times of trouble,
in times of sorrow, in times of praise,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All

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.
Breaking of the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread.

President I heard the voice of a great multitude crying, Alleluia.
The Lord our God has entered into his kingdom.
Blessed are those who are called to the banquet of heaven.

The President receives Communion. She then places the consecrated host in a monstrance placed upon the altar, and moves aside.

You are invited to meditate on the presence of Christ in the Sacrament and to use this visual image as an icon of Christ, a window into heaven. Christ’s grace, offered through the Eucharist, does not depend on bodily eating but on the self-giving of Christ at Calvary, and on our faithful response to his love.

The visible Sacrament is a sign of Christ’s presence with you wherever you are drawing you in to experience his risen life and giving himself to you for your strengthening and salvation.

During this time of exposition, as we rest together in the presence of Jesus in our hearts and our homes, two hymns are sung and a prayer offered. After these, the President will give a final blessing and the service will end while the Sacrament remains on the altar.

Hymn
recorded by the Clerks of the Choir

Therefore we, before him bending,
This great sacrament revere:
Types and shadows have their ending,
For the newer rite is here;
Faith, our outward sense befriending,
Makes the inward vision clear.

Glory let us give and blessing
To the Father and the Son,
Honour, might and praise addressing,
While eternal ages run;
Ever too his love confessing,
Who, from both, with both is one. Amen

Words: St Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274),
translated JM Neale (1818–1866)
Music: Pange lingua (Mode III)
President  Let us pray.

All praise to you, our God and Father,  
for you feed us with the bread of heaven  
and quench our thirst from the true vine:  
hear our prayer that, being grafted into Christ,  
we may grow together in unity  
share together in his grace  
and come at last to feast with him in his kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**Hymn**

*recorded by the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church*

Soul of my Saviour, sanctify my breast,  
body of Christ, be thou my saving guest,  
blood of my Saviour, bathe me in thy tide,  
wash me with water flowing from thy side.

Strength and protection may thy Passion be,  
O blessèd Jesu, hear and answer me;  
deep in thy wounds, Lord, hide and shelter me,  
so shall I never, never part from thee.

Guard and defend me from the foe malign,  
in death’s dread moments make me only thine;  
call me and bid me come to thee on high  
where I may praise thee with thy saints for ay.

**Words:**  *Latin, 14th century*  
**Music:** Anima Christi, *William Maher (1823–77)*
Blessing

President Christ, who nourishes us with himself the living bread, make you one in praise and love and raise you up on the last day; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Music after the service recorded by Benjamin Sheen, Sub Organist

Hymn: Pange Lingua (3 verses) Jean Titelouze (c. 1562–1633)


CCLI Church Copyright Licence 262098, One License Church Copyright Licence A-733591


Photography © 2010-2016 Ralph Williamson
During these difficult times, please be assured that the prayers of the clergy and people of Christ Church continue. Please let us know if we can pray for you, or if you need our support. You are warmly invited to continue to participate in our community worship, prayer and spiritual life, whether you are a longstanding member of our congregations or new to us. You can find resources for prayer and contact details at:

www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship
www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedralblog
@chchcathedralox

Online worship resources from Christ Church Cathedral

The Cathedral blog contains an archive of sermons and services, alongside a daily reflection on a Psalm and a weekly reflection on a piece of music. On Sundays, there is a weekly recorded service available at 9am and an additional standalone sermon by one of the canons, on the readings of the day, available at www.chch.ox.ac.uk/onlineworship where you can also download a booklet of prayers for use at home, a recording of Compline, and other resources.