

Centenary Prayer

Eternal and ever-living God,
who created all things and breathes life into all peoples,
hold in your loving gaze this Diocese of Leicester and Cathedral Church,
with all your living stones, built on Jesus Christ the Cornerstone:
that we may stand firm on the ground of your being
and be nourished for the journey to come
with the bread of life and water of the Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
Amen.

Introduction – why celebrate a centenary?

The Diocese of Leicester was formally reconstituted on 12 November 1926 and the parish church of St Martin was hallowed as the Cathedral Church on 21 February 1927. So, we are preparing to celebrate one hundred years – a significant anniversary. But it is worth asking why we would want to celebrate the centenary of the diocese? Are we simply celebrating an organisation or institution? And is it just the fact that we have “survived” for one hundred years?

The answer is “no, we are not just celebrating our longevity as an organisation”. Rather the theme for our centenary celebrations will be **Hebrews 13.8: ‘Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.’** So, we are celebrating God’s faithfulness and the unchanging nature of God’s love, grace and mercy towards all that God has created. The world has changed enormously over the last century, but the gift of the church is that, even in the midst of so much change, we worship God, revealed in Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

Therefore, the heart of our centenary celebrations is worship and thanksgiving. We are not planning lots of big events, nor will we be spending lots of money. But there will be special services on the specific dates of the reconstitution of the diocese and the hollowing of the Cathedral, and we as bishops will be joining parish celebrations during Autumn 2026 and Spring 2027. You are free to organise your own celebrations at any point over the next year. These resources are intended to help you in marking the centenary in your local church.

+Martyn Leicester

+Saju Loughborough

Centenary Themes

When putting together special services for the Centenary, the following elements could be included:

Looking back with thankfulness and lament:

- Giving thanks for those who have served this Church/Benefice/Diocese in the past.
- Bringing to God anything from the past that has been amiss or which we want to lament.

Rejoicing in the gift of who we are as God’s people:

- Giving thanks for all that is good in the present and for who we are together in this place.

Looking to the future with hope and confidence, sent out to be Shaped by God to God’s eternal glory:

- Bringing hopes to God for the future and the next 100 years.
- Pledging ourselves anew to God’s service and to following Christ.

The Centenary Planning Group have identified **Hebrews 13:8 & Psalm 100** as the key underpinning biblical texts for the Centenary.

Hebrews 13: 8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. (NRSVA)

Psalm 100 - Common Worship

[*Common Worship*; Church House Publishing; © The Archbishops' Council, 2000]

**O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.**

**Know that the Lord is God;
it is he that has made us and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. [R]**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and bless his name.**

**For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting,
and his faithfulness endures from generation to generation.**

Refrain: The Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting.

*O Christ, door of the sheepfold,
may we enter your gates with praise
and go from your courts to serve you
in the poor, the lost and the wandering,
this day and all our days. **Amen.***

These two texts, together with other parts of Hebrews Chapter 13, have inspired these resources in large part. They call us to praise and thanksgiving for God who created us, who has been faithful through all time, and is present with us now. They remind us that God's love endures for ever and that through Jesus Christ we have confidence in God's salvation.

These resources have been devised to be used or adapted for different church settings and within services of the Word, or eucharistic services and offer a selection of texts – please do not try to use all of them in one service! The texts are inspired by Scripture and, unless marked, are original to the Liturgy and Worship Group members so not copyright. There are of course other texts which will fit the themes of the Centenary which could be used e.g. from *New Patterns for Worship* or the wider *Common Worship* suite of material, as well as countless prayer and liturgy books, but we hope that providing some texts will be a helpful starting point or save time when putting together services.

The Centenary Prayer above could be included in all services marking the Centenary and acts as a standalone prayer or as a Collect if that is helpful.

Intercultural Worship ideas

Some of our church communities have become much more diverse over the last 100 years, and we rejoice that many different voices and languages may be heard within our congregations. Below are some ideas for how to build in intercultural elements to worship. Even if your church community is not a diverse one, the welcome graphic, invitation to pray 'in your own language' for the Lord's Prayer and remembering our sisters and brothers in Christ in different countries (see the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle) are good ways to signal that we are all part of a global church and in solidarity with many millions of others following Jesus Christ.

Some ideas:

- Readings in a language other than English (with translation in the order of service).
- Congregational responses translated into different languages.
- Prayers of intercession or part of these led in different languages.

