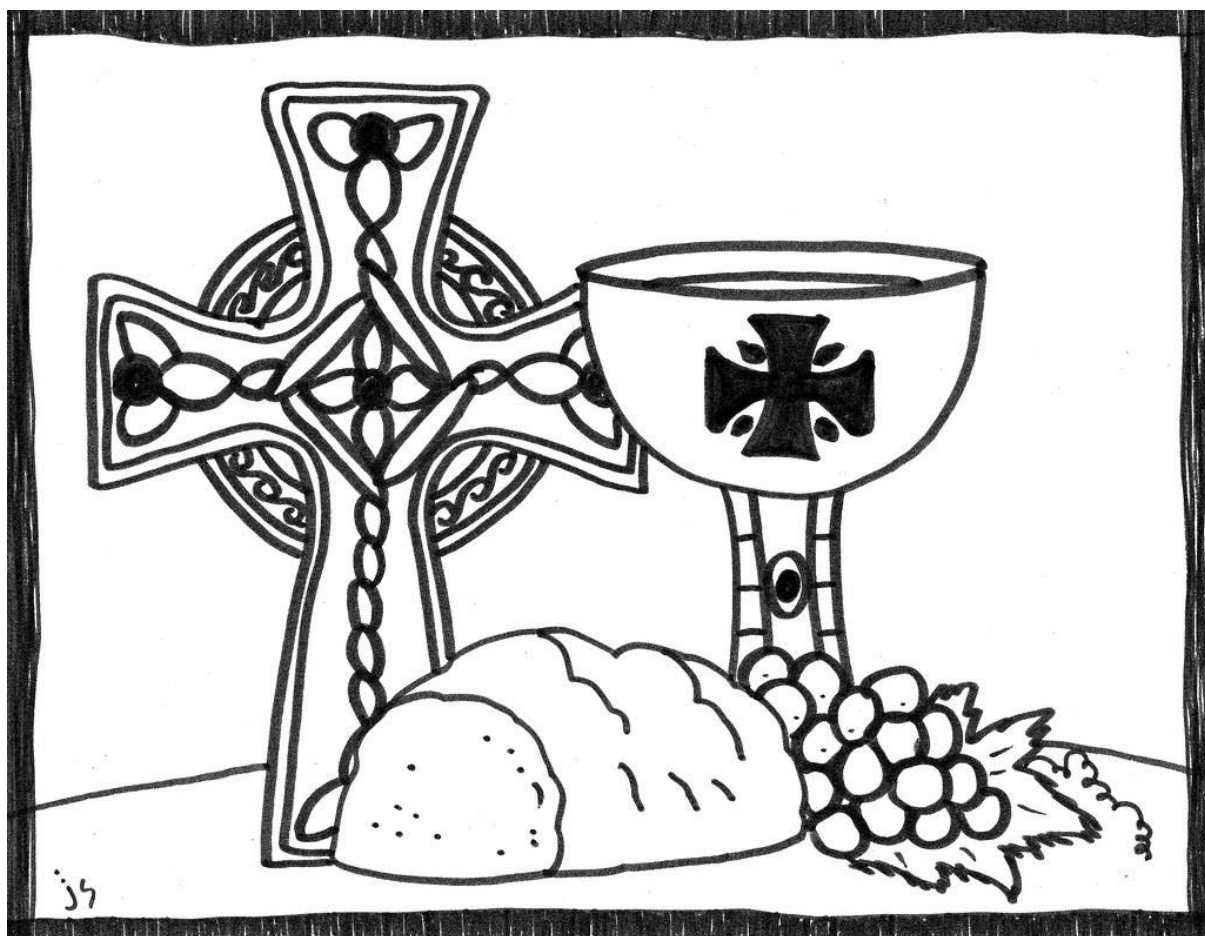


**United Benefice of Berrow with
Pendock, Eldersfield, Hollybush and
Birtsmorton**



A Celtic Communion Service

What is Celtic Christianity?

