

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, AYLESFORD



A Service of the Word

Inner Wisdom

Lent 3

7th March 2021

Welcome and Gathering

Gathering Prayer

**Holy God, as we meet together today,
we ask that you renew our love for you.
Open our eyes to see fresh things,
open our ears to hear with more clarity,
open our minds to recognise new ideas
– that we may be willing to grow and
change and to become more like your
Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn

As we are gathered, Jesus is here;
one with each other, Jesus is here.

Joined by the Spirit, washed in the blood,
part of the body, the church of God.

As we are gathered, Jesus is here,
one with each other, Jesus is here.

John Daniels

Prayer of confession

Lord God, our ancestors turned the Temple into a marketplace; where are the marketplaces in our lives, O Lord?

Silence

We confess that we are driven by the need to possess. In our greed, we plunder the earth of resources and fail to share the good things you have provided for our needs. We are obsessed with the work of human hands, making idols of our houses – and yours.

**Forgive us, fill us with your wisdom
and help us to see that your Church is
eternally under construction – in us.
Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

It's hard, Lord, when the message hits home; when we see, in our own sins, the sins of our forebears; when reality topples our self-styled crowns and we carry the weight of guilt. But when we open our hearts to your wisdom and choose to live in the Holy Spirit, you always forgive.
Amen.

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving

We thank you, Lord, for the times when you have knocked us off our pedestals. Thinking we are wise, we have trusted in our own understanding rather than yours. You have bulldozed our 'castles in the air' to bring us down to earth.

**Praise be that, time after time,
you have driven our falseness and
foolishness away with cords of truth
and righteousness, freeing us to be your
Church without walls, open to all and
ever expanding. Amen.**

The Collect

Eternal God, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up what harms us, and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
revive your church with life and power.
O Breath of Life, come cleanse, renew us,
and fit your Church to meet this hour.

*O Breath of Love, come breathe within,
renewing thought and will and heart;
come, love of Christ, afresh to win,
revive your church in every part.*

O Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
till humbly we confess our need;
then, in your tenderness remake us,
revive, restore – for this we plead.

O Breath of Love, come breathe within ...

Revive us, Lord; is zeal abating
while harvest fields are vast and ripe?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting –
equip your Church to spread the light.

O Breath of Love, come breathe within ...
Elizabeth Ann Porter Head (1850-1936)

Gospel Reading

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

John 2.13-22

When it was almost time for the Jewish
Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In
the temple courts he found people selling
cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting
at tables exchanging money. So he made
a whip out of cords, and drove all from
the temple courts, both sheep and cattle;
he scattered the coins of the money
changers and overturned their tables. To
those who sold doves he said, "Get these
out of here! Stop turning my Father's
house into a market!" His disciples
remembered that it is written: "Zeal for
your house will consume me." The Jews
then responded to him, "What sign can
you show us to prove your authority to do
all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy
this temple, and I will raise it again in
three days." They replied, "It has taken
forty-six years to build this temple, and
you are going to raise it in three days?"

But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

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

Prayers of Intercession

Response:

Lord of the world and the church:
bring healing and peace.

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

Hymn

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions;
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

Let us build a house where prophets speak
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and a symbol of God's grace.
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome ...

Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God through Jesus
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
All are welcome ...

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of love's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome ...

Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace;
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome ...

Marty Haugan

Offertory Prayer

Gracious God, you call us to let go of the things we cling to and step out in faith, trusting in your love and provision. Give us courage to step out boldly, to act generously, and without fear. Use our gifts to accomplish more than we could possibly imagine, so that, through us, your kingdom might come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. **Amen.**

A Sending Out Prayer and Blessing

May the God whose temple is creation
bless us to honour the earth.

May the Son whose body becomes the
temple bless us to honour our own
bodies.

May the Spirit who dwells in us and
makes us holy, fill us with wisdom and
bless us to honour the bodies of those we
meet. **Amen.**

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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