

BENEFICE OF MARSTON & ELSFIELD  
Ash Wednesday Service 2021

Welcome

The Lord be with you  
All: And also with you

*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.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 58: 1-12

Hymn: 'The love of God comes close'

1. The love of God comes close  
where stands an open door  
to let the stranger in,  
to mingle rich and poor.  
The love of God is here to stay;  
embracing those who walk His way,  
the love of God is here to stay.
2. The joy of God comes close  
where faith encounters fears,  
where heights and depths of life are found  
through smiles and tears.  
The joy of God is here to stay;  
embracing those who walk His way,  
the joy of God is here to stay.
3. The Son of God comes close  
where people praise His name,  
where bread and wine are blessed  
and shared as when He came.  
The Son of God is here to stay;  
embracing those who walk His way,  
the Son of God is here to stay.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Reflection: *Revd Dr Andy Gosler*

Prayer

*A time for us to turn to God afresh at the start of Lent, with a sense of repentance. If you picked up one of our packs have your ash cross pebble ready at this point.*

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father                    **have mercy upon us.**  
God the Son                      **have mercy upon us.**  
God the Holy Spirit            **have mercy upon us.**  
Holy, blessed & glorious Trinity  
   **have mercy upon us.**

From all evil & mischief; from pride, vanity & hypocrisy;  
from envy, hatred, & malice; & from all evil intent,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

From sloth, worldliness & love of money;  
from hardness of heart, contempt for your word & laws,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

From sins of body & mind;  
from the deceits of the world, the flesh & the devil,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

In all times of sorrow; in all times of joy;  
in the hour of death, & at the day of judgement,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation;  
by your birth, childhood and obedience;  
by your baptism, fasting & temptation,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your ministry in word & work; by your mighty acts of power; and by your preaching of the kingdom,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your agony & trial; by your cross and passion;  
by your precious death and burial,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

By your mighty resurrection; by your glorious ascension;  
and by your sending of the Holy Spirit,  
**good Lord, deliver us.**

Give us true repentance; forgive us our sins of negligence and ignorance, and our deliberate sins;  
and grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit  
to amend our lives according to your holy word.  
**Holy God,**  
**holy and strong,**  
**holy and immortal,**  
**have mercy upon us.**

*Silence is kept*

Make our hearts clean, O God;  
and renew a right spirit within us.

Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our  
neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love,  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed,  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light.  
Amen.

#### Invitation to sign oneself with the cross

*You may choose to use the ash in the packs, either  
mix it with oil or sprinkle it on your head.*

As we make the sign of the cross, we do so as a sign  
of the spirit of repentance with which we shall keep  
this season of Lent.

God our Father,  
Help us to remember that you created us from the  
dust of the earth and to dust we shall return.  
Help us to turn away from sin and be faithful to  
Christ.  
for it is by your grace alone that we receive  
eternal life  
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
Amen.

#### Song: Speak, O Lord, as we come to you

1. Speak, O Lord, as we come to you  
to receive the food of your holy word.  
Take your truth, plant it deep in us;  
shape and fashion us in your likeness,  
that the light of Christ might be seen today  
in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.  
Speak, O Lord, and fulfil in us  
all your purposes, for your glory.
2. Teach us, Lord, full obedience,  
holy reverence, true humility.  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes  
in the radiance of your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
your majestic love and authority.  
Word of power that can never fail;  
let their truth prevail over unbelief.

3. Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;  
help us grasp the heights of your plans for us.  
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time  
that will echo down through eternity.  
And by grace we'll stand on your promises,  
and by faith we'll walk as you walk with us.  
Speak, O Lord, 'till your church is built  
and the earth is filled with your glory.

#### Assurance of forgiveness

May the Lord enrich us with grace,  
and nourish us with God's blessing;  
May the Lord defend us in trouble  
and keep us from all evil;  
May the Lord accept our prayers,  
and absolve us from our offences,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.  
Amen.

#### The Blessing

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

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

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

And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us and remain with us always.  
Amen.

