



DIOCESE OF
COVENTRY



Diocesan Service of Baptism and Confirmation

Sunday, 27th September 2026 at 4pm

Welcome to Coventry Cathedral

Welcome to your Cathedral, and to this Michaelmas celebration of baptism and confirmation.

Michaelmas is the feast of St Michael and All Angels, when the Church celebrates the angels and all who serve God, and remembers that our lives of faith are lived within a story much larger than ourselves. It is a fitting day to celebrate those who are beginning or renewing their journey of faith.

In baptism, we are welcomed into the life of Christ; *in confirmation*, we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit to live that life more fully. Today we give thanks for God's love and for the people who walk this journey with us.

We are delighted that the Bishop of Coventry, the Right Reverend Sophie Jelley, will lead and preach at today's service.

If, as you worship with us today, you find yourself wondering about baptism or confirmation or feeling that this might be a step you would like to explore, please speak to someone involved in this service before you leave. There is always room for another 'yes'.

We are delighted that you are here.

The Cathedral Choir is directed by Joe Watson, Acting Director of Music, the organists are Liam Condom, Assistant Director of Music and Adam Heron, Organ Scholar.

The artwork on the cover is a detail from the Holy Spirit window (circa 1660) by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), which is above the Cathedra Petri, Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City State.

Of your goodness, please pray for our candidates:

Bablake School Chaplaincy

Matt Parsons

Holy Trinity Church, Coventry

Michael Jonas Churchill
Kyara Eva Malabo Gérardin
Faith Chinasa Anyanwu
Mariam Kelvin Kendi Dodworth

Saint Laurence's Church, Meriden

Sophia Rebecca Shineton

*Saint Catherine's Church,
Stoke Aldermoor*

Diamond Chenaniah Sanni-Esan
Derek Kelechi Onuoha
Desmond Oluwapelumi Sanni-Esan
Gerald Ngere Kamau
Michelle Onuoha Somtochi
Amba Campbell*
Faith Omeneké Yusuf
Blessing Jumoke Alayande
Patience Asheazi Bature
Rachel Wanyaga Nthiga

*Cathedral Church of
Saint Michael, Coventry*

Sylvana Liverpool
Libby Raistrick
Susan Lincy
Jacob Highton
Moses Dai

Saint Nicholas' Church, Warwick

Noah Thompson
David Edward Robert Nelson

Draycote & Leam Valley Benefice

Euan Keith

Preparation

The Acting Dean, the Reverend Canon Kate Massey, welcomes the congregation.

Acclamation

*The Acting Dean invites us to **STAND** and says –*

All The Lord commands his angels
to keep you in all your ways.

All Give thanks to the Lord, all his angels, mighty in power,
who fulfil his command and heed the voice of his word.

All Give thanks to the Lord, all his hosts,
his servants that do his will.

All Give thanks to the Lord, all his works,
in every place where he rules,
my soul, give thanks to the Lord.

All or he commands his angels,
to keep you in all your ways.

Cf. Psalm 91:11, Psalm 103:20-22

Hymn

**Ye holy angels bright,
who wait at God's right hand,
or through the realms of light
fly at your Lord's command,
assist our song,
for else the theme
too high doth seem
for mortal tongue.**

**Ye blessed souls at rest,
who ran this earthly race,
and now, from sin released,
behold the Saviour's face,
his praises sound,
as in his light
with sweet delight
ye do abound.**

**Ye saints, who toil below,
adore your heavenly King,
and onward as ye go
some joyful anthem sing;
take what he gives
and praise him still,
through good and ill,
who ever lives.**

**My soul, bear thou thy part,
triumph in God above,
and with a well-tuned heart
sing thou the songs of love;
let all thy days
till life shall end,
whate'er he send,
be filled with praise.**

*Words by Richard Baxter (1615-1691) and J.H. Gurney (1802-1862)
Tune CP 626 Darwall's 148th melody by John Darwall (1739-1789)
harmonised by W.H. Monk (1823-1889)*

The Greeting

The Right Reverend Sophie Jelley, Bishop of Coventry, greets the people, saying –

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

There is one body and one spirit.

All There is one hope to which we were called;

one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

All one God and Father of all.

Peace be with you

All and also with you.

The Bishop adds her welcome to that of the Acting Dean.

