



# SERVICE OF LIGHT

*for parents and relatives  
of children who have died,  
whether through illness, accident, trauma, cot death,  
stillbirth, miscarriage or any other way,  
however long ago.*

**ST MARY'S CHURCH MENDLESHAM**

**SATURDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2023**  
**11.00 am**

## ORDER OF SERVICE

STAND *when the bell rings in the Sacristy*  
*Organ music: Pie Jesu: Andrew Lloyd Webber*

Fr Philip **Welcome**

We have come together to worship God,  
and to recall the lives  
of the children we remember today, however long or short;  
to share our grief  
and to commend them to the eternal care of God.

SIT

**Reading** *Lamentations 3: 17 – 21, 25-26*

My soul is shut out from peace; I have forgotten happiness.  
And now I say, 'My strength is gone, that hope which came from  
the Lord'.

Brooding on my anguish and affliction is gall and wormwood.

My spirit ponders it continually and sinks within me.

This is what I shall tell my heart, and so recover hope.

The Lord is good to those who trust him, to the soul that  
searches for him.

It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save.

STAND **Prayers for forgiveness**

Fr Philip Forgive us, Lord, when we have let bitterness rule our lives.

**All Forgive us, Lord**

Fr Philip Forgive us, Lord, when we have preferred darkness to light.

**All Forgive us, Lord**

Fr Philip Forgive us, Lord, when we have lost all hope.

**All Forgive us, Lord**

Fr Philip Forgive us, Lord, when we have failed to comfort those in need  
because we did not listen.

**All Forgive us, Lord**

## Hymn

Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;  
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord;  
And where there's doubt true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;  
Where there is darkness, only light;  
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
In giving to all men that we receive;  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

SIT

## Readings

***Jeremiah 1 v 5 - God speaks to the prophet Jeremiah***

'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you.'

*SILENCE*

***Matthew 18 v 1-2,5, 10 -Jesus speaks of the importance of children***

The disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'

So he called a little child to him and set the child in front of them.

'Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me... See you never despise any of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven are continually in the presence of my Father in heaven.'

*SILENCE*

***John 14 v 1-3 – Jesus says he will prepare a place for us in Heaven***

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Trust in God still, and trust in me.

There are many rooms in my Father’s house;

if there were not, I should have told you.

I am going now to prepare a place for you,

and after I have gone and prepared you a place,

I shall return to take you with me;

so that where I am you may be too.’

*SILENCE*

Reader Let us thank God for the precious gift of these children, however short their life. In silence let us name them to God in our hearts.  
- *SILENCE* - Lord, in your mercy:

**All Hear our prayer**

Reader We come to God with all our baggage of guilt, brokenness and unanswered questions. May we leave it all, Lord, with you. Lord in your mercy:

**All Hear our prayer**

Reader Let us pray for all in our wider circle of family and friends and all in the caring professions who have been touched by the lives of our children and who share our sorrows. Lord in your mercy:

**All Hear our prayer**

Reader As Jesus has taught us, we pray for the coming of his kingdom where there will be no more pain, sadness or sickness:

**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**

SIT

**Hymn**

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,  
the Holy One is here.  
Come bow before Him now  
with reverence and fear.  
In Him no sin is found,  
we stand on holy ground;  
be still, for the presence of the Lord  
the Holy One is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around.  
He burns with holy fire,  
with splendour He is crowned.  
How awesome is the sight,  
our radiant King of light;  
be still, for the glory of the Lord  
is shining all around

Be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.  
He comes to cleanse and heal,  
to minister His grace.  
No work too hard for Him,  
in faith receive from Him;  
be still, for the power of the Lord  
is moving in this place.

Fr Philip

*We all have a candle, symbolizing the life of the child or children in our family who have died. We now take our candles to the Lady chapel to be lit and we place them on the altar – a symbol of prayer and hope as we entrust our children to God's care.*

STAND **Commendation**

Fr Philip God of love and mercy, we give these children back to you who first gave them to us. As you did not lose them in giving, so we do not lose them in return. Keep them safe and welcome them into your kingdom.

Jesus, when Mary, your mother, watched you die on the Cross and held your lifeless body in her arms, her soul was pierced with a sword. You were victorious over death and ascended to Heaven, where she now lives with you in glory. May she be a mother there to these children.

All **Amen**

*We all now go silently to the Lady Chapel with our candles. Please follow the stewards' directions starting from the Lady Chapel side and return to your seat a different way.*

*Organ music: The Lord Bless You and Keep You: John Rutter*

STAND **Prayer**

All **Heavenly Father**

**Give us the certainty that beyond death there is a life  
where broken things are mended and lost things are found:  
where there is rest for the weary and joy for the sad:  
where all that we have loved and willed of good exists  
and where we will meet again our loved ones.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

Fr Philip May God console you with the hope that you will see your children again in the kingdom of Heaven.  
And may almighty God bless you now and forever, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen**

*Organ music: Largo from Symphony no. 9 (New World): Antonin Dvořák*

*As the service ends, you are welcome to stay or leave as you choose.  
You may wish to:*

- *go to the High Altar for the laying-on-of hands and anointing for healing, or*
- *stay a while in the church reflecting on the candles, or*
- *leave in silence with your own thoughts, or*
- *tell your story to a sympathetic listener (they will be at various places around the church) or*
- *take prayer cards or literature on the table at the back of the church.*

*You are welcome to stay for tea or coffee and cake.*

Thank you to those who have volunteered to listen to whoever wants to share their story, to those providing refreshments and to John for playing the organ.

We don't take a collection,

but if you would like to make a donation towards the cost of the Service, please donate via the card reader, or place in the red box near the church door -

and if you pay tax, please complete a pink envelope so we can reclaim Gift Aid at no extra cost to you.

## SOME BEREAVEMENT HELPLINES AND WEBSITES

*These are given in good faith and we cannot take any responsibility for services offered by others.*

### ❖ *The Compassionate Friends (TCF)*

**www.tcf.org.uk** Helpline: 0345 123 2304 email: [helpline@tcf.org.uk](mailto:helpline@tcf.org.uk)

Offers compassion, friendship & support for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents after a child dies. The Helpline is always answered by a bereaved parent. There is a separate siblings website link from the main site. Also has resources for professionals.

### ❖ *Child Death Helpline*

**www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk** Freephone: 0800 282 986

A helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child of any age, from prebirth to adult, however recently or long ago: accepts calls in any language; always answered by a bereaved parent. Information packs and leaflets available.

### ❖ *Bereaved Parents Network*

**www.careforthefamily.org.uk/bpn** Tel: **029 2081 0800**

Part of the national charity 'Care for the Family', it offers support, online resources & a befriending service to those who have lost a child of any age and in any circumstance.

### ❖ *Lullaby Trust*

**www.lullabytrust.org.uk/bereavement-support/**

Helpline: **0808 802 6868** email: [support@lullabytrust.org.uk](mailto:support@lullabytrust.org.uk)

Supports families whose babies have died suddenly & unexpectedly: publications, activities & support when bereaved families have subsequent babies.

### ❖ *SANDS (Still & Neonatal Death Charity)*

**www.sands.org.uk/** Helpline: **020 7436 5881** email: [helpline@uk-sands.org](mailto:helpline@uk-sands.org)

Offers support to families in which a baby has died during pregnancy or after birth, whether recently or long ago, & advises those caring for these people.

### ❖ *Miscarriage Association*

**www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk** Helpline: **01924 200799**

Support for those who have been affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy, whether recently or long ago.



[www.stmarysmendlesham.org.uk](http://www.stmarysmendlesham.org.uk)