- The Lord's Prayer led in a language other than English (and use multi-lingual prompt version in order of service) – see resources Prayers section below.
- Songs/hymns from different cultures – see resources Hymns/Songs section below.
- Translating some resources e.g. greetings and responses into different languages, saying welcome at the beginning in different languages.
- Using the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle (visit <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle>) which focuses on different countries each week and encourages us to remember those who worship Christ across the world. Subjects for prayer as well as written prayers are also available.
- Print or show this welcome graphic in multiple languages:



Grouping of texts below:

- Greetings/calls to worship/gathering
- Prayers of penitence and thanksgiving
- Collects
- Responsories/Refrains
- Introductions to the Peace
- General Prayers, Intercessions
- The Lord's Prayer in multiple languages
- Prayers of Dedication
- Blessing and Dismissal
- Hymns and Songs

Greetings/calls to worship/gathering

Come to God the Creator with joy all the earth!

for God is good and God's love endures forever!

Worship God with gladness all you people!

for it is God who made us and we belong to God!

Come to Christ the Good Shepherd who enfolds us with arms of love!

We are his people and the sheep of his pasture!

Come in the power of the Holy Spirit who calls us to enter God's courts with praise!

We give thanks and bless God's holy name

Come one and all who know God the three-in-one,
whose faithfulness continues through all generations

for God is good and God's love endures forever!

based on Psalm 100

Prayers of penitence and Thanksgiving

Prayer of confession

Faithful God, we are sorry for the times we have tried to be Church without you:
for the times we have doubted your presence and power to work in us.

For the times we have believed that we are not enough.
Forgive us for all the ways we have fallen into pride or fear,
missing the mark as individuals and as a Diocese.
In your mercy, help us to move into the future you have for us,
in Jesus name. **Amen.**

Lament

We have seen your faithfulness in our Diocese for one hundred years,
yet we fail to recognise you in each other.
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

We have seen your love in our communities,
yet we have not shared your love with others.
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We have heard your voice speaking to us,
yet we resist your call to be your people in our time and place.
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Thanksgiving

Know that the Lord is God.
We are his, we are his people.

For the Lord is good.
**His steadfast love endures forever,
his faithfulness to all generations.**

Know that the Lord is God.
**Worship the Lord with gladness.
Shout to the Lord all the earth**

For the Lord is good.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.

Collects

Almighty God, who in Your great love calls all people to be sheep of Your pasture,
and heirs of Your Kingdom: grant us to know your enduring love and continuing faithfulness
that, rejoicing in what goes before, we may look to all that is to come as we love and serve you, each other,
and our community, building your Kingdom in this place;
through Jesus Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty Shepherd and Lord of all,
who are the same yesterday, today and forever,
hear us as we give thanks for this Diocese of Leicester:
for those who faithfully built up the Church in this place and in whose footsteps we tread;
for us who worship you now with gladness and praise you in many and varied voices; for all who will follow us
through the landscape to come;
that your family will grow ever more diverse and wonderful
until we gather together in your ever presence in your eternal Kingdom. **Amen.**

Faithful and eternal God,
whose faithful love endures forever:
grant us thankful hearts for the past,
steadfastness for today,
and hope for the future;
so that all may come to faith in you,
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

God of all,
whose love endures forever
and whose faithfulness continues through all generations,
hold us secure in that love and in the knowledge
you are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow:
that we may rejoice in all that has gone before and walk boldly into the future,
building your kingdom in our Diocese and communities;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Responsories/Refrains

Responsories

O God, as we live with worries and fears,
come and be close to us.
O God, as we live the ordinary rhythms of our lives,
come and bring your joy.

Let all the earth rejoice in you, O God,
you have made us and we are your people.
We shall worship you with gladness,
we shall sing your praise with joy.
Your love endures for ever
and your faithfulness through all ages.
We shall worship you with gladness,
we shall sing your praise with joy

cf Psalm 100

You, Jesus Christ, are the same yesterday, today and forever,
we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.
We come into your presence with singing.
You enfold us and tend us with love,
You made us and we are your people.

You made us, we did not make ourselves,
we come into your presence with singing.
You enfold us and tend us with love,
You, Jesus Christ, are the same yesterday, today, and forever
cf Hebrews 13.8

Refrains

From Psalm 100:

Worship the Lord with gladness,
come before God with joyful songs.

Know that the Lord is God,
it is God who made us, we belong to God.

We are God's people,
the sheep of God's pasture.

For the Lord is good,
God's love endures forever.

From Hebrews 13:

Let mutual love continue,
God will never leave you (us) or forsake you (us).

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,
for some have entertained angels without knowing.

So, we can say with confidence,
the Lord is my Helper (I will not be afraid).

Jesus Christ is the same,
yesterday, today and forever.

Introductions to The Peace

God of Yesterday, Christ of Today, Spirit of Tomorrow, lead us in your Peace...

Jesus, the same yesterday, today and forever, is the Prince of peace...

The God who has whispered words of peace for generations, speaks peace to our hearts today...

Jesus, the Good Shepherd of all generations, welcomes us into the sheepfold and speaks words of peace and hope...

