



— Diocese of —
Hereford

Proclaiming Christ ✦ Growing Disciples

Celebrating **1350** Years



2026 Bishop's Visitation

Welcome to this Bishop's Visitation service.

We are grateful for your presence today, and we especially give thanks for the faithful service each of you offers to the church and your communities across the diocese - whether seen or unseen, it has made a difference in the lives of your worshipping congregations, in your cities, towns and villages, and in the kingdom of God.

Historically, a Bishop's Visitation was a time for the bishop to inspect the life, worship, and order of the parish, ensuring that the church remained rooted in its calling and traditions.

Today, while that sense of accountability remains, the visitation is also a moment of encouragement, connection, and shared mission. Today is an opportunity to reflect on who we are as a church, to celebrate what God is doing among us, and to renew our commitment to serve with faith, hope, and love.

Welcome

We stand to sing

Hymn

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet your tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King!

Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress.
Praise him, still the same as ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Glorious in his faithfulness!

Fatherlike he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows.
In his hand he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Widely yet his mercy flows!

Angels, help us to adore him;
you behold him face to face.
Sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace!

Please be seated

Bishop Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you

All and also with you.

The Bishop may offer some words of introduction and welcome

The Confession and Absolution

Bishop Brothers and sisters,
as we prepare to celebrate,
let us call to mind our sins.

Bishop Lord God, our maker and our redeemer,
this is your world and we are your people:
come among us and save us.

Bishop We have wilfully misused your gifts of creation;
Lord, be merciful:

All forgive us our sin.

Bishop We have seen the ill-treatment of others
and have not gone to their aid;
Lord, be merciful:

All forgive us our sin.

Bishop We have condoned evil and dishonesty
and failed to strive for justice;
Lord, be merciful:

All forgive us our sin.

Bishop We have heard the good news of Christ,
but have failed to share it with others;
Lord, be merciful:

***All* forgive us our sin.**

Bishop We have not loved you with all our heart,
nor our neighbours as ourselves;
Lord, be merciful:

***All* forgive us our sin.**

Bishop May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive *us our* sins
and make *us* holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***All* Amen.**

Collect

Bishop Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church
is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in our vocation and ministry
we may serve you in holiness and truth
to the glory of your name;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2: 4-10

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

‘See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner’,

and

‘A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.’

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

At the end the reader says

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God

The Gospel

Please stand

John 15:1-4,17

Reader Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord.

Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever.

John 6:51

All Alleluia.

Reader Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John

All Glory to you, O Lord.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. This is my command: Love each other.

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Address

*The Right Reverend Richard Jackson
Bishop of Hereford*

Hymn

Please stand

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation,
By water and the word;
From Heav'n he came and sought her
To be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
And for her life he died.

Elect from ev'ry nation,
Yet one o'er all the Earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With ev'ry grace endued.

'Mid toil and tribulation
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forever more;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
Shall be the Church at rest.

O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with thee;
There, past the border mountains,
Where in sweet vales, the bride
With thee, by living fountains,
Forever shall abide!

Words: S. J. Stone (1866)
Tune: AURELIA

Please be seated.

The Declaration and Admittance of Churchwardens

The Bishop invites the Churchwardens quietly to read through the declaration which they are about to make. After a moment's silence, the Churchwardens stand and make their declaration together

Bishop Churchwardens are officers of the bishop, responsible for representing the laity, supporting and co-operating with their incumbent and caring for the church building and its contents.

Will you, as leaders elected by your parish and as partners with your incumbent, promote God's mission through pastoral care, sharing the good news, serving the community and working for the unity of God's church?

Wardens **We will, with the help of God**

Bishop Will you do your best to ensure that the church building and its contents are properly maintained, and that they offer a welcome and a witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ?

Wardens **We will, with the help of God**

Bishop Will you care for your clergy and support them in their ministry, offering guidance and advice and ensuring that responsibilities are shared?

Wardens **We will, with the help of God**

Bishop I invite you now to make your declaration together:

Wardens I solemnly and sincerely declare
that I will faithfully and diligently perform
the duties of the office of Churchwarden
within the parish in which I am called to serve for
the coming year.

Bishop I admit as Churchwardens all you
who have made this solemn declaration.
May our Lord Jesus Christ be with you
in all you do in his service,
and give you grace to fulfil this office
to the glory of God and for the good of his people.

Wardens Amen

The newly admitted Churchwardens say together

Wardens Almighty and ever-living God,
ruler of all things in heaven and earth,
hear our prayers for ourselves and our church
families:
May we be faithful stewards of the authority
entrusted to us this day, and our lives may be
fashioned to the example of your Son.
Grant all that is necessary for our common life,
and bring us to be of one heart and mind
within your holy Church;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The clergy and others also stand

Archdeacon Let us now together reaffirm our various ministries:

Will you endeavour to continue
in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread
and in prayers for the church and the world?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

Archdeacon Will you persevere in resisting evil,
and in penitence and faith resolve
to live a godly life
by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

Archdeacon Will you proclaim by word and example
the good news of God in Jesus Christ?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

Archdeacon Will you endeavour to serve Christ in all people,
loving your neighbour as yourself, and welcoming
the stranger in your midst?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

Archdeacon Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over
human society by prayer for the world and its
leaders, by defending the weak,
and seeking peace and justice?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

The Prayers

We sit or kneel for prayer.

Archdeacon Let us pray

The response to each prayer is

Archdeacon Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.

Archdeacon Jesus taught us to call God our Father,
so in faith and trust we pray

**All Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

After prayer led by the Archdeacon, all join in the following prayer

**All Merciful God,
you have called us to be members of Christ
and of his Church in this Diocese.
May we and our congregations
reach up to your throne in adoration and worship;
in to one another in love and fellowship;
and out to the world in evangelism and care;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

Bishop Eternal God, giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world
to preach the gospel of his kingdom:
confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Blessing

Bishop May the Father, whose glory
fills the heavens,
cleanse you by his holiness
and send you to proclaim his word.

All Amen

May the Son, who has ascended to the heights,
pour upon you the riches of his grace.

All Amen

May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter,
equip you and strengthen you in your ministry.

All Amen

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

All Amen

The Dismissal

Bishop One in heart and one in mind,
and empowered by the Spirit,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Please stand

Go forth and tell! O church of God, awake!
God's saving news to all the nations take;
proclaim Christ Jesus, Saviour, Lord, and king,
that all the world his worthy praise may sing.

Go forth and tell! God's love embraces all;
he will in grace respond to all who call:
how shall they call if they have never heard
the gracious invitation of his word?

Go forth and tell where still the darkness lies;
in wealth or want, the sinner surely dies:
give us, O Lord, concern of heart and mind,
a love like yours which cares for all mankind.

Go forth and tell! The doors are open wide:
share God's good gifts let no one be denied;
live out your life as Christ your Lord shall choose,
your ransomed powers for his sole glory use.

Go forth and tell! O church of God, arise!
go in the strength which Christ your Lord supplies;
go till all nations his great name adore
and serve him, Lord and king for evermore

*Please join us for refreshments after the service,
kindly provided by members of the parish.*

*Diocesan Officers and Staff will be pleased to talk to you,
and to answer any questions you may have.*

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