

# Farewell service for The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE Bishop of Dorchester

Sunday 4 October 2020, 3pm  
Dorchester Abbey



*Welcome* to this service at which we say farewell to Bishop Colin and Sarah, giving thanks for all they have shared with us over the last twenty years.

In this time of pandemic, we ask that all those attending the service in person wear face coverings and keep a suitable distance away from other households.

Music during this service will be provided by an organist and a small choir.

This is a public occasion. Please be aware that photography and filming will take place during the service.

No other photography or filming is permitted during the service. For any questions or concerns relating to photography or filming please email **[communications@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:communications@oxford.anglican.org)**.

Please pray for Bishop Colin as he lays down his ministry as Bishop of Dorchester and places his crozier and cross on the altar at the end of the service.

## ORDER OF SERVICE

*Organ voluntary*

*The congregation stands.*

## **PREPARATION**

### THE GREETING

*The congregation remains standing as the bishop greets the people*

*Bishop Steven*    The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you

*All*                    **and also with you.**

HYMN *Praise my soul the king of heaven (choir)*

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;  
to his feet thy tribute bring.  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
who like me his praise should sing.  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Praise the everlasting King!

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

Father like 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;  
ye 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!

*Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Bishop Steven* What God has prepared for those who love him, he has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything. Therefore, let us in penitence open our hearts to the Lord, who has prepared good things for those who love him.

*cf 1 Corinthians 2.9.*

*(silence)*

*Bishop Steven* God be gracious to us and bless us,  
and make your face shine upon us:  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Bishop Steven* May your ways be known on the earth,  
your saving power among the nations:  
Christ, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

*Bishop Steven* You, Lord, have made known your salvation,  
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

*Bishop Steven* Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

*Hymn – The Lord’s my Shepherd (Choir only)*

The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want.  
He makes me lie in pastures green.  
He leads me by the still, still waters,  
His goodness restores my soul.

*And I will trust in You alone, and I will trust in You alone,  
For Your endless mercy follows me,  
Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,  
And He anoints my head with oil,  
And my cup, it overflows with joy,  
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,  
I will not fear the evil one,  
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff  
Are the comfort I need to know.

*Stuart Townend (b 1963)*

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**

*Reader*            But now thus says the Lord,  
                         he who created you, O Jacob,  
                         he who formed you, O Israel:  
                         Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
                         I have called you by name, you are mine.  
                         When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
                         and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.  
For I am the Lord your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

*Isaiah 43 : 1 – 3a*

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

*MAGNIFICAT* (*said together*)

*All* **You have done great things, O God,  
And holy is your name.**

1 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;  
he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.  
2 From this day all generations will call me blessed;  
the Almighty has done great things for me  
and holy is his name.  
3 He has mercy on those who fear him,  
from generation to generation.  
4 He has shown strength with his arm  
and has scattered the proud in their conceit,  
5 Casting down the mighty from their thrones  
and lifting up the lowly.  
6 He has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
7 He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,  
to remember his promise of mercy,  
8 The promise made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

*Luke 1.46-55*

*All* **Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*All*                    **You have done great things, O God,  
And holy is your name.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

*Reader*            So again Jesus said to them,  
                          ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.  
                          All who came before me are thieves and bandits;  
                          but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate.  
                          Whoever enters by me will be saved,  
                          and will come in and go out and find pasture.  
                          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*

*Reader*            This is the Word of the Lord.

*All*                    **Thanks be to God.**

*SERMON*         *The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester*

*Nunc Dimittis.* *Soloist*

Faithful vigil ended,  
watching, waiting cease;  
Master, grant your servant  
his discharge in peace.

All the Spirit promised,  
all the Father willed,  
now these eyes behold it  
perfectly fulfilled.

This your great deliverance  
sets your people free;  
Christ their light uplifted  
all the nations see.

Christ, your people's glory!  
Watching, doubting cease:  
grant to us your servants  
our discharge in peace

*Timothy Dudley-Smith (b 1926)*

## **PRAYERS**

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*All sit or kneel for the prayers led by +Olivia*

Lord, we have stopped for a while in your presence as companions on the way. We pray that you will stay with us as we leave this place and journey on.

