

THE ASH WEDNESDAY EUCCHARIST

The Benefice of the
Avon Valley Churches,
17th February 2021 at 7.00pm



¶ *The Gathering*

*The Keble Choir sings 'Let my prayer be set forth' by
H. S. Middleton*

The Greeting

We are those who seek after God's love,
We long for his touch,
We yearn for the warm softness of his embrace
**In this place we gather to wait
And to open our hearts.**

The president welcomes the people.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all
and also with you.

*A minister explains the meaning of Lent, invites the people to observe it
faithfully, and then says.*

From dust we came,
To dust we will return;
We belong to God.

We gather in penitence,
We gather in confidence;
We belong to God.

At the beginning of Lent,
At every moment of our lives,
We belong to God.

The Collect

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Silence is kept.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

Ash Wednesday by Malcolm Guite

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday' cross;
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands,
The very stones themselves would shout and sing,
If you covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their lord and king.
He sees the slow destruction of the trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

*(From 'The Word in the Wilderness: A Poem a Day for Lent and Easter
by Malcolm Guite, poet, priest and song-writer.)*

Psalm 51:1-18

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, in your great goodness;
according to the abundance of your compassion
blot out my offences.
- 2 **Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness:
and cleanse me from my sin.**
- 3 For I acknowledge my faults:
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 **Against you only have I sinned:
and done what is evil in your sight,**
- 5 So that you are justified in your sentence:
and righteous in your judgement.
- 6 **I have been wicked even from my birth:
a sinner when my mother conceived me.**
- 7 Behold, you desire truth deep within me:
and shall make me understand wisdom
in the depths of my heart.
- 8 **Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean:
wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.**
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness:
that the bones you have broken | may rejoice.
- 10 **Turn your face from my sins:
and blot out all my misdeeds.**
- 11 Make me a clean heart, O God:
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 **Cast me not away | from your presence:
and take not your holy spirit from me.**
- 13 Give me again the joy of your salvation:
and sustain me with your | gracious spirit;
- 14 **Then shall I teach your ways to the wicked:
and sinners shall return to you.**
- 15 Deliver me from my guilt, O God,
the God of my salvation:
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.

16 O Lord, open my lips:

and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

17 For you desire no sacrifice, else I would give it:

you take no delight in burnt offerings.

18 The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit:

a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will | not despise.

The Gospel

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Jesus said to the disciples, 'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your

Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes 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

LITURGY OF PENITENCE

Let us now call to mind our separateness from God and the infinite love and acceptance of God.

Self-Examination and Confession

God the Father,
have compassion upon us.

God the Son,
have compassion upon us.

God the Holy Spirit,
have compassion upon us.

Trinity of love,
have compassion upon us.

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.
Lord, have compassion.

Lord, we have heard your call so many times,
But, we have run away; we have hidden from your presence.

Lord, we have seen your beauty in so many ways
**But we have turned away;
we have closed our eyes to your goodness.**
Lord we have felt your touch in so many encounters,
But, we have shrugged you off;

We have shut ourselves from your love
And you have not rejected us.
**You have not ceased to woo us.
You have given yourself for us,
And have shown immense love again and again.**

You have remained faithful
You have continued to care,
You have showered us with compassion.

We confess to you, Lord ...

All our past unfaithfulness:
the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,
Lord, have compassion.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways,
and our exploitation of other people,
Lord, have compassion.

Our anger at our own frustration,
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,
Lord, have compassion.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,
Lord, have compassion.

Our negligence in prayer and worship,
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,
Lord, have compassion.

Accept our repentance, Lord ...

for the wrongs we have done,
for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgments,
for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbours,
and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ
from us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation,
and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;
Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
That we may show your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,
**Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his
resurrection.**

Silence is kept.

After a pause

**Holy God,
Holy and strong,
Holy and immortal,
Have mercy upon us. (x3)**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Lifting the Ashes, the President says:

Dear friends in Christ,
I invite you to make the sign of the cross on your forehead
as a reminder of the sign made in previous times with ashes and
as a sign of the spirit of penitence
with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth: grant
that this may be for us
a sign of our penitence and a symbol of our mortality;
for it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Saviour. **AMEN.**

*All are invited to make the sign of the cross on their foreheads saying
these words*

**I remember that I am dust, and to dust I shall return.
Help me to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.**

The Keble Choir sings 'Save me O God' by W. Boyce

God our Father, the strength of all who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers;
and because, in our weakness, we can do nothing good without
you, grant us the help of your grace,

that in keeping your commandments
we may please you, both in will and deed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

Jesus said to his Disciples:
Happy are you needy ones;
The Kingdom of God is yours.

Happy are you who are hungry;
You will be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now;
You will be filled with laughter.

Rejected, insulted, happy are you;
Be glad and dance with joy.

Jesus said: Take up your cross.
We will follow you, Christ,
into the needs of the world,
into the truth of our lives,
into the pain of our hearts,
and into the presence of God.
AMEN.

¶ ***The Liturgy of the Sacrament***

The Peace

Christ is our peace.
He has reconciled us to God
in one body by the cross.
We meet in his name and share his peace.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.
All may exchange a sign of peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN:

FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS

1. Forty days and forty nights
Thou wast fasting in the wild;
Forty days and forty nights
Tempted and yet undefiled.

2. Sunbeams scorching all the day;
Chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
Prowling beasts about thy way;
Stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.

3. Shall not we thy sorrows share,
And from earthly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer,
Glad with thee to suffer pain?

4. And if Satan, vexing sore,
Flesh or spirit should assail,
Thou, his vanquisher before,
Grant we may not faint nor fail.

5. So shall we have peace divine;
Holier gladness ours shall be;
Round us too shall angels shine,
Such as ministered to thee.

6. Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,

Ever constant by thy side;
That with thee we may appear
At the eternal Eastertide.

With this bread that we bring
we shall remember Jesus

With this wine we bring
we shall remember Jesus

Bread for his body,
wine for his blood,
gifts from God to his table we bring.

We shall remember Jesus

The Eucharistic Prayer

(With Joyful Song, p. 86)

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

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.

The president praises God for his mighty acts and all respond

**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.**

The president recalls the Last Supper.

Christ is the bread of life:

**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

The Prayer continues and leads into the doxology, to which all respond boldly:

AMEN.

There will be a period of silence at the end of the Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord Jesus, remember us in your kingdom
and teach us to pray.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come;
your will be done,
on earth as is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Do not bring us to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. AMEN.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Every time we eat this bread
And drink this cup
**We proclaim the Lord's death
Until he comes.**

Agnus Dei

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
grant us peace.**

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which is broken for you and
the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which is shed for you.

Silence is kept before the mystery of Christ's presence

Prayer after Communion

God of our Lenten pilgrimage,
**you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.**

HYMN AFTER COMMUNION: O FOR A HEART TO PRAISE MY GOD

1. O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that's sprinkled with the blood
So freely shed for me.
2. A heart resigned, submissive, meek,

My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.

3. A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From him that dwells within.

4. A heart in every thought renewed
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good –
A copy, Lord, of thine.

5. Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above;
Write thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new, best name of Love.

¶ *The Dismissal*

We have shared the bread and wine,
We have experienced the love and compassion of God,
And we have remembered the mission of Jesus,
Which we are called to continue;

**May your love, your friendship and your acceptance
fill us, change us and inspire us,
that the world may grow into a place
where all of God's children know they have a home
for all eternity. Amen.**

Let us go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

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