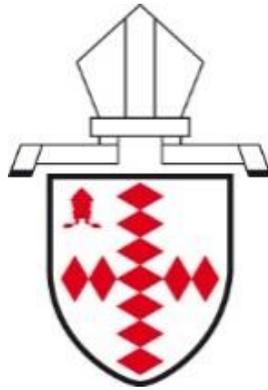


St Michael & All Angels South Beddington On re-entering the church

*Commended by the Bishop of Southwark
during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Trinity 2020*



One thing have I asked of the Lord and that alone I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life

Psalm 27.4

A Returning to Church Prayer

O God from whom all blessings flow,
I turn to you in gratitude for St Michael & All Angels Church
for every faithful footstep taken within its walls,
and every petition prayed,
for every story shared,
the ordinary and the extraordinary
from generation to generation.

Thank you that in the silence of our absence
You were still here, as well as with your people.
As we begin to return,
grant to us all the wisdom to stay safe,
the comfort of your peace
and joy in coming home.

Now these doors are opened once again
let your Spirit flow out of me and all who come here,
bringing life, hope and healing
to our community

On Entering

Opening Sentence:

How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven

Genesis 28.17

Passage from Scripture:

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

At this point there is space to pause for reflection, silence or extemporary prayer, seated or kneeling. You may wish to begin with the question "What does this building mean to me, and to the others who have worshipped here and will do so in future?"

The Collect:

Almighty God,
to whose glory this house of prayer is dedicated:
we praise you for the many blessings
you have given to those who worship you here:
and we pray that all who seek you in this place may find you,
and, being filled with the Holy Spirit,
may become a living temple acceptable to you;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Concluding Sentence:

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Ps 122.1

A prayer of sadness

God,
our hearts are filled with joy
to be able to return to this place.
Yet, our Church is incomplete,
not all of our brothers and sisters here.
Hold all those still at home in your loving arms;
protect them from all harm;
bring comfort to the mourning or frightened,
and healing to the sick.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

*In a moment of silence we hold before God those members of our community
for whom this time is still so difficult.*

A prayer of hope

Gracious God,
persevering through the years, persevering to the end,
as we face the future as a community of your people in this place,
may we know afresh your faithful love,
and see afresh your loving faithfulness.
May it be your words of life for which we listen,
and by which alone we live.
God before and God behind,

for all that has been - thanks.
For all that will be - Yes!
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Wherever we are, whatever language we speak,
we may be united in the prayer our Saviour has taught us
Our Father ...

On Leaving

Opening Sentence:

'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'

Mark 16.15

Passage from Scripture:

⁷ Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

John 10.7-10

At this point there is space to pause for reflection, silence or extemporary prayer, seated or kneeling. You may wish to begin with the question "How does this Church building nurture us to be the Church in the world today?"

The Collect:

Almighty God,
who calls us to worship in this place,
and is willing to meet us here in your Son Jesus Christ:
through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

Concluding Sentence:

The word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart

Deuteronomy 30.14