The Collect

The Bishop introduces a period of silent prayer with the words ‘Let us pray’ and then says –

Heavenly Father,

by the power of your Holy Spirit

you give your faithful people new life in the water of baptism.

Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit,

that we who are born again may serve you in faith and love,

and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus Christ,

who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit

now and for ever

All Amen.

¶ **The Liturgy of the Word**

We *SIT*.

The Old Testament Reading

A reading from the Book of Genesis

¹⁰Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. ¹¹He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. ¹²And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And the Lord stood beside him and said, 'I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ¹⁴and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' ¹⁶Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!' ¹⁷And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

Genesis 28: 10-17

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The Bishop may invite candidates to share their testimonies at this point or after the anthem.

The New Testament Reading

A reading from the Gospel of John.

⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' ⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' ⁴⁹Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' ⁵⁰Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' ⁵¹And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

John 1:47-end

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Given by the Right Reverend Sophie Jelley, Bishop of Coventry.

Anthem

The choir sings –

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi
amor.
Exsulemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Amen.

*Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has gathered us
together.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Let us revere and love the living God.
And from a sincere heart let us love one
another. Amen.*

*Words from the Litany of Maundy Thursday
Music by Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)*

The Liturgy of Initiation

Presentation of the Candidates

The candidates stand in a semi-circle in front of Bishop Sophie, with their supporting clergy behind them.

The Bishop asks Amba, to be baptised
Do you wish to be baptized?
I do.

The Bishop asks the candidates for confirmation who have been baptized
Have you been baptized in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?
I have.

The Bishop asks all the candidates
Are you ready with your own mouth and from your own heart
to affirm your faith in Jesus Christ?
I am.

The Bishop addresses the whole congregation
Faith is the gift of God to his people.
In baptism the Lord is adding to our number
those whom he is calling.
People of God, will you welcome these candidates
and uphold them in their life in Christ?

All With the help of God, we will.

The Decision

The Bishop addresses all the candidates -

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness
into his marvellous light.
To follow Christ means dying to sin
and rising to new life with him.

Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us
from God and neighbour?

I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

I come to Christ.

Signing with the Cross

The Bishop makes the sign of the cross on Amba's forehead, saying –

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

The Bishop says to her –

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
 against sin, the world and the devil,
 and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,

and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

Hymn

We **STAND**. During this hymn we follow the Bishop, along with Amba and the candidates to gather around the font.

**Come down, O Love divine,
seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.**

**O let it freely burn,
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illumining.**

Words by Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)

translated by R.F. Littledale (1833-1890)

Tune CP 175i Down Ampney by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Prayer over the Water

The Bishop stands before the water of baptism and says -

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

All who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water
to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.

Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of
creation.

Through water you led the children of Israel
from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.

In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah,
the Christ,
to lead us from the death of sin to newness of life.
We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.
By it we share in his resurrection.
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.
Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son,
we baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in faith.
Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your
Holy Spirit,
they may be cleansed from sin and born again.
Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith
and continue for ever in the risen life of
Jesus Christ our Lord;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Profession of Faith

The Bishop addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess
together with *these candidates*
the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**All I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

All I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Baptism

The Bishop addresses the candidate for baptism by name, saying
Amba, is this your faith?

and candidates answers
This is my faith.

The Bishop pours water on the candidate, saying
Amba, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The Bishop says
May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All Amen.

The Bishop sprinkles with water the candidates for confirmation and says -
Almighty God,
we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith
with all who have been baptized into your name.
Keep us faithful to our baptism,
and so make us ready for that day
when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Hymn

*We follow the cross and lights, the Bishop and candidates, back to our seats
as we sing –*

**Let holy charity
mine outward vesture be,
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;
true lowliness of heart,
which takes the humbler part,
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.**

**And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace,
till they become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.**

Words by Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)

translated by R.F. Littledale (1833-1890)

Tune CP 175i Down Ampney by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Confirmation

The candidates stand in a semi-circle in front of the Bishop, their supporting clergy behind them.

The Bishop says

Our help is in the name of the Lord

All who has made heaven and earth.

Blessed be the name of the Lord

All now and for ever.

Amen.

The Bishop extends her hands towards those to be confirmed and says

Almighty and ever-living God,
you have given these your servants new birth
in baptism by water and the Spirit,
and have forgiven them all their sins.
Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them:
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding;
the Spirit of counsel and inward strength;
the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness;
and let their delight be in the fear of the Lord.

