

The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

Holy Cross Day

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

The Parish Mass

Sunday 14 September 2025

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding *St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.*

Live streaming *Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.*

GDPR *Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.*

Toilet and baby changing facilities *may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.*

For younger children *In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-specific Christian resources is provided. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.*



Collection – ‘Building a Generous Church’



Our response to God’s generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of St Matthew’s is funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

* * * * *

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew’s Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

Contactless giving - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

Giving on your smart phone - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

Giving online - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



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Good morning and welcome ...

Today we give thanks for the Holy Cross, the sign of Christ's victory over sin and death, and the symbol of God's unfailing love for the world. The cross, once an instrument of suffering and death, has become for us the tree of life and the place where heaven and earth meet.

Our gospel reading (John 3.13–17) reminds us of the heart of this mystery: “*God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.*” Lifted up on the cross, Christ draws all people to himself, offering healing, forgiveness, and the hope of eternal life.

As we worship together, we are invited to look to the cross not with fear or despair, but with faith and gratitude. Here we see the depth of God's love and the promise of salvation, and we are called to take up our own cross and follow in the way of Christ.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following reflection/prayer, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Prayer

Almighty God,
whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross
that he might draw the whole world to himself:
Mercifully grant that we,
who glory in the mystery of our redemption,
may have grace to take up our cross and follow him;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

§ *At the sound of the bell, **all stand***

Call to Worship

Priest We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in whom is our salvation, our life and our resurrection,
through him we are saved and made free.

Hymn

All **THE royal banners forward go,
The cross shines forth in mystic glow,
Where he in flesh, our flesh who made,
Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.**

**Where deep for us the spear was dyed,
Life's torrent rushing from his side,
To wash us in that precious flood,
Where mingled water flowed, and blood.**

**Fulfilled is all that David told
In true prophetic song of old,
Amongst the nations, God, says he,
Has reigned and triumphed from the tree.**

**O tree of beauty, tree of light,
O tree with royal purple dight,
Elect on whose triumphal breast
Those holy limbs should find their rest!**

**On whose dear arms, so widely flung,
The weight of this world's ransom hung,
The price of humankind to pay
And spoil the spoiler of his prey.**

**O Cross, our one reliance, hail!
So may thy power with us prevail
To give new virtue to the saint,
And pardon to the penitent.**

**To thee, eternal three in one,
Let homage meet by all be done;
Whom by the cross thou dost restore,
Preserve and govern evermore. Amen.**

Words Latin, Venantius Fortunatus 530-609
translated by John Mason Neale 1818-1866

Music Gonfalon Royal
Percy Buck 1871-1947

Priest † In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All **Amen.**

The Greeting

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

The Mass is introduced

Prayers of Penitence

Christ himself carried up our sins in his body to the tree,
so that, free from sins, we might live to righteousness;
by his wounds we are healed.

Let us confess our sins.

Silence is kept

Confession

**Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Kyries

Lord Jesus, you came to reconcile us to one another and the Father:
Kyrie eleison.
All **Kyrie eleison.**

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division:
Christe eleison.
All **Christe eleison.**

Lord Jesus, you intercede for us with your Father:
Kyrie eleison.
All **Kyrie eleison.**

Absolution

May almighty God,
who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,
bring you his pardon † and peace,
now and for ever.
All **Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

All

**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.**

**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.**

**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.
Amen.**

The Collect

Let us pray.

**Almighty God,
who in the passion of your blessed Son
made an instrument of painful death
to be for us the means of life and peace:
grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ
that we may gladly suffer for his sake;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.**

All

Amen.

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
now that we have prepared for this encounter with God
in the holy scriptures,
let us be seated to receive into our hearts and minds
the living word of the Lord as it is proclaimed to us.

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading

Reader A reading from the book Numbers.

