

## Inaugural Service

of the

# SELLY OAK CENTRE FOR STUDY AND ACTION (SOEISA)

*Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2002  
United College of the Ascension*

*Please stand*

### Call to worship

- L Remember not the former things.  
Do not consider the things of old  
Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth  
- do you not perceive it? *(Isaiah 43. 18-19a)*
- P** ***Lord, we await. Do a new thing among us.***

### Processional hymn

- 1 Thy hand, O God, has guided thy flock, from age to age;  
The wondrous tale is written full clear, on every page;  
Our forbears owned thy goodness and we their deeds record;  
And both of this bear witness; one Church, one Faith, one Lord.
- 2 Thy heralds brought glad tidings to greatest as to least;  
They bade them rise and hasten to share the great King=s feast;  
And this was all their teaching in ev'ry deed and word,  
To all alike proclaiming; one Church, one Faith, one Lord.
- 3 And we, shall we be faithless? Shall hearts fail, heads hang down?  
Shall we evade the conflict, and cast away our crown?  
Not so; in God's deep counsels some better thing is stored;  
We will maintain unflinching, one Church, one Faith, one Lord
- 4 Thy mercy will not fail us, nor leave thy work undone;  
With thy right hand to help us, the vict'ry shall be won;  
And then by all creation thy name shall be adored.  
And this shall be their anthem; one Church, one Faith, one Lord

*Edward Hayes Plumtre (1821-1891), alt.*

*Please sit*

### Prayers of adoration and confession

- L We have come together  
**P** ***With our longing, with our faith, with our doubts***  
L We have come together

**P** *Seeking the depths of faith in praise and prayer*  
L We have come together  
**P** *To share, to learn, to grow in unity and in the love of God*  
L Let us be silent before the face of God

*All sing*

**O Lord, have mercy on your Church, O Lord have mercy on your Church**  
**O Lord, have mercy on your Church, O Lord have mercy on your Church**  
**O Lord, have mercy on your Church**

L We belong together  
**P** *Like members in one body*  
L When there is dissension within the body  
**P** *Lord have mercy on us*  
L If one member suffers  
**P** *All suffer together with it*  
L When we lack compassion  
**P** *Lord, have mercy on us*  
L If one member is honoured  
**P** *All rejoice together with it*  
L When we lack thankfulness and joy  
**P** *Lord have mercy on us*  
L We belong together  
**P** *Like members in one body*

*All sing*

**O Lord, have mercy on your world, O Lord have mercy on your world**  
**O Lord, have mercy on your world, O Lord have mercy on your world**  
**O Lord, have mercy on your world**

L On behalf of Jesus Christ our Saviour, I assure you  
You are forgiven - forgive others  
You are restored - restore others  
You are reconciled with God - be reconciled with others  
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
**P** *Amen*

### The Epistle

1 John 1. 1-4

*Please stand*

### Gradual hymn

1 Joy to the world! The Lord has come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth! The saviour reigns;  
Your sweetest songs employ;  
While fields and streams and hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 God rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness,  
The wonders of his love, the wonders of his love,  
The wonders, the wonders of his love.

*Isaac Watts (1674-1748)*

### The Gospel

R The holy gospel according to John, chapter one, reading from the fourteenth verse  
**P *Glory to you, O Christ***

John 1. 14-18

R This is the gospel of Christ  
**P *Praise to you, O Lord***

*Please sit*

## The Sermon

*Please stand*

### Affirmation of faith

L Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**P *We believe and trust in him***

L Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**P *We believe and trust in him***

L Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God, and makes Christ known in the world?

**P *We believe and trust in him***

L This is the faith of the Church

**P *This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.***

*Please sit*

### Response

*(As music is played, seeds are distributed. Please take one and hold it as the intercessions are offered).*

L Eternal God, your Word declares that the life which is laid down in faith will be raised and produce a great harvest. This we celebrate as we proclaim

**P *Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again***

L We remember and praise you for courageous people who have proclaimed the unity of your Church in word and deed in this and every age, and we name them before you now.

