

The Church of the Holy Family  
Blackbird Leys

PRAYER VIGIL:

GROWING UP WITHOUT VIOLENCE

*Ending legalised violence against children*

Tuesday 16th March 2010

6.30 pm

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

This Prayer Vigil is being held during the Roadshow: “Growing up without violence – ending legalised violence against children”. The Roadshow has been organised by the Churches’ Network for Non-violence (CNNV) & partners including the NSPCC, Tearfund and the Children Are Unbeatable Children’s Campaign. The Vigil is intended as an expression of respect for children and of solidarity and support for law reform to end all corporal punishment of children.

The contributions of children to the roadshow exhibition and Vigil represent the views of a growing movement of children who want the law to be modernised to put an end to the social and legal acceptance of corporal punishment.

The Report of the United Nations Secretary-General’s *Study on Violence against Children* calls for all countries to prohibit violent and humiliating punishment of children, including corporal punishment:

“The Study should mark a turning point – an end to adult justification of violence against children, whether accepted as ‘tradition’ or disguised as ‘discipline’. There can be no compromise in challenging violence against children.”

“Parents often say they smack their children to teach them respect. How can you expect children to respect people who don’t respect them? Violence is not something you use against someone you love and respect. Surely if you love someone and respect them you would take time to explain things?”

*Article 12 – Children and young people’s statement at the Children’s Summit, Göteborg, Sweden, 2001*

*All remain seated to sing music before the service*



*Where charity and love are, there is God.*



*O come let us sing unto the Lord, O come let us adore him.*

## ORDER OF SERVICE

*All stand to sing*

### THE HYMN



1.Can the parents' tender care  
cease towards the child they bear?  
Yes, and we stand by and see  
sadnesses and cruelty.

2.When the bells of Christmas ring,  
we recall a savage king,

who killed children in his spite;  
we today still share that night.

3.Children trafficked, parents killed,  
childhood's promise unfulfilled,  
children naked, poor and cold,  
children who will not grow old.

4. Child abuse is wounding Christ;  
children's armies pierce his side;  
children's worries fill God's heart;  
where can God's forgiveness start?

5. Children can bring into life  
wonder, magic, and delight;

*Buckland 517 CP*

*Leighton George Hayne 1836–1883*

yet they need security  
for their creativity.

6. God of parents, carers, friends,  
teach us how to make amends;  
bless our aims, forgive our wrongs,  
help our children sing your songs.

*June Boyce-Tillman (b 1943)*

*All remain standing:*

## THE GREETING

*All sit:*

### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHILDREN

*Elinor Milne*

*All stand to sing*

## THE HYMN

1. One more step along the world I go,  
one more step along the world I go;  
from the old things to the new  
keep me travelling along with you:

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;  
keep me travelling along with you.*

2. Round the corner of the world I turn,  
more and more about the world I learn;  
all the new things that I see  
you'll be looking at along with me:

3. You are older than the world can be,  
you are younger than the life in me;  
ever old and ever new,  
keep me travelling along with you:

*Southcote 405 HON*

*Sydney Carter (1915 - 2004)*

*All remain standing*

AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE SUFFERED  
VIOLENCE

Let us give thanks to Almighty God for the gifts which children bring to our society, and for those who nurture and protect those gifts. And let us confess with penitence the ways in which our society has neglected or abused our children, remembering in particular, in a time of silence, those children who have suffered violence at the hands of adults, including corporal punishment.

*Silence is kept.*



*Lord have mercy.*

*All repeat:* **Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

Creator God, we thank you for the inherent dignity of children. We remember with sorrow those children who are not respected and who suffer from violence.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who protect children. We remember with regret those children who are not protected and who are humiliated through abuse.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who listen to children. We remember with sadness those children who have no voice, or who are not heard.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who help children understand their value. We remember with sadness those children who are kept ignorant of their rights.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who are called to work with children. We remember with regret those children who have not received good quality care and support.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who help children who have suffered. We remember with sadness those children who have not been helped adequately or appropriately.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

We thank you for those who model non-violent ways to resolve conflict. We remember with sorrow those children who have never known justice, fairness, and compassion.

**Kyrie, kyrie eleison. Kyrie, kyrie eleison.**

THE ABSOLUTION

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

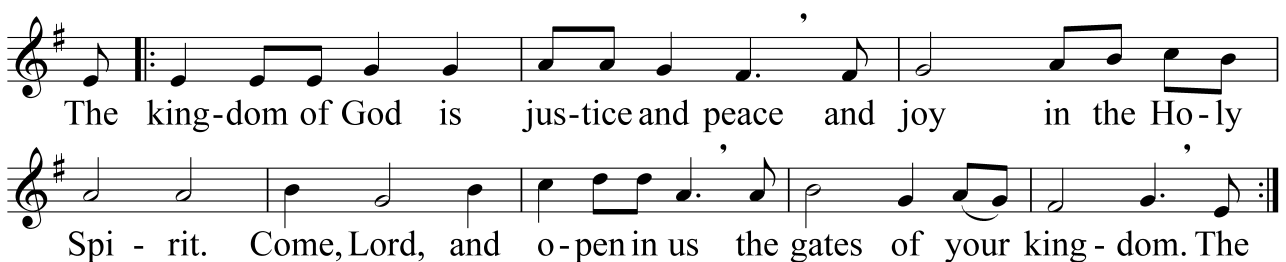
**Amen.**

In the name of God our nurturing and protecting father and mother, we commit ourselves to our children, to helping them to learn well, to discover boundaries, and to explore safely, without fear of being hit or hurt by those they trust, so that we might reflect God's gentle love for them, for us, and for all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*All sit for.....*