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.' So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Numbers 21.4-9

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Tom Moore



Choir Praise the Lord, you that fear him;
O seed of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, O seed of Israel.
For he has not despised nor abhorred the suffering of the poor;
neither has he hidden his face from them;
but when they cried to him he heard them. **Response**

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
I will perform my vows in the presence of those that fear you.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the Lord shall praise him;
their hearts shall live for ever. **Response**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord,
and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
For the kingdom is the Lord's
and he rules over the nations. **Response**

Psalm 22.23-28

New Testament Reading

Reader A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death -
even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2.6-11

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

§ *Stand*

Holy Gospel

Acclamation

1. Choir
 2. Choir and Congregation

Fintan O'Carroll

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

All

Choir We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
 because by your cross you have redeemed the world.

All **Alleluia!**

§ *We turn to face the Book of the Gospels*

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

All Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, 'No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.'

John 3:13-17

All This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

At the end, there may be a time of quiet reflection

The Nicene Creed

§ Stand with the priest

Priest Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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.**

All may bow ***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 the Faithful

Priest Let us pray to the Father through the Son,
 who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption.

§ *Kneel*

Intercessor Fill with your Spirit Christ's broken body, the Church ...
 Give to Christian people everywhere a deep longing
 to take up the cross and to understand its mysterious glory.

All By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Give your grace to those who preach your word to the nations ...
 Help us to witness to the faith we have received
 by our words and in our deeds,
 and daily conform us more and more to Christ,
 that we may glory in his cross.

All By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Look in your mercy upon the world you loved so much
 that you sent your Son to suffer and to die ...
 Strengthen those who work to share
 the reconciliation won at such a cost upon the cross.

All By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Bring healing by the wounds of Christ
to all who are weighed down by pain and injustice ...
Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying,
to find strength in the companionship of Jesus,
and in his passion to know their salvation.

All By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Welcome into paradise all who have left this world
in your faith and friendship ...
According to your promises,
bring them with all your saints
to share in all the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

All By the Saviour's cross and passion,
Lord, save us and help us.

Priest Heavenly Father,
we ask you to hear our prayers.
Comfort those in need
and enable us to share in the work of your Son's redemption.
For you are Lord for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

§ *Stand*

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Peace

Once we were far off,
but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near
through the shedding of Christ's blood,
for he is our peace.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

The Offertory

- § *The bread and wine are brought to the dais step, given to the presiding priest, and the altar is prepared.*
- § *A monetary collection is taken. Please give as you are able using any of the ways indicated at the front of this booklet. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.*

Hymn

*All Refrain **LIFT high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred Name.***

**Come, let us follow where our captain trod,
Our King victorious, Christ the Son of God.**

**Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
The hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.**

**Each new-born soldier of the Crucified
Bears on his brow the seal of him who died.**

**O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
As thou hast promised, draw us unto thee.**

**Let every race and every language tell
Of him who saves our souls from death and hell.**

**From farthest regions let them homage bring,
And on his cross adore their Saviour King.**

**Set up thy throne, that earth's despair may cease
Beneath the shadow of its healing peace.**

**From thy blest cross which doth for all atone
Creation's praises rise before thy throne.**

*Music Crucifer
Sydney Hugo Nicholson 1875-1947*

*George William Kitchin 1827-1912
and Michael Robert Newbolt 1874-1956*

Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Merciful God,
through the sacrifice and death of your beloved Son
you transformed an instrument of shame
into a sign of hope and glory.

Receive all we bring before you this day,
and renew us in the mystery of his love;
through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

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

It is truly right and good, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today we celebrate with songs of praise the cross,
the victory-sign of Christ.

Once through the fruit of the forbidden tree we fell,
now through this tree Christ cancels all our sin.

An instrument of shameful death
has become for Christ a throne of glory.
The power of the life-giving cross
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world
and the triumph of Christ crucified.

And so, with choirs of angels 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.**

Please remain standing

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.