It's a blanket term covering a variety of distinctive flavours of Christianity which were prevalent amongst the Celtic peoples in the early Middle Ages – so in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and Galicia. They worked out the date of Easter on a different basis to the Roman Catholic Church, their monks sported different tonsures but for me the main difference was that Celtic Christianity was more of a walking religion, emphasising pilgrimage. It's missionaries were out and about amongst the people, teaching, preaching and healing. There was a greater connection to nature and the seasons, building one might say on the pagan or nature-based beliefs of the people which had gone before. And there were a number of women leaders, like St Hilda of Whitby.

At the Synod of Whitby in 664 AD, the decision was taken to go with the Roman form of Christianity rather than the Celtic in the kingdom of Northumbria, a decision which led on to the Romanisation of the Church in the UK – right up to the point where Henry VIII needed to get himself a new wife – but that's a whole other story.....

This morning, after our Walking Church adventure, it feels right to use a more Celtic form of Communion Service to celebrate that walking, outdoorsy, creation appreciating version of our faith.

Welcome and Introduction

Opening Hymn

A time for saying sorry, and bringing to God the things of the week just gone by. We sit or kneel to pray.

Son of Mary

Have mercy on us

Carpenter of Nazareth

Have mercy on us

Healer of the sick

Have mercy on us

Bringer of good news

Have mercy on us

Saviour of the poor

Have mercy on us

Disturber of the mighty

Have mercy on us

You, who suffered death upon the cross,

Facing our darkness, our death,

Have mercy on us

You, who call us sister, brother, mother, friend:

Your body, here

Have mercy on us

Holy God, we bring our ourselves, all that we are, all that we long to be, our weakness, our failures, our sinfulness, our brokenness before you now, asking for your healing and forgiveness. Amen.

May the God of love and power
forgive and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit,
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen

The Collect (a special prayer for the day)

We stand for the reading of the Gospel

Gospel Reading

Reader: This is the word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

We share the peace

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.
The peace of the triune God be always with you
and also with you.

Hymn – during which a collection will be taken

The Offertory Prayer

Blessed are you, O God

For you have brought forth bread from the earth.

Blessed are you, O God,

For you have created the fruit of the vine

The Communion

The table of bread and wine has been made ready.

It is the table of company with Jesus
and with all those who love him.

It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world,
with whom Jesus identified himself.

It is the table of communion with the earth
in which Christ became incarnate.

So, come to this table, you who have much faith
and you who would like to have more;

You who have been to this sacrament often,
and you who have not been for a long time;

You who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed.

Come. It is Christ himself who invites us to meet him here now.

We sit or kneel for the eucharistic prayer

Heavenly Father,

in the beginning you watered the earth
that all might have food and drink.

You gave to your servant Sarah
bread to strengthen her family on their journey,
and wine to make them glad.

You called Moses and his people out of bondage
and refreshed them with food in the wilderness.

You gave Mary and Joseph their daily bread to share.
and here at your table you offer us bread and wine for the
journey to nourish us as sons and daughters.

And so with all our sisters and brothers,
before us and beside us, near and far,

we join in the song of your unending greatness saying together;
**Holy, holy holy, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory
Glory be to you, O God most high.**

Among friends, gathered round a table Jesus took bread, and, having blessed it, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you.

In the same way after supper, he took the cup of wine 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.

So, now, following Jesus' example, we take this bread and this wine; the ordinary things of the world through which God will bless us. And as Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth, let us also celebrate God's goodness.

Lord Jesus Christ, present with us now,
as we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room,
breathe your Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine,
that they may be heaven's food for us.
Renewing, sustaining and making us whole, that we may be
your body on earth, loving and caring in the world.

Look, the bread of heaven is broken for the life of the world.
Here is Christ, coming to us in bread and wine
The gifts of God for the people of God.

(We give and receive bread and wine)

Prayer after Communion

Merciful Father,

You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again: keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Final Hymn

The Blessing

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.

Amen

Go in peace to love and serve God.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

A Celtic Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.