*Welcome, thanks for being here. As we all settle in and the rest of the congregation come and join us, I’m going to give some notices, and then Kath will help us practise our singing.*

*First, feel free to stand up, sit down, clap or move around during the service whenever you wish.*

*Second, if you need to go to the toilet, you will have to leave the building, either down the steps through the big doors up here to your right, or on the level by the door you came in, and then go round to the toilets beside the Bisto.*

*Third, if there is an emergency, just stay where you are, and our staff team will direct you to a place of safety.*

*Now Kath is going to help us practise our singing.*

*Welcome to Lichfield Cathedral for our dementia friendly Songs of Praise as we look forward to Dementia Action Week. This is our eighth dementia friendly service as we continue our journey to become a dementia friendly church which included almost 12 years ago a conference with Age on the Agenda for the diocese here in our Cathedral. We are delighted today to be joined by so many people who have been impacted by dementia in many different ways. We have members of our regular congregations and people from at least 15 other churches around our diocese, where we have a network of more than 100 churches taking steps to become more dementia-friendly. There are people from at least five local community groups as well as staff and residents from twelve care homes. We are joined again by children from Years 5&6 at Lichfield Cathedral School as well as our Choristers. We’re here with family and friends. And we have, as our special guest, Tony Christie.*

*So let us pray that today we may find unity in worship, and joy in singing.*

*Almighty God, you create each and everyone of us in your own image.
We thank you for the gift of music,
 and for the opportunity to come together in songs of praise.
Help us to know your Spirit moving amongst us now in this service of worship.
We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour. Amen*

*We know that dementia impacts us in different ways. Dementia is an umbrella term for a range of progressive conditions that affect the brain. Over time as dementia advances, symptoms such as memory loss, confusion, and problems with speech and understanding become more severe. We are here because we all want to find ways to live as well as we can with dementia, and one of these ways is sharing in songs of praise.*

*Songs are part of our journey through life. I wonder where you were, and who you were with, when you first heard Tony Christie singing his 1971 hit “Is This The Way To Amarillo?”. Tony, let’s sing it again ….*

* “Is This The Way To Amarillo” Tony Christie

Thank you Tony for that fantastic performance and thank you for all you do with the Music for Dementia campaign to raise awareness of the power of music.

Music is special, in how it affects our brains and touches our hearts. For families living with dementia, the right music can turn a day around. It can calm anxiety, or create moments of joy and connection.

Each of us has a lifetime of musical memories to explore, the tunes that bring back memories and feelings to spark conversation and reminiscence.

What music brings back memories and feelings for you? Perhaps Amarillo is one of your songs. For many, hymns will be part of the mix, from church or school, or if you were once a Girl Guide or a Scout. Your mix of tunes will be as unique as you are.

“Praise My Soul The King of Heaven” is a hymn that always connects with Tony - let’s sing it with him now.

* Praise my Soul

Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven;

To His feet thy tribute bring.

Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,

Evermore His praises sing:

Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!

Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favour

To His people in distress;

Praise Him still the same as ever,

Slow to chide, and swift to bless.

Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!

Glorious in His faithfulness.

Fatherlike He tends and spares us,

Well our feeble frame He knows;

In His hands He gently bears us,

Rescues us from all our foes.

Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!

Widely as His mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore Him,

Ye behold Him face to face;

Sun and moon, bow down before Him;

Dwellers all in time and space,

Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!

Praise with us the God of grace.

[Henry F. Lyte](https://library.timelesstruths.org/music/_/Lyte_Henry_F/?sortby=author), 1834

*In the bible, Jesus told us lots of parables, stories with familiar images which speak truth to us across the ages. Tony lives with dementia. He and his wife Viv are going to read the passage about how “the wise man built his house upon the rock”, encouraging us to focus on whatever endures and remains steady, even through the storms of life. These verses from the Gospel of Matthew were read at their wedding forty years ago, and have remained one of their favourite bible readings.*

**Matthew 7**

Jesus said **21**“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22**Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ **23**Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

**24**“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25**The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. **26**But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27**The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

1. When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,

*Now children from two local primary schools, Christchurch and The Willows, are going to distribute stones on which they have painted a house. If you have come with some-one living with dementia, please ensure they receive a stone. If you have a diagnosis of dementia, there is a stone for you.*

*I wonder how you feel, when you hear those words about the house built on the sand and the house built on the rock. I wonder how you feel when you hold a rock in your hand and look at the house a child has painted on it. Whatever our feelings, we can allow space for them when we return to the Book of Psalms in the Bible, which expresses the full range of human emotion and life experience. Particularly when we are feeling vulnerable, like a house build on sand, it can be helpful to return to the bedrock of our faith, in the familiar words of the 23rd Psalm. Here, traditional words express the unchanging truth of God’s faithfulness, even when we walk in death’s dark vale. This psalm can be sung to various tunes – today’s choice is known as Crimond.*

The Lord’s my Shepherd, I’ll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul He doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
E’en for His own name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk in death’s dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill;
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

My table Thou hast furnished me
In presence of my foes;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God’s house forevermore,
My dwelling place shall be.