...The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

OR

...The peace of the risen Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

General Prayers, Intercessions

Eternal God, Faithful Shepherd and Teacher, we give heartfelt thanks for the past, gratitude for the gifts of this day, and trustful hearts in you for all that is ahead. May your name may be glorified in all the earth, through our Lord, your Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Faithful God, your love endures forever.

A hundred years ago, you blessed our Cathedral and Diocese
and you gather us here today in this time and place as your people.

In the richness of our diversity,
help us to rejoice in your love for us,
and to open ourselves to your power and presence,
so that we may move forward together into the future you have prepared for us,
through Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever. **Amen.**

God of our days and years,
you have faithfully blessed, shaped and shepherded your people
of the Diocese of Leicester
through all the joys and trials of the past.
In this centenary year,
continue to equip and strengthen us for mission, ministry and service
as people of your pasture and citizens of your kingdom,
now and in the years to come;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever
and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and always. **Amen.**

Loving God, source of our being, of our longing, and of our becoming,
thank you for your faithfulness through our Diocese for one hundred years.
As we step into the next one hundred years,
may our hearts be open to you,
may we seek more of you in each other,
and may we welcome others to know your joy;
all through your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the same yesterday, today and forever. **Amen.**

Risen and ascended God,
who called Mary by name on the first resurrection morning
and encouraged her to share the Good News,
help us boldly to share your love and grace with all we meet,
so they may come to recognition of who you are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Shepherding God,
who crowns the years with your favour,
fill our hearts with thankfulness and delight for your faithfulness
so that we may share your generous love with all people,
all for your glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**

Sequence of Intercessions

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.
Hear our prayer.

Lord of eternity, we give you thanks and praise for 100 years of our Diocese of Leicester [and our Cathedral Church], for all the people you called to witness faithfully to your Gospel who have passed the torch of faith to us [here at Church of N]. Inspired by their example, may we have courage to respond to your call to share our faith in your community today.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

Eternal Word of God, full of grace and truth, help us to recognise where in the past we have strayed from the righteous way, and help us return to you now. Forgive us for those times when we have failed to be all we can be, missed opportunities to show love and compassion, wounded your love by causing harm or failing to safeguard others from harm. We thank you that you do not hold our mistakes against us but are quick to forgive when we truly repent and remain faithful even when we are unfaithful to you, for you are good to us and your love endures forever.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

Incarnate Lord, you walked amongst your people as one of us and promised to be with us always. Make yourself known to us now, in this present moment and amongst your people gathered today in this place. We thank you for the gift of each and every person here, all they are and all that they bring to our Diocese. Strengthen us for your service, fill us with the power of your Spirit to bring Good News to the poor, proclaim freedom and the year of the Lord's favour, and in all things to live and work to your praise and glory.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

Healing Saviour, we bring before you the needs of this present moment

- The needs of the world...
- The needs of the community...
- The needs of the individual...

We ask that in your love and mercy you would bring peace to troubled hearts, minds and places, healing and wellness to the sick in body, mind and spirit, comfort to all those who grieve and who are struggling with loss. As you have been faithful in past generations, continue to hold faith with us as we pray to you now.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

Bridegroom of the Church, we pray for all who lead us in the community of faith today; for our Bishops Martyn and Saju, for Dean Karen, our Archdeacons, our Area Deans and all who lead and minister to us here. Grant them your spiritual gifts of wisdom and compassion as we continue our journey through ever changing times; keep us all rooted in your welcoming nature and eternal promises.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

King of Heaven, we look forward to your coming again as ruler of the world. Help us never to cease to come into your courts with praise and to sing joyful songs whatever the future brings. Keep us safe in the hope you have set before us as we continue to build the Kingdom of God here in the Diocese of Leicester day by day, year by year, century by century until your return and your will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Jesus, you are the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hear our prayer.

Merciful Father...

The Lord's Prayer (with prompts in in multiple languages)

Introductions to The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray, in the language closest to our hearts: **Our Father...**

With all Sisters and Brothers [or Siblings] in the faith; past, present and future,
we join our many voices in praying the prayer Jesus taught us, in the language closest to our hearts: **Our Father...**

With all who share our faith in Christ: those faithful forebears who have gone before us,
all today who bear the flame of the Spirit, and those yet to come who will take up the torch of faith;
we pray the prayer Jesus taught us, in our preferred heart language:

Our Father...

Traditional version:

**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,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Notre Père...
Baba wa...
我們在天上的父...
Nna Anyi...
Ojcze Nasz...
Vater unser...
Ein Tad...
Wo tye...
Baba mu...
...أبانا
Padre nuestro...
Πάτερ ἡμῶν...
Отче наш...
Pater noster...

Contemporary version:

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.

