Holy Communion
for the Feast of Christ the King



The Stour Valley Benefice

Cavendish, Clare, Hundon, Poslingford, Stoke-by-Clare & Wixoe

- A short introduction to the Festival –

The annual cycle of the Church's year ends with the Feast of Christ the King. The year that began with the hope of the coming Messiah (Advent) ends with the proclamation of Christs universal sovereignty.

The ascension of Christ has revealed him to be Lord of earth and heaven, and final judgement is one of his proper kingly purposes. The Feast of Christ the King returns us to the Advent theme of judgement, with which the cycle of the Church's year begins again next Sunday.

Growing in God

Spiritual Communion

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.

In joining with Revd Mark today as he celebrates the Eucharist from his own home, you too are able to join with him in communion. The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

Hymn – All people that on earth do dwell

1 All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him, and rejoice.

2 The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

3 O enter then his gates with praise,
approach with joy his courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

4 For why? the Lord our God is good;
his mercy is for ever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

5 To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
the God whom heaven and earth adore,
from men and from the angel-host
be praise and glory evermore.

William Kethe, (d. 1594)

The Gathering

Minister: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
All: **Amen.**

The Greeting

Minister: The Lord be with you.
All: **and also with you.**

Prayer of Preparation

All: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from who no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers of Penitence

Minister: Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand." So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

(cf Matthew 4:17)

Kyrie Confession

Minister: The kingdom is yours, but we turn away from your just rule: Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Minister: The power is yours, but we trust in our own power and strength: Christ, have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Minister: The glory is yours, but we fall short of the glory of God: Lord, have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Confession

All: **O King enthroned on high, filling the earth with your glory: holy is your name, Lord God almighty. In our sinfulness we cry to you to take our guilt away, and to cleanse our lips to speak your word, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Absolution

Minister: 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.

All: Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

All: ***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest*.**
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.

***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest*.**
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest*.**
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest*.**

The Collect

Minister: Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen

Old Testament Reading *(Ezekiel 34:11–16,20–24)*

For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD,

will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

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

New Testament Reading *(Ephesians 1.15–23)*

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

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

Gospel Reading *(Matthew 25:31-46)*

Minister: Alleluia, alleluia. You, Christ, are the King of glory, the eternal Son of the Father.
All: Alleluia.

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

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered

before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Minister: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed

All: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Minister: For the spirit of love and service, let us pray to the Lord.

Grant to the Church light to know the will of God and grace to perform it. Make all Christian people true followers of Christ in their lives day by day.

Fill the world with the spirit of compassion, that the powerful may use their power to help the weak. Break through the barriers that divide people and nations, and draw all together for the common good.

Give us deeper compassion, open our eyes to see the presence of Christ in all people. Grant us insight to know where we can give help in the needs of friends and neighbours and in all our community, and grace to offer it.

We pray for all who suffer, for the poor and hungry, for the sick and the homeless, for prisoners and those who have no one to care for them. Bring them relief in their misery and strengthen all who as individuals or organisations work for relief.

Have mercy on those who have passed from this world and come to judgement. Pardon their failures and receive them in the compassion of Christ. Grant mercy to us all when we are called to account at the end of our lives.

May our prayers be accepted in the name of Christ, our Judge and our Redeemer.

Minister: Merciful Father,

All: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Minister: To crown all things there must be love, to bind all together and complete the whole. Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. *(cf Colossians 3:14,15)*
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: and also with you.

Preparation of the Altar

The Eucharistic Prayer

Minister: The Lord is here.
All: His Spirit is with us.

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

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: it is right to give thanks and praise.

Minister: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.
For with the oil of gladness
you have anointed Christ the Lord, your only Son,
to be our great high priest and king of all creation.
As priest, he offered himself once for all upon the altar of the cross and redeemed the human race by this perfect sacrifice of peace.
As king he claims dominion over all your creatures,
that he may bring before your infinite majesty
a kingdom of truth and life,
a kingdom of holiness and grace,

a kingdom of justice, love and peace.
And so with angels and archangels
and with all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending hymn of praise:

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord,**
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Minister: Lord God, you are the most holy one,
enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.

Embracing our humanity,
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end,
he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own,
he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave himself for us all
he 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.

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross, we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb, we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high and we long for his coming in glory.

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; form us into the likeness of Christ and make us a perfect offering in your sight.
Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth,
heal the sick,
let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast with all your saints at the table in your kingdom, where the new creation is brought to perfection in 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. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Minister: Seeking the salvation of the world, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

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.

Breaking of the Bread

Minister: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All: **Though we are many, we are one body,**
because we all share in one bread.

The Agnus Dei

All: **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,**
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

Minister: Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

All: **We do not presume to come to this your table,**
merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Minister receives communion on behalf of all those in our community who are unable to be present.

Prayer after Communion

Minister: Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All: **Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of 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.

The Dismissal

Minister: Christ our exalted King pour upon you his abundant gifts and bring you to reign with him in glory; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.
All: **Amen.**

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
All: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Hymn – Rejoice, the Lord is King

Rejoice, the Lord is King,
your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

2 Jesus the Saviour, reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

3 His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

4 He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.

5 Rejoice in glorious hope;
Jesus the judge shall come,
and take his servants up
to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice
the trump of God shall sound: rejoice!

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and John Taylor (1750-1826)

PARISHGIVINGSCHEME

Although not all of us are able to meet in church for services, it is important to remember that the work of the Church continues, as do many of the ongoing costs in maintaining our historic buildings as well as supporting the ministry in this benefice and the wider church.

Remember that if you are able, please Gift Aid your donation as it means that we can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate from the Government at no extra cost to you – resulting in your £20 donation now being worth £25!

If you wish to donate regularly to your church, please consider signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, please ask Revd Mark or one of the churchwardens for a pack or sign up online at:

www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/

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