



**The Benefice of
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme
Sunday 7 March 2021
The Third Sunday of Lent: Written Service**

The Greeting

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.
Let us recognise his presence with us.
As God's people we have gathered:
Let us worship God together!

Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.

In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us

(Anselm)

Prayers of Penitence

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion,
and acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

Confession

**Lord God,
we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Absolution

May the God of love
bring us back to himself,
forgive us our sins,
and assure us of his eternal love
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **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 Readings

The First Reading: Exodus 20: 1 - 17

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of
anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or
that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them
or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,

punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

Thanks be to God for the gift of His word

The Gospel: John 2: 13 – 22

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews then said to him,

“What sign can you show us for doing this?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

The is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Reflection from Richard

Over this last year we have become very familiar with rules being set for us to follow. We have been told to “Stay at Home”, we’ve be told to “Wash our Hands” and we have all got used to being two metres apart from people and wearing our masks. And there have been all the complexities of how many people we can meet and where we can meet them and what we can and cannot do together.

When the announcement came last Monday about how we are to move forwards we had another set of instructions which will bring more change on those key dates in March, April, May and June.

All of these instructions are to help us to protect ourselves and to protect the people around us too. They are not just random restrictions made up to make life difficult. They have a very important purpose.

In our Old Testament reading we have the list of the Ten Commandments that God gives to the people about how they must live. These too are laws about our relationships and how we should live our lives for the benefit of ourselves and others.

Even though there are only ten, it can sometimes be difficult to remember them all, so there is that very useful summary which Jesus

gave us: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. Love your neighbour as yourself.”

I think that we tend to focus on the second part: loving our neighbours. It is perhaps an easier one to try to live out, even though it is not easy always to keep it!

It is clear through the prophets and elsewhere that the keeping of this part, our care and love for those around us is an important part of keeping the first bit. “How can we say we love God, who we cannot see, if we do not love our neighbours, who we can see?” asks John in his first letter.

And if we love God, then surely from that should naturally flow our love for those around us.

But our Gospel reading perhaps challenges us to take a closer look at that first part - How do we love God?

Is there maybe a bit of clearing out that we could do so that we can love God with a bit more of our heart, our mind, our soul and our strength?

This time of Lent is the perfect time to begin to do that kind of Spiritual Spring cleaning! It is a time when we can look at our prayer life and see if it needs a bit of a boost. Perhaps add in five minute of quiet with your morning cuppa, or join us on Facebook for Morning, Evening or Night Prayer.

It is a time when we can look at our Bible reading. I must say that I have really enjoyed my journey through the Bible since I arrived here. I am now well into the book of psalms, just reading a chapter of the Bible each day. It has been really good using a version that is easy to read. Something like “The New Living Translation”, “The

Contemporary English Version” or “The Living Bible” all make a daily Bible reading easier to understand and enjoy.

This Sunday is the Third Sunday in Lent and it is called “Refreshment Sunday.” It is the perfect time to look at how we respond to God’s rules for us and to find and start new ways of fulfilling them in our lives.

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 led by Margaret Harrison

O Lord: in a world where many are lonely; we thank you for our friendships. In a world where many are captive; we thank you for our freedom. In a world where many are hungry; we thank you for your provision. We pray that you will enlarge our sympathy; deepen our compassion and give us grateful hearts.

God of love, hear our prayer.

Angry Jesus, as of old you entered into that Temple market casting out the merchants and money changers; enter now into the markets of our modern world. Throw out of them all that is unworthy, unjust or self-seeking and direct the market forces of the world in the ways of justice, plenty and peace, for your tender mercy's sake.

God of love, hear our prayer.

We pray for all areas of the world where there is conflict and unrest, thinking particularly at this time of the people of Myanmar and the Yemen. Father give wisdom to those in a position to bring an end to conflict and enable them to restore peace and prosperity.

God of love, hear our prayer.

As our schools and colleges are preparing to re-open, we pray for the safety of the children, their families, teachers and all other key workers. We give thanks for the scientists who developed the vaccines and for the success of the vaccination programme in this Country. Lord of compassion it is so hard to feel useless, to be unable to escape from difficulties, to have no control. When there is nothing we can do to decide the future, give us the power to wait with patience.

God of love, hear our prayer.

Lord God we bring to you our worries for all who are in need of your healing today. We pray for all in our benefice who are sick or in pain, in hospital or at home. We pray for those who are frightened and feel that everything is going wrong. We pray for those who are sad and lonely, thinking particularly of those recently bereaved. In darkness and in light, in trouble and in joy, help us heavenly Father to trust your love, to serve your purpose and to praise your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

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.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
O my God, in you I trust.

You are the God of my salvation;
To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

In you I hope all the day long.
O my God, in you I trust.

Remember, Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.
To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
O my God, in you I trust.

Blessing

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.**

Sending Out

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