

ST BOTOLPH'S, HADSTOCK

MILLENNIUM OF THE BATTLE OF ASSANDUN COMMEMORATION SERVICE 16 OCTOBER 2016



*Welcome to our service, as we commemorate 1000 years since the Battle of Assandun on 18 October 1016. Please join in the hymns, and the responses shown in **bold type**. Please also join us for refreshments in the church afterwards.*

We are delighted and privileged to welcome the Right Revd Dr Rowan Williams, previously Archbishop of Canterbury and currently Master of Magdalene College Cambridge, as our preacher.

Essex in 1016 was very different from today, and yet that battle helped shape our national story. Cnut, once he became king, worked hard to reconcile his people into their new kingdom, and to uphold the laws of the English people and the Christian faith, before yet another invader came only 50 years later to change the culture of England for ever. We remember with respect how Cnut founded a church for those who fell in the conflict - maybe the very church in which we meet today.

The story of that battle, like so much of history, shows up the messiness of human lives: the tension between violence and peace; the different perceptions of the different factions, both believing their cause was right or at least justifiable; the burning need in the human heart for peace. And it reminds us too that true kingship rests with God, the author of true peace: the God whom we worship and trust and who longs for us to follow him. And as we still see conflict all around us, let us commit ourselves anew to strive for an end to division and for peace.

During the service the Millennium Banners, illustrating the story of the battle and Cnut's foundation of the church, will be dedicated for display in this church.

Please stand as the clergy enter to sing our opening hymn

1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise.

2. In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow thee.

3. O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

4. Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

5. Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Welcome and Opening prayers

We meet in the presence of God, remembering that battle long ago:
a battle which formed the background to our present
in a time of strife and violence, fear and treachery,
in a time of reconciliation and a search for unity,
in a time of uncertainty and a time of excitement,
in a time of endings and new beginnings.

As we recall that time, we pray that we too may be reconcilers
and may work for freedom, justice and peace for all.

***All* Lord, make us instruments of our peace:
where there is hatred, may we bring love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is sadness, joy;
for your mercy and for your truth's sake. Amen.**

An act of contrition for the past *Please sit or kneel*

Let us hold before God and confess together our own part in the sins and shortcomings of this world, the sins which darken our own time as they

have darkened all human history:
its pride, its selfishness, its divisions and hatreds,
and our failure to seek and establish that peace
which God wills for his children.

The kingdom is yours, but we turn away from your just rule:

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

The power is yours, but we trust in our own power and strength:

Christ, have mercy

All **Christ, have mercy.**

The glory is yours, but we fall short of the glory of God.

Lord, have mercy.

All **Lord, have mercy.**

We hear God's forgiveness

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from your sins,
and restore you in his image to the praise and glory of his name
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We hear God's call

Jesus said: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit

All For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn

All For they will be comforted

Blessed are the meek

All For they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

All For they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful

All For they will obtain mercy

Blessed are the peacemakers

All For they will be called children of God.'

Lord, teach us the way of blessedness.

All Bring us to the knowledge of your love.

The Collect

Eternal God,

in whose perfect realm no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness,
and no strength known but the strength of love,
so guide and inspire the work of those who seek your kingdom,

that all people may find their security in that love which casts out fear
and in the fellowship revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Battle of Assandun: an extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle *Please be seated.*

Psalm 84 *We say together*

**How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she
may lay her young:
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
Blessed are they who dwell in your house:
they will always be praising you.**

Old Testament Reading – Micah 4:1-5

At the end the reader says

This is the Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Please stand to sing our next hymn:

1. He who would valiant be
'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy
follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent
to be a pilgrim.

2. Who so beset him round
with dismal stories
do but themselves confound
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might;
though he with giants fight,
he will make good his right
to be a pilgrim.

3. Since, Lord, thou dost defend
us with thy Spirit,
We know we at the end,
shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day
to be a pilgrim.

John Bunyan

New Testament Reading: John 14:21-27 *Please remain standing.*

At the end the reader says

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon - *please be seated*

We affirm our Faith - *please stand*

Let us declare our faith in God.