Lord, we pray that, as your living stones, we may be signs of your kingdom and bearers of your love to all whom we meet.

Lord, when times are difficult and we cannot see the way ahead, help us to follow you.

Lord, keep us full-hearted in the service of your kingdom mission to the world; contemplative, compassionate, and courageous.

Lord, when our faith falters and we feel empty inside send us fellow travellers to sustain us on the way.

Lord, give us the strength and the heart to be signs of hope for those who have lost their way.

Lord, we give thanks for the lives of the saints who have gone before us, quicken us, that we may follow in their footsteps.



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

THE COLLECT [17<sup>th</sup> after Trinity]

*Bishop Steven* Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; 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.

*All* **Amen.**

*All* As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:  
**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.**

**CONCLUSION**

HYMN - *I cannot tell (choir only)*

I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship,  
should set his love upon the sons of men,  
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers,  
to bring them back, they know not how or when.  
But this I know, that he was born of Mary

when Beth'lem's manger was his only home,  
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,  
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

I cannot tell how silently he suffered,  
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,  
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,  
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.  
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted  
and stays our sin and calms our lurking fear  
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden;  
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.

I cannot tell how he will win the nations,  
how he will claim his earthly heritage,  
how satisfy the needs and aspirations  
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.  
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,  
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,  
and some glad day his sun will shine in splendour  
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,  
when at his bidding every storm is stilled,  
or who can say how great the jubilation  
when every heart with love and joy is filled.  
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,  
and myriad myriad human voices sing,  
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, will answer,  
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

*William Young Fullerton (1857-1932)*

*The congregation sit for the presentations and farewells.  
Then the Bishop of Oxford says a prayer adapted from one originally written  
by St Francis of Assisi.*

Most High and glorious God,  
enlighten the darkness of our hearts  
and give to your people true faith,  
a certain hope and a perfect love.  
As we bid farewell to Bishop Colin and Sarah  
we thank you for their fellowship with us  
and for all that you have done through them in this Diocese.  
As we seek your blessing upon them.  
give them a sense of the divine and knowledge of your love,  
so that everything they do  
may be in fulfilment of your holy will;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

### THE BLESSING

*Bishop Colin* Eternal God,  
our beginning and our end,  
accompany us on the journey that lies ahead.  
Dawn on our darkness,  
open our eyes to praise you for your creation  
and to see the work you set before us.  
Take us and use us to bring to others  
the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and with those whom you love,  
And those who love you, always.  
**Amen**

*Bishop Colin places his crozier and cross on the altar and walks to the west end of the  
Abbey, as Choir sings, The Lord Bless you and keep you (Rutter)*

*Organ Voluntary – Toccata from Symphony No 5 in F Major, by Charles Marie Widor*

It has been a delight to host this farewell service for Bishop Colin who is as much loved in this Church which shares his Episcopal title as he is across the Archdeaconry.

At the beginning of his ministry amongst us Bishop Colin was very much involved with supporting the Campaign for the repair and development of the Abbey together with Sir Hugo Brunner. As he leaves, we are planning the next stage of our developmental work – improvements to the West End and later a Visitor Centre in our Guest House.

This church has been a place of hospitality in each stage of its life – and throughout his time as our Bishop, the Right Reverend Colin Fletcher OBE has been very much a part of that ministry extending a particular welcome to the Mayors and Chairs of the County of Oxfordshire and to members of the Fellowship of St Birinus, those who have served their parishes with distinction.

It is for this hospitality and care that Bishop Colin will be remembered here.

Cover image: The Dorchester Cross, made by Professor Brian Catling RA in memory of his friend Kevin Slingsby. Professor Catling also made a pectoral version of the Dorchester cross for Bishop Colin which was presented to him at the Abbey on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, as a token of appreciation, by friends from the Parish, County and Diocese.

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**The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE  
Bishop of Dorchester 2000 – 2020**