*All stand to sing*

THE GRADUAL



The king-dom of God is jus-tice and peace and joy in the Ho-ly  
Spi - rit. Come, Lord, and o-pen in us the gates of your king - dom. The

*All remain standing.*

THE GOSPEL

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the

kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'

*Matthew 18: 1-5; 19: 13-14 NRSV*

*All repeat:*

The king-dom of God is jus-tice and peace and joy in the Ho-ly  
Spi - rit. Come, Lord, and o-pen in us the gates of your king - dom. The

*All sit for..... ? Children*

## THE ADDRESS

*Bishop John*

*Representatives from churches and organisations gather around the candle globe for prayers and candle lighting*

*All sit*

## PRAYERS OF DEDICATION

We dedicate the lighting of this candle globe to children everywhere and commit ourselves to ending all forms of violence against children including corporal punishment.

Compassionate God

Hear our prayers for all your children who are suffering through the unseen cruelty of others.

Look with kindness and compassion on all those who are mistreated.

When they feel abandoned, give them hope.

When they feel unloved and betrayed give them courage, comfort and peace.

Bless all those who care for them and who work to bring them rescue and relief,

Give us the courage to speak out against all that harms the bodies and minds of your children, so that love will triumph over fear and light shine in the darkness.

*From the prayer: "Let your light shine in darkness"*  
*by Martin Wharton, Bishop of Newcastle*

*The Lord Mayor leads the lighting of the candles*

We thank you God for the gift of childhood; for its own particular wisdom and for its glimpses into the wonder of our world and the promise of eternity. We pray for a society that so often steals childhood - that takes away its hopes and dreams, and does violence to the innocent. As in the manger-child, we gaze upon the face of God, so in each and every child, may we recognise the face of Christ, cherishing the miracle.

Incarnate God: **hear our prayer.**

Eternal God our Creator, we pray for all children and young people who endure violence in their homes. We pray that we may all work together to support the families in our communities so that all children may grow up in an atmosphere of compassion, loving-kindness, encouragement, and non-violence.

Eternal God: **hear our prayer.**

God of ompassion, we remember all children in the world affected by the violence of poverty and armed conflict. We pray for peace for the children of Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, and Palestine. Fill us with love for all human beings so that we recognise and respect the dignity and human rights of one another. Give us grace to resolve our differences without the use of force.

God of compassion: **hear our prayer.**

God of love, we pray that we may promote a culture of respect for the dignity of all children and young people. Help adults to teach children by their own example and to develop mutual respect, for respect for one another is a key to non-violence.

God of love: **hear our prayer.**

God of justice, we pray for strength of purpose to work in solidarity towards eliminating all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment. Give us insights to read and interpret our religious texts to promote justicw and non-violence.

God of justice: **hear our prayer.**

God of peace we pray that adults will create environments where children and young people are partners with adults in speaking out, resolving conflict, and creating peace.

God of peace: **hear our prayer.**

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us, we are confident to pray:



**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.**

*All sit for*

## THE WASHING OF FEET

*We wash the feet of the children as a symbolic mark of respect for children everywhere*

*During the washing of feet we all sing:*

*Jesu, Jesu,  
Fill us with your love,  
Show us how to serve  
the children we have from you*

1. Kneels at the feet of his friends,  
silently washes their feet,  
Master who acts as a slave to them:
2. Neighbours are rich, and are poor,  
neighbours are black and are white,  
neighbours are near and far away:
3. These are the ones we should serve,  
these are the ones we should love.  
All these are neighbours to us and you:
4. Kneel at the feet of our friends,  
silently washing their feet,  
this is the way we should live with you:

*Chereponi 648*

*Tom Colvin (b1925)*

*Members of the Congregation form a circle.....*

## THE PEACE

God is love and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them.

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

*All remain standing to sing:*

## THE HYMN

We sing a love that sets all people free.  
That blows like wind that burns like scorching flame,  
Enfolds like earth, springs up like water clear.  
Come, living love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love that seeks another's good,  
That longs to serve and not to count the cost,  
A love that yielding, finds itself made new.  
Come, caring love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a burning, fiery, Holy One,  
That seeks out shades of ancient bitterness.  
Transfigures these as peace in every heart,  
Come joyful love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love, unflinching, unafraid  
To be itself, despite another's wrath,  
A love that stands alone and undismayed  
Come strengthening love, live in our hearts today.

*Woodlands 186 NEH*  
*Walter Greatorex (1877–1949)*

*June Boyce-Tillman (b 1943)*

*All remain standing.*

*A light from the Candle Globe is passed around the circle*

*We process from the church with lighted candles. After a short silence the Bishop gives the blessing*

#### THE BLESSING

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no-one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*(We process around the church and enter the hall for refreshments)*