

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, AYLESFORD



A Service of the Word

Beloved

Lent 1

21st February 2021

Welcome and Gathering

Call to worship

Come together to be God's people.
Come together and be yourselves.
Bring to God your joys and your struggles.
Bring to God your hopes and your fears.
Come together to be God's people,
and let us worship the living God.

Loving God, thank you for drawing us together to be your people. Help us, as we meet together, to see ourselves as you see us. Give us faith to hear your words of love beyond some of the hard realities of our lives. May your Holy Spirit guide and inspire us to recognise your presence in all we do. Amen.

Anthem

For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies:

For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light:

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.*

For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
pleasures pure and undefiled:

For each perfect gift of thine,
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven:

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.*

For thy church which evermore
lifteth holy hands above,
offering up on every shore
her pure sacrifice of love:

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.*

Folliott Sandford Pierpoint

A prayer of confession

Beloved Lord Jesus, you stepped from water to wilderness, from God's voice to the taunting voice of the enemy. In the wilderness of today's world, we face many enemies, many temptations. Forgive us for succumbing to selfishness, greed, lust, anger, power.

Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.

Sometimes difficult times follow fast on the heels of one another. And it's hard to keep our focus on you. Forgive us. Help us not to wallow in selfish self-centredness, but to remember your promises and recognise you in those you bring alongside.

Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.

Forgive us when our minds fail to focus on you and your word. Help us to remember that no matter what we're going through, you've been there before us. Whether we're swimming in the warm waters of your love, or journeying through the arid wilderness, help us not to lose sight of your hand guiding us to eternal glory at rainbow's end.

**Lord most high, forgive us, we pray.
Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

Lord Jesus Christ, you went from water to wilderness to suffering on the cross. There you, beloved Son of God, died in your physical body for our sins. Through your blood we are washed clean of all our guilt. And we are able to enter the presence of God with whom you now sit, having been raised in the Spirit. All angels, powers and authorities submit to you. Because of you, we are forgiven.

**Praise be to Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.
Amen.**

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

We thank you, faithful Lord, for your patience, provision and power; for your tenderness, trust and triumph; for your security and strength; for your compassion and wisdom. We thank you, Lord, that through your grace and mercy, the blessings of faith, and your covenant, you equip, teach and guide us as we traverse today's world, ever mindful of your steadfast love.

Amen.

The Collect

**Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Genesis 9.8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you - the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you - every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Forty days and forty nights
you were fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights
tempted and yet undefiled.

Burning heat throughout the day,
bitter cold when light had fled;
prowling beasts around your way,
stones your pillow, earth your bed.

Shall not we your trials share,
learn your discipline of will;
and with you by fast and prayer
wrestle with the powers of hell?

So if Satan, pressing hard,
soul and body would destroy:
Christ who conquered, be our guard;
give to us the victor's joy.

Saviour, may we hear your voice
keep us constant at your side;
and with you we shall rejoice
at the eternal Eastertide.

George Hunt Smyttan (1822-1870)
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Gospel Reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mark 1.9-15

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Affirmation of Faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Response:

Your kingdom comes near
to those who call on your name;
your pathway is surrounded by love.

Teach us to walk in it.

And ending with The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us so we pray

**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.**

Sending

News and Notices

Song

Take my life and let it be
dedicated to your praise,
Lord I freely give to you
every moment of my days.

Take my hands to show your love
for the broken and the lost
guide my feet to follow Christ
in the shadow of the cross.

Take my voice and let me sing,
always only for my King.
Take my lips and may they always
bring you praise

*I'm all yours,
I'm all yours, my Lord
all I am, every part.
I'm all yours,
I'm all yours, my Lord
take my life,
take my heart.*

Take the things that I possess
I surrender all I own.
Lord, I give my every thought
to be ruled by Christ alone

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Offertory Prayer

We give in grateful thanksgiving for all
that God has given us. In the upside down
world of the gospel, we measure our
wealth not by what we have, but by what

we can give away. Lord, take our offering
to heal and bless your church, your
people, your creation. **Amen.**

A Sending Out Prayer and Blessing

Creator God, you made us in your image.
Take our lives that we may be your
people, wherever we go. This coming
week, whatever we experience, wherever
we find ourselves, help us to know that
you are with us – guiding, revealing and
sustaining – always.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you
and with all those you love and miss,
this day and always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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