Notre Père...
Baba wa...
我們在天上的父...
Nna Anyi...
Ojcze Nasz...
Vater unser...
Ein Tad...
Wo tye...
Baba mu...
...أبانا
Padre nuestro...
Πάτερ ἡμῶν...
Отче наш...
Pater noster...

Prayers of Dedication

Eternal God, you have called us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.
We dedicate our lives as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you.
May our life together as the Diocese of Leicester
be characterized by all that is good and pleasing in your sight.
Empower us by your Spirit, to follow the example of Jesus Christ,
to the Glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

cf Hebrews 13:15-16

Faithful God, you call us forward into a new day.
We are your people and trust that our Diocese is in your hands.
We shall go forth in hope and confidence
and dedicate our lives to the future vision Christ has for us.

Blessing and Dismissal

Blessings

May God the Father; the eternal provider, sustainer and redeemer,
surround you with his love.
Amen.

May Jesus the Son, gracious Teacher, Leader and Friend,
draw close in his mercy.
Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit; ever present Counsellor, Equipper and Life-giver,
fill you with hope,
Amen.

And the blessing.....

God of all life,
who called the people of yesterday to establish the Church
in this City and County (or Diocese),
send us out to continue to build God's Kingdom in the world.

Amen.

God the Good Shepherd,
who calls us by name today and who laid down life that we may have fullness of life,
send us out to announce God's Good News to all we meet.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
springing up within us to eternal life,
who will inspire the generations of tomorrow yet to be born,
send us out in this age to set hearts on fire with Divine Love.

Amen.

And the blessing..

Dismissal

Lord of our yesterday, you have been with us through all time.

[We go out now with gladness, giving thanks and praise for we are your people]

Thanks be to God

Lord of our today, you have made us and we are good.

[We praise and bless your name for faithfulness that travels through all generations]

Thanks be to God

Lord of our tomorrow, you send us out with joy, entering our world with praise.

[We go with faith to proclaim your goodness, and to share your love and the joy found in you]

Thanks be to God

God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**Shout with joy to the Lord, all you his people,
give thanks to him and bless his name.**

God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

We are his people the sheep of his pasture.

God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

His steadfast love endures forever.

God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**Shout with joy to the Lord, all you his people,
give thanks to him and bless his name**

cf Hebrews 13.8; Psalm 100

Hymns and Songs

An internet search will reveal many hymns/songs with themes related to Psalm 100 or Hebrews 13. Many hymnbooks also have a Scripture Index which will throw up ideas.

Below are some intercultural worship suggestions of songs in different languages or from different cultures which could be included in services even if your church community is not very diverse. Where you have a diverse congregation, do ask members for their own suggestions!

Centenary Liturgy & Worship Resources



Hakuna Mungu Kama Wewe (There's no one like Jesus) – this is good with actions for children too -

<https://songs2serve.eu/songs/hakuna-mungu-kama-wewe>

Multilingual Grace – <https://songs2serve.eu/songs/multilingual-grace>

Azim Ast Name To Isa (Great is your name Lord Jesus) – also has a choir score from Simon Headley, downloadable on the website - <https://songs2serve.eu/songs/azim-ast-name-to-isa>

I Just Want To Say Baba O Ese (Father thank you) - <https://songs2serve.eu/songs/i-just-want-to-say-baba-o-ese>

Baba Ese O Baba (Father O thank you Father) - <https://songs2serve.eu/songs/baba-ese-o-baba>

Peruvian Gloria - <https://hymnary.org/text/glory-to-god-glory-to-god-glory-in-the-h>

God is so good – easy to do in many languages, people can be invited to share it in their own language - <https://songs2serve.eu/songs/god-is-so-good>

Siyahamba - is very well-known – <https://thebirdsings.com/siyahamba/>

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving - this echoes themes from Psalm 100 -

<https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/ns/259>

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart,

I will enter His courts with praise;

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made,

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad -

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad -

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

There are versions of this in different languages including Sinhalese:

http://www.chamathwebs.com/kgp/page_en.asp?LyricsID=I_Will_Enter_His_Gates_With_Thanksgiving

Swaminwahansegay Doratuwa Thulin

Athulwee Prasangsa Karamin Sitimi

Meya Samindun Mawu Dawasayi Kiyamin

Ehi Preethiwemin Ma Santhosa Wemi

Chorus:

Ma Santhosayi, Ma Santhosayi

Ehi Preethiwemin Ma Santhosa Wemi

Members of the Diocesan Worship & Liturgy Group would be very happy to offer any advice or support you may need as you develop plans locally. In the first instance, do contact The Revd Canon Emma Davies on Emma.Davies@LeicesterCofE.org or The Revd James Pickersgill on Bishops.Chaplain@LeicesterCofE.org

Leicester Diocesan Liturgy & Worship Group
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