



The Lenten journey begins

Ash Wednesday

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the triune God, the Creator of heaven and earth and God's ownership of all things (Psalm 24:1). In God's sovereignty, God has allowed other groups to migrate to these shores. We acknowledge the cultures of our First Nations Peoples and are thankful for the community that we share together now.

Opening Song: Immortal Invisible

1. Immortal, invisible,
God only wise,
in light inaccessible
hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious,
the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious,
thy great name we praise.

2. Unresting, unhasting,
and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting,
thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains
high soaring above,
thy clouds which are fountains of
goodness and love.

3. To all life thou givest,
to both great and small,
in all life thou livest,
the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish
as leaves on a tree,
and wither and perish:
but nought changeth thee.

4. Great Father of glory,
pure Father of light,
thine angels adore thee,
all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render:
O help us to see,
'tis only the splendour
of light hideth thee;

5. Immortal, invisible,
God only wise,
in light inaccessible
hid from our eyes,

most blessed, most glorious,
the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious,
thy great name we praise.

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Minister's Greeting and Opening Prayer

Blessed be the Lord who forgives all our sins,
whose mercy and kindness endures for ever.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit
and also with you.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made,
and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
that we, worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our
brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and for ever. **Amen**

The Ministry of the Word

**The Old Testament reading comes from Isaiah chapter 58
commencing at verse 1.**

Today's reading is taken from The Living Bible.

Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast; tell my people of their sins! ²
Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and are so
delighted to hear the reading of my laws—just as though they would
obey them—just as though they don't despise the commandments of
their God! How anxious they are to worship correctly; oh, how they
love the Temple services!

³"We have fasted before you," they say. "Why aren't you impressed?
Why don't you see our sacrifices? Why don't you hear our prayers? We
have done much penance, and you don't even notice it!" I'll tell you
why! Because you are living in evil pleasure even while you are fasting,
and you keep right on oppressing your workers. ⁴Look, what good is
fasting when you keep on fighting and quarrelling? This kind of fasting

will never get you anywhere with me. ⁵ Is this what I want—this doing of penance and bowing like reeds in the wind, putting on sackcloth and covering yourselves with ashes? Is this what you call fasting?

⁶ No, the kind of fast I want is that you stop oppressing those who work for you and treat them fairly and give them what they earn. ⁷ I want you to share your food with the hungry and bring right into your own homes those who are helpless, poor, and destitute. Clothe those who are cold, and don't hide from relatives who need your help.

⁸ If you do these things, God will shed his own glorious light upon you. He will heal you; your godliness will lead you forward, goodness will be a shield before you, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. ⁹ Then, when you call, the Lord will answer. "Yes, I am here," he will quickly reply. All you need to do is to stop oppressing the weak and stop making false accusations and spreading vicious rumours!

¹⁰ Feed the hungry! Help those in trouble! Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you shall be as bright as day. ¹¹ And the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy you with all good things, and keep you healthy too; and you will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. ¹² Your sons will rebuild the long-deserted ruins of your cities, and you will be known as "The People Who Rebuild Their Walls and Cities."

The Psalm for Ash Wednesday is number 51, verses 7-17.

This reading is also from The Living Bible.

A psalm of David, regarding the time Nathan the prophet came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

⁷ Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and I shall be clean again.
Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

**⁸ And after you have punished me,
give me back my joy again.**

⁹ Don't keep looking at my sins—erase them from your sight.

**¹⁰ Create in me a new, clean heart, O God,
filled with clean thoughts and right desires.**

¹¹ Don't toss me aside, banished forever from your presence.
Don't take your Holy Spirit from me.

**¹² Restore to me again the joy of your salvation,
and make me willing to obey you.**

¹³ Then I will teach your ways to other sinners, and they—
guilty like me—will repent and return to you.

14-15 Don't sentence me to death. O my God, you alone can rescue me. Then I will sing of your forgiveness, for my lips will be unsealed—oh, how I will praise you.

¹⁶ You don't want cheap sacrifices; if you did, how gladly I would do it! You aren't interested in offerings burned before you on the altar.

¹⁷ It is a broken spirit you want—remorse and repentance. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not ignore.

Glory to God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit

as in the beginning and for ever. Amen.

The New Testament reading comes from the second letter written by the Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth, chapter 5 verse 20 to chapter 6 verse 10.

Here Paul is urging the believers to recognise God's heart of reconciliation towards the world and inviting us to take part in God's mission to those who do not yet know him.

²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **6¹**As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ²For 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. ³We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. ⁴Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; ⁵in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; ⁶in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸through glory and dishonour, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Gospel Song: Abide with Me

Abide with me;
fast falls the eventide:
the darkness deepens;
Lord, with me abide:
when other helpers fail,
and comforts flee,
help of the helpless,
O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs
out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim,
its glories pass away.
change and decay in
all around I see:
O thou who changest not,
abide with me.