*Last year, when pupils from Lichfield Cathedral School started joining our dementia friendly services, it was beautiful to watch the smiles on the faces of the young and the old grow into beams of joy and delight as the children sang for us. With dementia can come a spontaneity, an uninhibited living in the present, to which the young can readily respond, making connections and sharing blessings across the generations.*

*All of us, including people living with dementia, can draw inspiration not only from connections across the generations but also from the beauty of the natural world around us, the wonder of God’s creation. So our Cathedral Choristers and the pupils of year 5&6 sing John Rutter’s popular hymn “for the beauty of the earth”*

“for the beauty of the earth” John Rutter – Choristers and Yrs 5&6.

*When, as the years go by, speaking the right words at the right time becomes more problematic, people with dementia sometimes find it easier to sing, especially familiar songs and hymns which were learnt in earlier years. And whether or not we remember all the verses, we can enjoy joining in a chorus we know well. So we join together in celebrating the beauty of God’s creation, by singing together a hymn we may have known all our lives, “All things bright and beautiful”*.

Refrain:

All things bright and beautiful,

All creatures great and small,

All things wise and wonderful:

The Lord God made them all.

Each little flow’r that opens,

Each little bird that sings,

He made their glowing colors,

He made their tiny wings.

The cold wind in the winter,

The pleasant summer sun,

The ripe fruits in the garden,

He made them every one.

He gave us eyes to see them,

And lips that we might tell

How great is God Almighty,

Who has made all things well.

*Here at the Cathedral we have a team of dementia champions who, when appropriate, come alongside those worshipping with us who are impacted by dementia. They lead us now in prayer, using words gathered from around our diocese and freely available for everyone.*

[Jill] **Prayer written by a child at St Paul’s Church of England School, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, contributed by teacher Mrs Boult**

Dear God,

We pray that those with dementia

would feel free again.

May they always feel loved and welcomed. **Amen**

**Prayer written by a Brownie, contributed by Ivy Leese, Brownie leader at St Mary & St Chad, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent**

Dear Lord,

We pray for all affected by dementia.

In this difficult journey

grant hope, comfort, peace and strength

to everyone.

**Amen**

[Robert] **Prayer written by Linda Gillion, one of our Cathedral Guides**

O Lord,

Only you know the battles we face,

the tears we shed.

Help us to live this and every day

under the shadow of your wing.

Give us patience to forebear

whatever life brings us.

courage to face it head on,

strength to keep moving forward,

laughter to enjoy ourselves

and above all your love to encompass it. **Amen**

[Gail] **And a prayer from our diocesan network of dementia friendly churches**

God of love,

In moments of confusion, keep us safe.

In moments of clarity, grant us joy.

In moments of frustration, give us peace.

In moments of sorrow, bring us comfort.

Though we now see through a glass, darkly,

we trust you to see into the secret places of our minds and hearts and souls,

beyond anything which limits us,

to the person that is us, always has been us and always will be us.

Encircle us in your faith and hope and love,

until we see you face to face,

until we know you fully, even as we are fully known. **Amen**

*Now, knowing that God forgives us when we come to him, let us pray with confidence the family prayer that our Saviour Jesus Christ has taught us, saying together*

**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,**

**for ever and ever.**

**Amen.**

*For all of us impacted by dementia, there are times of darkness and challenge. Our faith promises us that the light shines in the darkness and is not overcome by it. When we come together in worship, we can experience something of the Light of Christ shining into our lives, and we can pray as we sing that the light of God’s love will shine brightly in our lives and in our world.*

Lord, the light of Your love is shining

In the midst of the darkness, shining

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us

Set us free by the truth You now bring us

Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence

From the shadows into Your radiance

By the blood, I may enter Your brightness

Search me, try me, consume all my darkness

Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness

So our faces display Your likeness

Ever-changing from glory to glory

Mirrored here, may our lives tell Your story

Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light

*Thank you for joining us today, recognising that, however dementia is impacting our lives, there is still a joy in coming together to share worship. So we conclude our worship with a traditional prayer of blessing.*

The peace of God,

which passes all understanding,

keep your hearts and minds

in the knowledge and love of God,

and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;

and the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen**.

*Tony rerecorded Andrew Gold’s classic hit, Thank You For Being A Friend, last summer as a charity single in aid of Music for Dementia, and Tony now ends his gigs playing this as the final song. The song speaks of the importance of friendship, kindness and gratitude. However you have been impacted by dementia, you will know the value of the friendships for the journey, acts of kindness in the moment, and that redeeming sense of gratitude for all the goodness which has been, is now and is yet to come.*

Thank you for being a Friend (TC and all)

*Thank you for coming today. Do join us for refreshments in the front of the Cathedral. If you would like to leave a prayer request, our volunteers have tags for you to write on – these can then be hung on our prayers trees which will remain here till the end of Dementia Action Week. And for everyone living with dementia, our children have a little gift to remind you of today. If you have come with some-one living with dementia, please do ensure that they receive one of these gifts.*