

The Collegiate Church of St Mary in Stafford



Order of Service

on the occasion of the opening of

The Hilary Term of the

CROWN COURT

at

STAFFORD

January 2021

The Office of High Sheriff is the oldest continuous secular office under the Crown and can be traced back more than 1,000 years to the reign of the Saxon King 'Ethelred the Unready' (978-1016).

High Sheriffs were appointed to act as the sovereign's representative in their county, historically referred to as a Bailiwick, and they wielded great power. The legal aspect of the role was present from the outset when Sheriffs sat in judgement at trials and were responsible for general law and order. They could raise the 'hue and cry' in pursuit of criminals and keep the King's Peace by mobilising the 'posse', the full military might of the county. The Sheriffs' powers spread when they became responsible for the raising and collecting of taxes which they had to account for at the Court of Exchequer in London, a significant and often unpopular task.

Today, the High Sheriff is the Queen's representative in the County for all matters relating to the Judiciary and the maintenance of law and order; much of the High Sheriff's year is therefore spent supporting and encouraging the voluntary and statutory organisations who work in this area. In Staffordshire this means involvement with the Crown and Magistrates' Courts, the Police, Prison and Probation Services.

Traditionally High Sheriffs look after visiting High Court Judges to the county, although there are fewer such visits now than in the past. However, the High Sheriff does make awards to those who, in the opinion of the Judges at a criminal trial, have been active in the apprehension of certain offenders.

The Office of High Sheriff is apolitical and as such the High Sheriff is in a unique position to be able to bring people together within the county and to support the enormous contribution made by the emergency services, the armed forces, local authorities, church and faith groups and the voluntary community.

In a ceremonial capacity the High Sheriff assists the Lord Lieutenant of the county with Royal visits, is the Official Returning Officer for parliamentary elections and has responsibility for proclaiming the accession of a new Sovereign.

High Sheriffs are volunteers and meets all the costs of their year in Office. No part of their expenses falls on the public purse.

Blithfield

Organ: Chorale – Break Forth, O beauteous heav'nly light - J S Bach

WELCOME

Charles Bagot Jewitt
High Sheriff of Staffordshire

Abbots Bromley

INTROIT

Ring Out Ye Bells – Paul L Dunbar/Terence Cooper (arr Tonking)
Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Choir

St Mary's Stafford

OPENING PRAYERS

The Reverend Prebendary Richard Grigson
Rector of Stafford

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you.

We stand before the throne of God
with countless crowds
from every nation and race, tribe and language.

**Blessing and glory and wisdom,
thanksgiving and honour, power and might
be to our God forever and ever. Amen.**

Almighty God,
who in Christ makes all things new,
transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

The Spirit of truth will convict the world of guilt
about sin, righteousness and judgement.

We have grieved the Holy Spirit.

In sorrow we confess our sins.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you are always more ready to hear than we to pray,
and to give more than we either desire or deserve:
Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy,
forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid,
and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to
ask,
except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our
Saviour;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,
for ever and ever. Amen.

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.

County Buildings

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

Councillor Kath Perry MBE

Chair Staffordshire County Council

Abbots Bromley

HYMN

Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Choir

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Police HQ

SECOND READING

Matthew 2: 1 – 12

Emma Barnett

Deputy Chief Constable of Staffordshire

Abbots Bromley Vicarage

SERMON

The Reverend Simon Davis
Chaplain to the High Sheriff

Abbots Bromley

ANTHEM

In The Bleak Mid Winter - Darke
Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Choir

Stafford Prison Chapel

THE PRAYERS

Led by a Prison Chaplain

O God, the Father of us all,
We pray for the growth of peace
And justice throughout the world;
For the defeat of tyranny and the confounding of evil;
For the enlargement of your Kingdom,
The growth of your Church and the freedom and prosperity of all your
people.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for Elizabeth our Queen,
For the people and nations over whom she rules
And those who hold authority under her.
We also pray for Philip, Duke of Edinburgh,
Charles, Prince of Wales and all the Royal Family.

Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the High Court of Parliament,
The Armed Forces of the Crown,
The Civil Service and all who work for the common good;
For the upholding of freedom and truth and for those who bear
responsibility in the communication thereof,
That truth, justice and integrity may direct our common life.

Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury,
for Michael, Bishop of Lichfield, and
For all who call upon Christ's name and for people of every faith and
none, that all may work together for the common good.

Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the guidance of your Holy Spirit
For all who hold office in our County and this Borough.
We pray for Ian Dudson, the Lord Lieutenant, the Worshipful the Mayor
of Stafford Borough, The Chairman of the County Council,
And for Charles Bagot Jewitt, the High Sheriff of Staffordshire.

Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all Judges and Magistrates, Barristers and Solicitors,
For Kristina Montgomery, Recorder of Stafford
The Police, the Probation and Prison services
And all who administer the law,
That they may be people of wisdom, courage and compassion.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We remember before God all those whom our society
And our institutions have failed;
All who are in need or in trouble in our communities
And to whom we have a duty of compassion and care.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for the young people of our County,
Our universities, schools and colleges;
And we pray for ourselves and those we love,
That you will grant grace and peace to our souls.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who are sick, vulnerable or in need, and those suffering in
the current epidemic
Especially those whom we name in the silence of our hearts.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

We remember with thanksgiving the departed,
Who have enriched our lives and the life of our community
in the past.
Lord in your mercy:
Hear our prayer.

St Mary's Stafford

The High Sheriff's Prayer

The Reverend Prebendary Richard Grigson
Rector of Stafford

Grant your grace and guidance, almighty God,
to all who work for the voluntary organisations
in this County of Staffordshire;
Support and encourage them
that by their skill and compassion
they may bring help to those who are in need;
and bestow on all of us, we pray, O Lord,
a desire to serve our neighbour,
a respect for all creation,
and a sense of duty to one another and to you;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As our Saviour has taught us, so we 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**

Abbots Bromley

HYMN

Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Choir

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious God, may we
evermore be led to thee.

As they offered gifts most rare
at that manger rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.

Holy Jesu, every day
keep us in the narrow way,
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

Stafford Court

SHORT ADDRESS

Her Honour Judge Kristina Montgomery QC
Resident Judge at Stafford Combined Court

St Mary's Stafford

THE BLESSING

The Reverend Prebendary Richard Grigson
Rector of Stafford

Abbots Bromley

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM
Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Choir

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and Glorious,
Long to reign over us;
God save the Queen!

St Michael and St Wulfad's, Stone

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

In Dulci Jubilo BWV 608 - J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
George Gillow, Sir William McKie Organ Scholar, Clare College
Cambridge.

The Choir

Abbots Bromley and Blithfield Churches Choir
Conducted by the Chaplain to the High Sheriff

Organist

Dawn Clay
Organist at St Nicholas Church, Abbots Bromley

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In its present form St. Mary's Church dates from about 1200AD, although there was almost certainly an earlier church on the site (see the ancient foundations at the west end). In 1200 the church was endowed by Royal Charter of King John as a Collegiate Church served by a college of prebends who lived in houses around the church. Even today the precincts of St. Mary's resemble a small cathedral close. The main function of the college was to pray for living and departed members of the royal family. St. Mary's also served as Stafford's Parish Church, with the parishioners occupying the nave, which had its own altar, and the prebends having the chancel and transepts as their special reserve.

At the Reformation, the College was suppressed by King Edward VI, and St. Mary's became simply a parish church with the Dean of the former college as its first rector. Close links developed between the Church and the Borough Corporation, the latter being responsible for the upkeep of the nave. One of the two churchwardens was - and still is - known as the Town Warden, the annual nomination subject to ratification by the Borough Council.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Assizes were held in the chancel, the fittings of which were altered to accommodate seats for the judges, and a jury box. The holding of the Crown Court Service in St. Mary's provides a link with those days, and by custom the pew behind the High Court Judge is roped off, to prevent any attacks, verbal or physical, being made upon him or her!

Having fallen into considerable disrepair, St. Mary's was restored in 1842 - 44 by Sir George Gilbert Scott - the first of his many restorations. The scheme originally included the rebuilding of the spire, said to have been the third tallest in England until a storm swept it away in 1593. The finest features of the church include the north transept, in the decorated style of the fourteenth century, and the fifteenth century coffered roof of the nave.

