

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, AYLESFORD



A Service of the Word with Holy Communion

Surrendered

Ash Wednesday
17th February 2021

Gathering

Chant

Silent, surrendered, calm and still
open to the word of God.
Heart humbled to his will,
offered is the servant of God.

Welcome

Litany: We Come

In the softness of evening, in the solace
of silence we come to you, O Lord.
**We come for acceptance;
we come for community;
we come for forgiveness and love.**

Sung response:

*O Lord, hear my prayer
O Lord, hear my prayer
When I call, answer me
O Lord, hear my prayer
O Lord, hear my prayer
Come and listen to me*

Pause

In the serenity of day's end,
in the restfulness of worship, we come to
you O Lord.

**We come to you for respite;
we come to you for completion;
we come to you for forgiveness and love.**

O Lord, hear my prayer

Pause

In the quiet of the night,
in the comfort of darkness we come to
you, O Lord.

**We come for peace;
we come for comfort;
we come for forgiveness and love.**

O Lord, hear my prayer

Pause

We come, O Lord of Light,
seeking the illumination of your Word.
We come for the path we can't find;
we come for the life we don't have.
We come to you for our lives are death
and you alone have breath and being.
Amen.

Prayer of confession

Inspired by Psalm 51

On this first day of Lent
we pause, look within
and examine our consciousness.
**Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

Where we have neglected prayer,
been apathetic in worship,
found reasons to avoid generosity,
or lacked compassion:
**Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

Where we have colluded
in the oppression of those
who become invisible in their suffering,
and ignored on the streets:

**Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

Where anxiety has eroded
the gift of Your peace, and where
we have cared too much
about what others think:

**Have mercy on us, O God,
according to your steadfast love.**

Words of assurance

As Lent begins, know that God
understands how we struggle to stay
open and compassionate. The invitation
is not to focus on our inadequacies, but
on God's gift of grace and love which
transforms our hearts and minds.

That gift is given to us again, here and
now. Be encouraged. **Amen.**

May the peace of God be with you
and also with you.

The Collect

**Holy God,
our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

2 Corinthians 5.20b - 6.10

We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be
reconciled to God. God made him who
had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him
we might become the righteousness
of God. As God's co-workers we urge
you not to receive God's grace in vain.
For he says, "In the time of my favour I

heard you, and in the day of salvation I
helped you." I tell you, now is the time of
God's favour, now is the day of salvation.
We put no stumbling block in anyone's
path, so that our ministry will not be
discredited. Rather, as servants of God we
commend ourselves in every way: in great
endurance; in troubles, hardships and
distresses; in beatings, imprisonments
and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights
and hunger; in purity, understanding,
patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit
and in sincere love; in truthful speech
and in the power of God; with weapons
of righteousness in the right hand and
in the left; through glory and dishonour,
bad report and good report; genuine,
yet regarded as impostors; known, yet
regarded as unknown; dying, and yet
we live on; beaten, and yet not killed;
sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet
making many rich; having nothing, and
yet possessing everything.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Drop, drop, slow tears,
and bathe those beautiful feet
which brought from heaven
the news and Prince of Peace:

Cease not, wet eyes,
his mercy to entreat;
to cry for vengeance
sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods
drown all my faults and fears;
nor let His eye
see sin, but through my tears.

Phineas Fletcher (1582-1650)

Gospel Reading

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory. The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his voice.

Harden not your hearts.

**Praise to you, O Christ,
King of eternal glory.**

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

“Be careful not to practise your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

“When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what

is done in secret, will reward you. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Response:

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

At the end:

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ash Wednesday Benediction

Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Let the memory of your incomplete humanity awaken you to the wonders, joys, sorrows, and pain of life.

Let the ashes you cannot wear this evening, in your heart still be the ashes of transformation; of awakening to the beauty and love of seizing the moment and living it to the fullest.

Let it be said of you that here in this little part of eternity that you lived fully, loved extravagantly and helped humanity evolve into all that God dreamed we can be.

You are fearfully and wonderfully made
In the image of the One who is, was and ever more shall be; Creator, Christ and Spirit One. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psalms 51:10

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Song

Jesus, I've forgotten the words that you have spoken
Promises that burned within my heart
have now grown dim

With a doubting heart I follow the paths
of earthly wisdom
Forgive me for my unbelief, renew the fire
again

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy

Lord have mercy on me

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy

Lord have mercy on me

I have built an altar where I worship
things of men

I have taken journeys that have drawn me
far from you

Now I am returning to your mercies ever
flowing

Pardon my transgressions, help me love
You again

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy ...

I have longed to know you and your
tender mercies

Like a river of forgiveness, ever flowing
without end

I bow my heart before you in the
goodness of your presence

Your grace forever shining like a beacon in
the night

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy ...

Steve Merkel

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

... singing your unending praise.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and
might, heaven and earth are full of your
glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is
he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

... Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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.

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread

to share in the body of Christ.

Though we are many, we are one body,

because we all share in one bread.

Preparation

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits you have given
me, for all the pains and insults you
have borne for me. Since I cannot now
receive you sacramentally, I ask you to
come spiritually into my heart. O most
merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly, love
you more dearly, and follow you more
nearly, day by day. Amen.

Be known to us in breaking bread,

But do not then depart;

Saviour, abide with us, and spread

Your table in our heart.

James Montgomery

Prayer after Communion

Almighty God,

you have given your only Son to be for

us both a sacrifice for sin and also an

example of godly life: give us grace

that we may always most thankfully

receive these his inestimable gifts,

and also daily endeavour to follow the

blessed steps of his most holy life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sending

Hymn

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

o'er the world's tempestuous sea;

guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us

for we have no help but thee;

yet possessing every blessing,

if our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;

all our weakness thou dost know;

thou didst tread this earth before us,

thou didst feel its keenest woe;

self denying, death defying,

thou to Calvary didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,

fill our hearts with heavenly joy,

love with every passion blending,

pleasure that can never cloy:

thus provided, pardoned, guided,

nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston (1791-1867)

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,

to deny yourselves, take up your cross,

and follow him; and the blessing of God

almighty, the Father, the Son, and the

Holy Spirit, be among you and remain

with you always. **Amen.**

In the footsteps of centuries of pilgrims, go now to embark on your Lenten journey.

Consider how you may simplify your days, so that you may travel lightly.

Be alert to all that could side-track you: notice that which beckons alluringly, or with apparently greater urgency, than the pilgrim journey Christ invites.

Do not try to cover more than one good day's journey at a time. Know when to stop for food and sleep, so that the journey will not be too great for you.

Walk humbly, knowing that the goal is not recognition, achievement or reward, but simply to have come to know Christ and yourself more intimately.

Be on the lookout for other pilgrims, caring for those who limp, or fall; those who cannot see the way forward: pilgrimage is richer in community.

Go now: place your hand into the outstretched hand of Jesus Christ, allow the words of the story to guide you, and pray for purity of heart and mind.

Amen.

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