

**Service for
Ash Wednesday**



*Remember
that you are
dust and into
dust you shall
return.*

St Laurence Church, Downton

17 February 2021

Preparation

Call to Worship

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit:

a broken and contrite heart you will not despise. *Psalm 51:7*

Brothers and sisters in Christ: since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom of the Church to prepare for this by a season of penitence and fasting.

At first this season of Lent was observed by those who were preparing for Baptism at Easter and by those who were to be restored to the Church's fellowship from which they had been separated through sin. In course of time the Church came to recognize that, by a careful keeping of these days, all Christians might 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.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

Hymn: Take my life and let it be

(Chet Valley Churches)

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

Take my moments and my days,

Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and 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, not a mite 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.

Frances R. Havergal (1836-1879)

The Collect

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

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

Reading:

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Music: Hide not thou thy face (*Choir Of Clare College Cambridge*)

Prayers

We are led in a time of prayer

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,
let us pray to the Father.

Hear our prayers, O Lord our God.

Hear us, good Lord.

Govern and direct your holy Church; fill it with love and truth;
and grant it that unity which is your will.

Hear us, good Lord.

Give us boldness to preach the gospel in all the world, and to
make disciples of all the nations.

Hear us, good Lord.

Enlighten your ministers with knowledge and understanding,
that by their teaching and their lives they may proclaim your
word.

Hear us, good Lord.

Give your people grace to hear and receive your word, and to
bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

Hear us, good Lord.

Bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived.

Hear us, good Lord.

Strengthen those who stand; comfort and help the faint-
hearted; raise up the fallen; and finally beat down Satan under
our feet.

Hear us, good Lord.

Guide the leaders of the nations into the ways of peace and
justice.

Hear us, good Lord.

Guard and strengthen your servant Elizabeth our Queen, that
she may put her trust in you, and seek your honour and glory.

Hear us, good Lord.

Endue the High Court of Parliament and all the Ministers of the Crown with wisdom and understanding.

Hear us, good Lord.

Bless those who administer the law, that they may uphold justice, honesty, and truth.

Hear us, good Lord.

Give us the will to use the resources of the earth to your glory, and for the good of all.

Hear us, good Lord.

Bless and keep all your people.

Hear us, good Lord.

Help and comfort the lonely, the bereaved, and the oppressed.

Lord, have mercy.

Keep in safety those who travel, and all who are in danger.

Lord, have mercy.

Heal the sick in body and mind, and provide for the homeless, the hungry, and the destitute.

Lord, have mercy.

Show your pity on prisoners and refugees, and all who are in trouble.

Lord, have mercy.

Forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts.

Lord, have mercy.

Hear us as we remember those who have died in the peace of Christ, both those who have confessed the faith and those whose faith is known to you alone, and grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, have mercy.

Father, you hear those who pray in the name of your Son: grant that what we have asked in faith we may obtain according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer is said:

Trusting in the compassion of God,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Conclusion

Blessing:

May God the Father, who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

Amen.

May Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

Amen.

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.