

# St. Mary's Church Bromley



## Esther's Story

**Family Service**

**10.30 a.m. 14 May 2023**

## Welcome

Clap your hands, all you peoples.

**Shout to God with songs of joy.**

God has gone up with a shout.

**Sing praises to the most high.**

God is ruler over all the Earth.

**We worship God with all our heart.**

*Based on Psalm 47*

## Song – Let us build a house

Let us build a house where love can dwell

and all can safely live,

a place where saints and children tell

how hearts learn to forgive.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions;

rock of faith and vault of grace;

here the love of all shall end divisions:

*All are welcome, all are welcome,*

*all are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where love is found

in water, wine and wheat:

a banquet hall on holy ground

where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God through Jesus

is revealed in time and space;

as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

*All are welcome...*

Let us build a house where hands will reach

beyond the wood and stone

to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,

and live the word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger

bear the image of love's face;

let us bring an end to fear and danger:

*All are welcome...*

Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace;  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:  
*All are welcome...*

*Marty Haugan © 1994 G.I.A. Publications Ltd*



## Supporting Christian Aid

### Opening Prayer

**Creator God, you have planted the seed of love  
in our hearts, in our souls, in our lives.  
We long for the brightness of your presence,  
drawing ever closer to you, and to one another.  
May we join with your people at all times, in all places,  
to worship and to serve you in Jesus name. Amen.**

### *Confession*

We confess those frequent times  
when we have been stony ground.  
We have been too hard to value the tiny seed,  
the generous smile, the heartfelt word.  
We confess those frequent times  
when we have been stony ground.  
We have been too hard to see beyond our selfish desires.  
We have quietly accepted a world that smothers  
the dreams of those with less power and wealth.

### *absolution*

Creator God, once again, soften us.  
Plant the seed of love in our hearts, in our souls, in our lives.  
Draw near today with your forgiveness.  
Water the seed within us, nurture its growth,  
may your Spirit bring rich life.  
May we flourish and bear fruit, now and forevermore. **Amen.**

*Collect for Christian Aid Week*

God, gardener of Eden,  
who flung stars into space  
and nurtures the tiniest plant.  
Lift our hopes and dreams above  
the loss and damage of our suffering planet.  
Fill us with your life-giving hope  
and inspire us with your creativity now,  
and in the age to come. **Amen.**

**Song – When I Needed A Neighbour**

When I needed a neighbour were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a neighbour were you there?

*And the creed and the colour  
and the name won't matter, were you there?*

I was hungry and thirsty were you there, were you there?  
I was hungry and thirsty were you there?

*And the creed...*

When I needed a shelter were you there, were you there?  
When I needed a shelter were you there?

*And the creed...*

Wherever you travel I'll be there, I'll be there.  
Wherever you travel I'll be there.

*And the creed...*

*Sidney Carter*

**Birthdays**

Everyone who has had a birthday since our last Family Service is welcome to join us at the front and receive a candle.

We then sing the following:

**Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you,  
may God bless you and keep you, happy birthday to you.**

## Reading - Matthew 13:1-9, 31-32

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'



## Esther's Story

### Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God:

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## **Song – The wise man built his house upon the rock**

The wise man built his house upon the rock,  
the wise man built his house upon the rock,  
the wise man built his house upon the rock,  
and the rains came tumbling down.

The rains came down and the floods came up,  
the rains came down and the floods came up,  
the rains came down and the floods came up,  
and the house on the rock stood firm.

The foolish man built his house upon the sand,  
the foolish man built his house upon the sand,  
the foolish man built his house upon the sand,  
and the rains came tumbling down.

The rains came down and the floods came up,  
the rains came down and the floods came up,  
the rains came down and the floods came up,  
and the house on the sand went crash.

*Unknown*

## **Prayers**

*To the bidding*

Lord take the seeds of our words,

*Please respond*

**and produce a harvest in the world.**

*Our prayers conclude*

Lord of life and growth

**may your ways of growth and peace**

**reap prosperity and banish poverty. Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,  
let us pray as our Saviour taught us:

**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.**

## **Notices**

### **Song – You shall go out with joy**

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,  
and the mountains and the hills will break forth before you.  
There'll be shouts of joy, and the trees of the field  
shall clap, shall clap their hands.

And the trees of the field shall clap their hands,  
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands,  
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands,  
and you'll go out with joy.

*Suart Dauermann*

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## **Sending and Blessing**

Go into the world working together for change  
so that all people can thrive and share life in its fullness.

And in all we do let us show the love of Jesus.

Let us treat everyone with dignity.

**We will show the love of Jesus.**

Let us stand up for equality.

**We will show the love of Jesus.**

Let us fight for justice.

**We will show the love of Jesus.**

May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may overflow with hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

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