**When life is surrendered, new life comes again,**

**There is love born from dying, and joy out of pain,**

**And all those who laid down a life for a friend,**

**Are standing close by, at the day's crimson end.**

**Departing**

*God of the West and sun setting*

*Bless us now as we journey through this day*

*and bring**us to rest with those who have travelled before us in faith*

**Blessed be God forever**

*God of the North and the season of distant Winter*

*Bless us now at this time of transition*

**Blessed be God forever**

*God of the East and the suns rising*

*Bless us now with the inspiration of your Holy fire*

**Blessed be God forever**

*God of the South and the Summer*

*Bless us now with your fruitfulness*

**Blessed be God forever**

**Blessing**

*Oh God who brings all seasons in their order*

*Be with us at this Mid-Summer*

*As Alban offered his life*

*Receive our lives as living sacrifices*

*As John prepared your way*

*Prepare a path for you in our hearts*

*And may the blessing of the God of life and death*

*In whom the seasons grow and fade*

*Our Father and Mother who made us*

*Our Brother Jesus who mends us*

*Our Sustainer the Spirit who moulds us*

*Be upon as at this time*

*And in all times to come*

*Amen*

**Travelling further…**

*God is bringing to birth in us new life for all creation*

**Thanks be to God.**

**Lichfield Diocese Forest Church**

**A Celebration for Mid-Summer**

**the feast of St. John & St. Alban**

**Welcoming the presence of the God of the Seasons**

*God of love and life*

*At this time of Mid-Summer*

**We come to you**

*in the fullness of life*

**We welcome your life giving Spirit**

*as those made male and female in your image*

**We welcome each other**

*God of the East and sun rising*

**We call to you to bring us light**

*God of the West and sun setting*

**We call to you at the longest day**

*God of the North and the storm winds*

**We call to you to refresh our souls**

*God of the South and the warm breeze*

**We call to you to be the embrace between us**

**Christ Jesus**

**Be the life within us**

**Be the love between us**

**Be the light that guides us**

**This day**

**And for eternity**

**Morning has broken like the first morning**

**Blackbird has spoken like the first bird**

**Praise for the singing, praise for the morning**

**Praise for them springing fresh from the world**

**Sweet the rains new fall, sunlit from Heaven**

**Like the first dewfall on the first grass**

**Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden**

**Sprung in completeness where His feet pass**

**Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning**

**Born of the one light, Eden saw play**

**Praise with elation, praise every morning**

**God's recreation of the new day**

**Morning has broken like the first morning**

**Blackbird has spoken like the first bird**

**Praise for the singing, praise for the morning**

**Praise for them springing fresh from the world**

**Breathing exercise – being mindful of God’s presence**

**Reading from John 3:25-35 ‘He must increase but I must decrease’**

**A reflection for Mid-summer St Alban and St John**

**Thanksgiving**

*Jesus born in mid-winter; you are present in the time of all seasons*

*Christ above us, Christ beneath us, Christ beside us, Christ within us,*

*In you all things hold together*

*At mid-summer you bring the vibrant greening of the earth…*

**Creator God, who called all life into being.**

**The Earth, Sea and Sky are yours; your presence is all around us.**

**Your Spirit enlivens all who dwell upon the earth,**

**With her we yearn for justice to be done,**

**For creation to be healed, for the hungry to be fed,**

**and for peace to spread throughout the land.**

*Today we remember your servant our brother Alban.*

*First Christian martyr in these Isles.*

*The one who knew you as lord of all creation.*

*From whose death life giving water sprang forth.*

*And we remember your cousin our brother John.*

*Greatest of prophets who prepared your path on earth.*

*May we like him decrease that you may grow in us.*

*We remember these witnesses of mid-summer,*

*Heralds of your coming kingdom*

**Flower prayers**

**A Mid-Summer Song (**tune when a knight one his spurs**)**

**As we stand at the point of the sun's greatest power,**

**With her brightness around us, unfolding each flower,**

**While the springs of life rise up, and the water flows clear,**

**We rejoice in the light, at the height of the year.**

**When the light is its brightest, still shadows will fall,**

**As out of the corners new darkness will crawl,**

**To keep the light burning, some spill at the end,**

**The red blood of a martyr, in the cloak of a friend.**