All Amen.

The Bishop addresses each candidate by name

N, God has called you by name and made you his own.

She then lays her hand on the head of each, saying

Confirm, O Lord, your servant with your Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

The choir sings –

Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give to you.
Not as the world giveth give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled.

*Words from John 14:27
Music by Amy Beach (1867-1944)*

The Commission

The Bishop asks the candidates -

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you persevere in resisting evil,
and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim by word and example
the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,
loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,
by prayer for the world and its leaders,
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

All Amen.

The Welcome and Peace

The Bishop addresses the newly baptized –

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

**All We welcome you in the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you!**

The Bishop introduces the Peace -

To crown all things there must be love,
to bind all together and complete the whole.
Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All and also with you.

The Bishop says -

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

We greet those located closest to us.

Prayers of Intercession

*We **SIT** as the Reverend Canon Nitano Muller, Canon for Worship and Welcome, leads us in prayer.*

Let us pray;

God of heaven and earth,
you meet us on the journey and call us to come and see.
Fill your Church with your Holy Spirit,
that we may know your presence
and make your love known.

Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

God of promise,
you called Jacob by name
and promised never to leave him.
Be close to those who receive baptism and confirmation today.
Strengthen them by your Holy Spirit,
and give them courage to follow where Christ leads.

Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

God who calls us to come and see,
meet those who are wondering, questioning or seeking.
Give them companions for the journey,
and the freedom to discover your presence
in unexpected places and people.

Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

God of angels and of all creation,
where there is conflict, bring peace;
where there is division, bring reconciliation;
where there is despair, breathe again your Spirit of life.
Send us as your people
to be bearers of hope and peace.

Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

God who never leaves us,
draw near to all who need you today.
Surround them with your presence,
and through your Spirit bring comfort, healing and courage.
Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

God of life and resurrection,
we remember those who have gone before us.
May they know the fullness of your presence,
and may we trust your promise
that heaven and earth are held within your love.

Stay with us,

All and lead us on.

Holy Spirit of God,
rest upon us and renew us.
Open our eyes to Christ,
our hearts to one another,
and our lives to your purposes.
May we leave this place
ready to follow, to serve and to love.
Stay with us,

All **and lead us on.**

The Lord's Prayer

Looking for the coming of the kingdom,
as our saviour Christ taught us, so we pray –

All **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.

The Sending Out

We **STAND**.

The Blessing

The Bishop prays -

May God, the Holy Spirit
who has begun a good work in you,
strengthen you in faith and hope and love,
and keep you faithful to Christ all the days of your life.
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Giving of a Lighted Candle

The Bishop gives the newly baptized and confirmed a lighted candle.

When all have received a candle, the Bishop says

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.
You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

Hymn

During the hymn, the cross and lights leads the Bishop and the candidates to the back of the nave where they form a semi-circle either side of the Bishop.

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure;
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine;
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God:
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.**

*Words by Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)
Tune CP 248 Carlisle Charles Lockhart (1745-1815)*

The Dismissal

The bishop says -

Go in the light and peace of Christ.

All Thanks be to God.

Organ Voluntary

*Allegro Maestoso and Fugue from Sonata No.2
by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)*

*We serve refreshments at the back of the Nave after this service, please do join us
and if you are visiting, please introduce yourself to one of the ministers.*

We invite those joining us for worship to contribute to the costs of mission at the Cathedral. Please use the cash or contactless donation points, or the QR code below. This will take you to the Cathedral's page for the Parish giving Scheme which will enable you to make a one-off donation, or set up a regular gift should you wish.

Thank you so much for your support and generosity.



*If you would like to revisit this afternoon's sermon, please visit this page:
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/worship-music/services/sermons>*

If you were moved to explore faith yourself, please speak to the person you came to support, one of the clergy or anyone you trust before you leave today.

Safeguarding at Coventry Cathedral

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/safeguarding>

Our Safeguarding Team are:



Canon Nitano

Interim
Chapter
Safeguarding
Lead



Jane Williams

Cathedral
Community
Safeguarding
Officer



Jo Brake

Safeguarding
Lead for Policy
and Process

You can report a concern to our Safeguarding Team by emailing cathedral.safeguarding@coventrycathedral.org.uk or phoning 02476 52 1360.

Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price by phoning 024 7652 1345 or emailing safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org

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