*(Feel free to speak aloud the names of ecumenical visionaries throughout the world, both well known, or known to just a few)*

C These lives, like seeds dropped to the ground, have borne fruit and enable us to say

**P *Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again***

L We pray for your church throughout the world and for those parts to which we belong, that it may be ready to spend and to be spent in your

service. That the love of self-preservation may be set aside, that the deaths you demand of it may be embraced joyfully, and that through all things it may proclaim

**P** ***Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again***

L We pray for the Selly Oak Initiative for Ecumenical Study and Action, praying that this seed, planted in faith and hope, may burst open with life and vision in Birmingham and beyond; and that its work may inspire a new generation to proclaim with confidence

**P** ***Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again***

L In silence, we surrender ourselves and all we count important to God=s will and purpose.

*(Please hold the seed in your hands and offer your personal prayers for this initiative and for the unity of the Church worldwide)*

L We cannot expect to gather the kingdom=s harvest if we do not sow and tend the kingdom=s seed.

**P** ***Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come, O Lord.***

***Amen***

L Our Father...

The Lord's Prayer *(spoken in our language of choice)*

An offering of seeds and of money

*(As music is played, collection bags are passed around for your offering of money, and pots of earth in which you are invited to plant your prayer seed. The offerings of money and seeds are then presented at the table)*

C Generous God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,  
at your table we present these gifts,  
symbols of the work you have given us to do;  
use them, use us, in the service of your world,  
to the glory of your name, Amen.

*Please stand*

Hymn

1 From many grains once scattered far and wide,  
Each one alone, to grow as best it may,  
Now safely gathered in and unified,  
One single loaf we offer here today.  
So may your Church in ev'ry time and place,  
Be in this meal united by your grace.

2 From many grapes, once living on the vine,  
Now crushed and broken under human feet,  
We offer here this single cup of wine;  
The sign of love, unbroken and complete.  
So may we stand among the crucified,  
And live the risen life of him who died.

3 From many places gathered we are here,  
Each with a gift that we alone can bring.  
O Spirit of the living God, draw near,  
Make whole by grace our broken offering.  
O crush the pride that bids us stand alone;  
Let flow the love that makes our spirits one.

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### The Eucharist or Holy Communion

C The Lord is here

**P *The Spirit is with us***

C Lift up your hearts

**P *We lift them to the Lord***

C Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**P *It is right to give God thanks and praise***

C In a world of longing, in work, in play, in rest,  
in creative power and visions

**P *You are here, God, in Christ our Saviour***

C In a world of disorder, in suffering, sorrow and struggle,  
in marginalisation and powerlessness

**P *You are here, God, in Christ our Redeemer***

C In the church, your body; in life, death and resurrection,  
in signs of renewal and unity

**P *You are here, God, in Christ our Intercessor***

C In a world of hunger, in bread and wine, in prayer and unity,

**P *You are here, God, in Christ the bread of life.***

C On the night he was betrayed, at supper with his friends,  
he took bread, and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to them saying,  
'Take, eat, this is my body given for you,  
do this in remembrance of me.'

At the end of the supper, taking the cup of wine,  
he gave you thanks and said,

'Drink this all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins, do this in remembrance of me.'

#### The breaking of the bread

- C Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup  
**P We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes**  
C You sent your Son to save the world  
**P We thank you, God**  
C You send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts  
**P We praise you, God**  
C You send us out in the service of your kingdom  
**P We bless you, God.**  
C Come, for all is prepared  
**P We are not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, that your Church may be healed.**

#### The distribution

*Please move down the centre of the Chapel to receive the elements and return to your seat by the side aisles.*

#### Prayers and the dismissal

*Please stand*

- C Let us pray  
**P God of glory,  
We have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands the bread of heaven.  
Strengthen us in our life together,  
That we may grow in love for you and each other;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

#### The blessing

- C Go in peace and in unity to love and serve the Lord  
**P In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## Hymn

- 1 Sent by the Lord am I, my hands are ready now  
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.  
Sent by the Lord am I, my hands are ready now  
To make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.
  
- 2 The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain  
into a world of love, of justice and of peace;  
the task is mine to do, to set it really free –  
O, help me to obey; help me to do your will.

*Nicaragua (traditional), translated by Jorge Maldonado*

*This liturgy was inspired by and compiled from various sources including Per Harling, 'Worshipping Ecumenically' (Best & Heller), 'Eucharistic Worship in Ecumenical Councils', 'Common Worship', 'The Methodist Worship Book' and a variety of original material.*