



Welcome to  
St Nicholas Church  
Sunday 21 May 2023

'In times of extreme challenge, community is born when we stand together.' Christian Aid began in response to the refugee crisis following WW2. In a time of weakness and crisis, the churches in the UK did not retreat into themselves and their own recovery but saw a wider need and responded. For 77 years, Christian Aid has lived out the challenge to stand together with sisters and brothers across the world – one global family. As they look ahead to the next chapters and challenges, they invite us to join them in celebration, reflection and recommitment to the cause.



**Short Film: 'You are the Light'**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRvP62ZRB8&t=61s>

### Opening Prayer: Love never fails

Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope. Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far. Love compels us to give and act as one.

Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before. As we pray in our individual homes - around the nation and around the world - we are united as one family. So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer. Amen

**The Song of Kingdom Come**  
[https://youtu.be/oBCu\\_yGLC2o](https://youtu.be/oBCu_yGLC2o)

#### Prayer

Creator, Son and Spirit, we gather together, online and/or in-person to seek Your presence in our time of worship. **WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOU.**

creative work. Transform us more into your likeness. **WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

We gather with women and their communities all over the world (this Christian Aid Week). May their stories make us hungry for justice and even more impatient for change. **WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOUR JUSTICE.**

We gather with all of creation; with the mountains and the hills. We shall burst into song, with the trees of the field we will clap our hands. **WE ARE HUNGRY TO PRAISE YOU.**

Establish the work of our hands, O God. We are your people so answer us, O God, from the streets of your city, from your river of life, from your throne in heaven. SPEAK TO US, OH LORD. Speak in words of power and mighty deeds. Speak to our cries of 'how long.'

How long will the bellies of children lie empty? How long will their mothers pray in vain? How long will temperatures rise beyond record? How long will the clouds fail to give rain? How long will the crop fields turn into dust? How long will the floods cover the plain?

How long will so few live with far too much? How long will so many be denied what they need? How long before the healing of nations? How long will injustice and suffering remain?

But heaven, we know, this is much of our making; our scapegoats, our alibis, they all know the truth: Our pointing the finger and prayers of 'how long' echo back on our piety and demand us to answer **HOW LONG, HOW LONG?** How long will indifference, inequality and injustice deny compassion, healing and fullness of life?

**Parable of the Sheep and the goats**  
(Matthew 25:34-40)

<sup>34</sup>"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For **I was hungry and you** gave me something to

eat, **I was** thirsty **and you** gave me something to drink, **I was** a stranger **and you** invited me in <sup>36</sup> **I needed** clothes **and you** clothed me, **I was** sick **and you** looked after me, **I was** in prison **and you** came to visit me.’ <sup>37</sup> “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ <sup>40</sup> “The King will reply, ‘**Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.**’



In our hunger for justice, we pray for all those known to us who hunger to provide for those they love in our global community. THE SUN WILL NOT STRIKE THEM, NOR ANY SCORCHING HEAT.

In our hunger, we pray for your little ones, children who go to bed hungry, whose parents struggle to provide for them in times of desperate drought. GOD WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES.

And in our hunger, we pray that you will fill us with your hope, your passion and your life, that we may go out from this place to give, act and pray. So, all who hunger to provide may be filled to overflowing. In the name of Christ, farmer, gardener and cultivator, AMEN.

**Final Hymn: Take My life and let it be...**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sss-g50Dw1Q>

**Sending**

Give us, Lord God, a vision of your Kingdom as your love desires, a world where the weak are protected, and none go hungry, a world where life is shared, and enjoyed by all, a world where all races, nations and cultures live in tolerance and respect, a world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love. Give us the inspiration and courage to build your Kingdom here and now.

**Offering/ Song**

**Christ's is the world in which we move**

<https://youtu.be/VBmQV-EsWM8>

**Prayers for offerings and others**

God, our Farmer You plant the seed You water the seed You nourish the seed You value the widow's mite You value Esther's peas You value what we bring today What we bring today Is already yours Accept these, our offerings And use them to help dreams come true In this community Through this church And in your world Through Christian Aid. Amen.

Creator God, cultivator of our faith, thank you for the privilege of living in this global garden planted to bear your fruit, to delight our tongues, to fill our bellies, to energise our bodies. You have given us life in all its fullness. You have given us life, yet millions still hunger.

Take our gifts of money and use them to help Christian Aid support communities throughout the world and partners who hunger to provide. But may our support not end here. May we be the seeds from which your kingdom grows.

But may our concern for them not stifle our concern for Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan and all those other places to whom our hearts have become hardened through over familiarity. THEY WILL HUNGER NO MORE AND THIRST NO MORE.



<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/give/ways-to-donate>