The priest elevates the Host, and genuflects

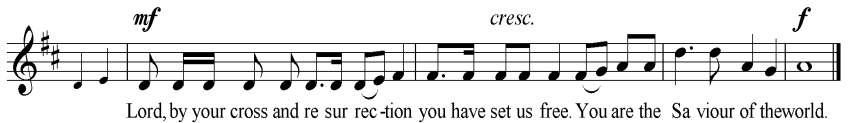
In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

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.

The priest elevates the Chalice, and genuflects

Jesus Christ is Lord:

All



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 Mary the Virgin Mother of God
Saint Matthew 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



A- men.

The Lord's Prayer

§ *Kneel*

Standing at the foot of the cross,
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

All Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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.**

Invitation to Communion

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

The clergy receive Holy Communion

Giving of Communion

When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself, says
the Lord.

*Those assisting with the distribution, the servers and choir receive Holy
Communion.*

§ *Baptized persons who are communicant members of other Churches
are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion.
Alternatively, if you wish to receive a blessing, please bring this booklet
with you as a sign to us. Thank you.*

Spiritual Communion – for those at home

Act of Reception

All In union, blessed Jesus,
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,
for creation and all the blessings of this life,
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,
and resurrection,
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,
I pray you to come into my heart.
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind.
Let nothing separate me from you;
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

Motet

Choir

O Saviour of the World,
who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us,
save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.
Amen.

Music John Goss 1800-1880

*Words from the Latin
Collect for the visitation of the sick*

Hymn

All

**SWEET the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend.
Life, and health, and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying friend.**

**Here I stay, for ever viewing
Mercy streaming in his blood;
Precious drops, my soul renewing,
Plead and claim my peace with God.**

**Truly blessed is this station,
Low before his cross to lie,
While I see divine compassion
Raised upon that cross to die.**

**Lord, in ceaseless contemplation
Fix our hearts and eyes on thee,
Till we taste thy full salvation,
And unveiled thy glories see.**

Words William Walter Shirley 1725-1785
and others

Music Batty
from a chorale adapted by the
Moravian Brethren in England, 1745

§ *We sit for a period of silent reflection and thanksgiving*

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

§ *Stand*

Faithful God,
whose Son bore our sins in his body on the tree
and gave us this sacrament to show forth his death until he comes:
give us grace to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for he is our salvation, our life and our hope,
who reigns as Lord, now and for ever.

All

Amen.

Hymn

All

**CHRIST triumphant ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
Hear us as we sing:
Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal Name.**

**Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
By your humble birth:**

**Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
Victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated,
Sinners justified:**

**Priestly king, enthroned for ever
High in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never
Stifle hymns of love:**

**So, our hearts and voices raising
Through the ages long,
Ceaselessly upon you gazing,
This shall be our song:
*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal Name.***

Words Michael John Saward 1932-2015

Music Guitting Power
John Barnard b. 1948

Notices for the Community

§ Sit

After the notices ...

Please stand for God's blessing.

Sending Out

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Solemn Blessing

All May the Father,
 who so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
 bring you by faith to his eternal life.
Amen.

All May Christ,
 who accepted the cup of sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will,
 keep you steadfast as you walk with him the way of the cross.
Amen.

All May the Spirit,
 who strengthens us to suffer with Christ
 send you out to glory in his cross,
 to live no longer for yourselves
 and set your minds on life and peace.
Amen.

All And the blessing of God almighty,
 the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
 be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Dismissal

All The Mass is ended, go in peace.
Thanks be to God.

Organ Voluntary

Prelude on "Rockingham"

Kenneth Leighton 1929-1988

- § *Remain standing until the procession has departed*
- § *Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary*
- § *Refreshments are being served in church. Do please join us.*
- § *If you are a newcomer to the parish or area, please introduce yourself to one of the clergy, or speak to a member of our Welcome Team.*

This evening at 4.00 pm

Choral Evensong

sung by St Matthew's Choir and 'Pop-Up' Choir
at Holy Cross Church, Pattishall

(Please note there is no evening service at St Matthew's today)

Our thanks are due to Martin and Lindsey Stone
who have generously financed
the production of this week's service booklet.

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

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