I need thy presence
every passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil
the tempter's power?

Who like thyself
my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine,
Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe with thee
at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears
no bitterness.
Where is death's sting?
Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou
abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross
before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom,
and point me to the skies:
heaven's morning breaks,
and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord,
abide with me.

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The Gospel of the Lord:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew chapter 6, commencing at verse 1. Glory to you, O Lord our Saviour.

¹Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²So 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. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left

hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

⁵And 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. ⁶But 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.

⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶When 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. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so 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. ¹⁹Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon: Are we really prepared to surrender all to Jesus?

The Act of Repentance

Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of penitence and fasting. By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord. So, I invite you, because of your love and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, to undertake this journey of Lent committing yourself to self-examination and repentance; to prayer and fasting, to intentional surrender to Christ's rulership over your life, and to reading and meditating on God's holy word.

The Receiving of Ashes

Dear friends in Christ,

I invite you to receive these ashes as a sign of the spirit of repentance with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

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

The minister, as the ashes are applied says,

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

Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

Invitation for Self-examination and Confession

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.
Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth,
we humble ourselves before you.

Incarnate Word, redeemer of the world,

we surrender our hearts to you.

Abiding Spirit, giver of light and life, **have your way in my life.**

For turning away from your presence, for disobeying your word and commandments, **forgive us, gracious Lord.**

For trusting in our own strength instead of yours, for betraying your trust and the trust of others, **forgive us, gracious Lord.**

For resisting your grace and refusing your blessings, for holding back from proclaiming our faith in you,

forgive us, gracious Lord.

For damaging this earth and exploiting its creatures, for neglecting and wasting the gifts you have given us,

forgive us, gracious Lord.

For failing to forgive as we have been forgiven. For judging others and bearing grudges, **forgive us, gracious Lord.**

For skimping on our commitments and relationships, for failing in hospitality, **forgive us, gracious Lord**

For turning a blind eye to oppression, injustice, and wrong, for keeping silent when we should have spoken up,

forgive us, gracious Lord.

For turning away when others have offered us love, for closing our hearts when others have needed compassion,

forgive us, gracious Lord.

For all we have done unkindly, unjustly and dishonestly, for our careless speech and hurtful words, **forgive us, gracious Lord.**

Most merciful God,

**we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:**

we have not loved you with our whole heart;

we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;

we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.

Father, forgive us.

**Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Assurance of Forgiveness

With our hearts turned to God in repentance, with the knowledge of our sins laid bare before the cross of Jesus Christ, in the name of the living God, your sins are forgiven. Receive God's mercy, take hold of your forgiveness, and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, walk in the light of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Greeting of Peace

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

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

The Holy Remembrance Meal

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us.

He was tempted in every way as we are, yet he did not sin.

By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to walk in the way of his love.

As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast with joyful hearts and minds we bless you for your mercy and join with saints and angels for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

And now, we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine, and may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and gave you thanks. He broke it, and gave it to his friends, saying, 'Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, and gave you thanks.

He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us.

The Breaking of the Bread and the Communion

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

Let us now draw near with faith, receiving the body of our Lord Jesus Christ and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Communion Song: Take My Life and Let it Be

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, & let them move
at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold,

nothing, Lord, would I withhold.

Take my intellect, and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

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 priceless gifts, and also daily
endeavour to follow the steps of his most holy life; through Jesus
Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Almighty God, whose Spirit leads us on our journey, you
have fed us with the bread of heaven. Refresh and sustain us
as we go forward, in the name of the Lord Jesus and the
power of the Spirit. Amen.**

Living out our humble journey of discipleship with our Lord

This is love, not that we loved God,

but that he loved us and sent his Son.

He is the sacrifice for our sins, **that we might live through him.**

If God loves us so much, **we ought to love one another.**

If we love one another **God's Spirit lives in us.**

The Blessing

May God the Father, who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart. May Christ, who bore our sins in his
body on the tree, heal you by his wounds. May the Holy Spirit, who
leads us into all truth, speak to you words of forgiveness and peace.
And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

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

Amen.

Closing Song: Make me a Channel of your Peace

Make me a channel of Your peace.

Where there is hatred let me bring Your love;

where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord;

and where there's doubt, true faith in You.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of Your peace.

Where there's despair in life

let me bring hope;

where there is darkness, only light;

and where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Master, grant

Make me a channel of Your peace.

It is in pardoning

that we are pardoned,

in giving of ourselves that we receive;

and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

O Master, grant