**All We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son
who lives in our hearts through faith
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Please sit or kneel as we bring the needs of the world to God.

After each prayer, in response to the words, Lord, in your mercy
please respond **Hear our prayer.**

The prayers end

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Please stand for our next hymn. A collection is taken for the work of the church.

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art;
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

2. Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee Lord;
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son;
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

3. Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower:
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.

4. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise:
Be thou mine inheritance now and always;
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart;
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

5. High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright sun,
O grant me its joys after victory is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

*Ancient Irish; trans. Mary Byrne,
versified by Eleanor Hull*

We offer our lives and gifts to God

All things come from you, O God, and of your own do we give you. Accept these gifts we pray, and use us and them in your service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Dedication and blessing of the banners

Please be seated as the four banners for the church are brought forward and presented at the altar: they show Cnut sailing to England, winning the Battle of Assandun, becoming King, and in 1020 founding his church.

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the skill and creativity of all who have prepared these banners, and for the fun of working in a common cause. Bless these banners, which we dedicate in your name, that they may speak to us and to all who see them of the rich heritage of this place, and that the story which they show may lead us to a greater knowledge of your purposes for all humanity.

Cnut sailed to England. **May we have strength to make dangerous journeys for the sake of truth.**

Cnut won the Battle. **May we prevail over evil and darkness, and fight only in the cause of right.**

Cnut became King, and sought to rule with justice. **May we acknowledge you as our King and your Son as our Redeemer.**

Cnut founded his church for those who fell on both sides of the conflict at Assandun. **May we too be people of reconciliation, bringing your peace to a divided world. Amen.**

Let us join in the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying together

**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 them that 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.**

The Act of Commitment and Sending Out *Please stand*

Let us commit ourselves to responsible living and faithful service.
Will you strive for all that makes for peace, in your homes and in your communities?

We will.

Will you seek to heal the wounds of war and division?

We will.

Will you work for a just future for all humanity, without distinction of rank or nation?

We will.

Merciful God, we offer to you the fears that have not yet been cast out by love: may we accept the hope you have placed in the hearts of all people, and live lives of justice, courage, and mercy, through Jesus Christ, our risen Redeemer. **Amen.**

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

We greet each other in the name of Christ.

God of our past, our present and our future, of all that has been and all that will be, you have set us in this time and this place:

All **May we learn from our past, use our present to your glory and go forward into your future.**

Lord, you have set us in a fair land: indeed, we have a goodly heritage:

All **May we always give thanks for the wonders of your creation.**

Lord God of our world, of islands and seas and nations:

All **May your will be done, your kingdom come on earth as in heaven.**

Lord, send us out to live to your praise and glory.

All **Send us out to live in your joy and your peace.**

Blessing

Christ our king make you faithful and strong to do his will, that you may reign with him in glory;

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Please remain standing for our final hymn

1. O worship the King,
All glorious above!
O gratefully sing
His power and his love!
Our shield and defender,
The Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendour,
And girded with praise.

2. O tell of his might!
O sing of his grace!
Whose robe is the light,
Whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath
The deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is his path
On the wings of the storm.

3. This earth, with its store
Of wonders untold,
Almighty, thy power
Hath founded of old,
Hath 'stablished it fast
By a changeless decree,
And round it hath cast,
Like a mantle, the sea.

4. Thy bountiful care,
What tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air;
It shines in the light;
It streams from the hills,
It descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills
In the dew and the rain.

5. Frail children of dust,
And feeble as frail,
In thee do we trust,
Nor find thee to fail;
Thy mercies, how tender!
How firm to the end!
Our Maker, Defender,
Redeemer, and Friend!

6. O measureless Might,
Ineffable Love,
While angels delight
To hymn thee above,
Thy humbler creation,
Though feeble their lays,
With true adoration
Shall sing to thy praise.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

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Thank you for joining us this morning. Please join us for refreshments in the church before you leave.

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