



*The Parish Church of St. Lawrence Little Stanmore
alias Whitchurch*

**Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
29th January 2023**



Welcome to the Christian Family here at S Lawrence's.

At the heart of this Parish Eucharist is the reception of Holy Communion and everyone is encouraged to come up to the Altar Rails. All who are communicant members of their own churches are welcome to make their Communion if not, then, please come and bow your head to receive a Blessing.

Introit Hymn

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love,
And do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with the fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with thee the perfect life
Of thine eternity.

[Entrance Antiphon. Ps 105: 47

Save us, O Lord our God!

And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Introduction

We gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Saviour and to remember his beautiful teachings. In the Beatitudes, which we read today, Jesus describes the kinds of people who are blessed in God's eyes. We hope to join the company of all these saints in the heavenly liturgy.

Penitential Act

Jesus has shown us the way to walk: let us remember when we sought other paths (*pause*):

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father: Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have given us the consolation of the truth: Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, leading us into everlasting life: Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. **Amen.****

Collect

Grant us, Lord our God,
that we may honour you with all our mind,
and love everyone in truth of heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

First Reading *Zephaniah 2:3,3:12-13*

In your midst I will leave a humble and lowly people

Seek the Lord, all you, the humble of the earth, who obey his commands.
Seek integrity, seek humility:
you may perhaps find shelter on the day of the anger of the Lord.
In your midst I will leave a humble and lowly people,
and those who are left in Israel will seek refuge in the name of the Lord.
They will do no wrong, will tell no lies;
and the perjured tongue will no longer be found in their mouths.
But they will be able to graze and rest with no one to disturb them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *145(146):6-10*

R/ How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R/**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. **R/**

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **R/**

Second Reading / *Corinthians 1:26-31*

God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, to shame the wise

Take yourselves for instance, brothers, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that he chose what is weak by human reckoning; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen – those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom. As scripture says: if anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *Mt 11:25*

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father,
Lord of heaven and earth,
for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom
to mere children.

Alleluia!

The Gospel

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 5:1-12a *How happy are the poor in spirit*

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up the hill. There he sat down and was joined by his disciples. Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them:

'How happy are the poor in spirit;
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy the gentle:
they shall have the earth for their heritage.

Happy those who mourn:
they shall be comforted.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right:
they shall be satisfied.

Happy the merciful:
they shall have mercy shown them.

Happy the pure in heart:
they shall see God.

Happy the peacemakers:

they shall be called sons of God.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right:

theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Happy are you when people abuse you and persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Creed

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth,

of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary

and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory

to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son

is worshipped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession *One of these responses may be used*

Lord, in your mercy **hear our prayer.** *(or)* Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

And at the end

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Peace

We are the body of Christ.
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life.

The peace of the Lord be always with you **and also with you.**
Unless we live in the same household we offer a sign of peace to those around us by means of a profound bow

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.
**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, we bring to your altar
these offerings of our service:
be pleased to receive them, we pray,
and transform them
into the Sacrament of our redemption.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Offertory Hymn

Will you let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant too

We are pilgrims on a journey
Fellow travelers on the road
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load

I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the nighttime of your fear
I will hold my hand out to you
Speak the peace you long to hear

I will weep when you are weeping
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through

When we sing to God in heaven
We will find such harmony
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony

Will you let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant too

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, the offerings
we have brought to honour the revealing of your beloved Son,
so that the oblation of your faithful may be transformed into the sacrifice of him
who willed in his compassion to wash away the sins of the world.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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.

It is truly right and just,
our duty and our salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through the mystery of his cross and resurrection
he freed us from the yoke of sin and death
and called us to the glory that has made us
a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
a people set apart to proclaim your mighty works,
for you have called us out of darkness
into your own wonderful light.

And so, with angels and archangels,
with all the heavenly host,
we proclaim your glory
and join their unending chorus of praise:

**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.

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup

and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,

so that we, in the company of
our Blessed Lady, S Paul, S Lawrence and all the Saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,

through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.**

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**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.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon *Cf. Ps 30: 17-18*

Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your merciful love.
O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

Prayer after Communion

Nourished by these redeeming gifts,
we pray, O Lord,
that through this help to eternal salvation
true faith may ever increase.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

Final Blessing

We have so little strength of our own:
may the Lord Jesus be our wisdom, our virtue, our holiness and our freedom as we go out in his name.
And may almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Dismissal

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

Recessional Hymn

The light of Christ has come into the world (2x)

All men must be born again
to see the kingdom of God
The water and the Spirit
bring new life in God's love

God gave up His only Son
out of love for the world
So that all men who believe
in Him will live forever

The light of God has come to us
so that we might have salvation
From the darkness of our sins
we walk into glory with Christ Jesus

*Everyone is invited into the Hall after The Parish Eucharist for coffee or tea with biscuits
we ask that if possible that you give £1 to defray costs
(our drinks are served in disposable cups & biscuits individually wrapped)*

Background on the Gospel Reading Today's reading is the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which is found in Matthew's Gospel. The form of the Beatitudes found here is not unique to Jesus. Beatitudes are found in the Old Testament, in the psalms, and in wisdom literature, for example. They are a way to teach about who will find favour with God.

We quickly note in this reading that the people whom Jesus calls "blessed" and "happy" are not people we think of as blessed or happy . . . the poor in spirit, the meek, the persecuted. This Gospel is one of reversals. Jesus' blueprint for happiness reflects little of what the world might call happiness.

"Blessed" is sometimes translated as happy, fortunate, or favoured. In other words, Jesus is saying that divine favor is upon those who are poor, those who mourn, those who are persecuted. This news might have been welcome - and surprising - to the crowds who heard Jesus that day.

The Beatitudes can be understood as a framework for Christian living. Our vocation as Christians is not to be first in this world, but rather to be first in the eyes of God. By referring to the good things that the faithful will experience, Matthew reminds us that those who act in the manner described in the Beatitudes will find their reward with God.



Staying with God As We Journey Towards Easter

For Lent 2023, the Bishops of London Diocese are hosting five online sessions exploring ancient ways of Christian prayer that are still relevant today and can help us spend time in the presence of God. Sessions take place on Tuesday evenings during Lent, from 7.30-8.30pm on the following dates:

*28th February, The Examen
7th March, Lectio Divina
14th March, Centring Prayer
21st March, Imaginative Contemplation
28th March, Visio Divina (Praying with Pictures)*

The evening will be opened and closed with a short liturgy by one of our Bishops. The prayer practice will be introduced and we will have a go at the practice together. A time of optional sharing will be offered at the end for those who wish to reflect on the practice with others. Everyone is welcome and you can attend some or all sessions. For more information and to register go to the Diocesan website:

www.london.anglican.org/event/2023/03/07/prayer-practices-for-lent-lectio-divina/

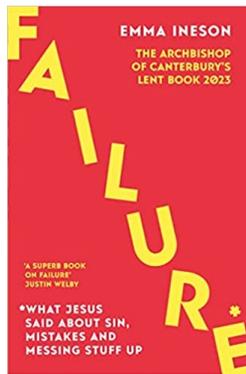


**The Presentation of Our Lord
Thursday 02 February**

***The Eucharist at 12 Noon
followed by a bread & soup lunch in the Hall***

*Forty days ago we celebrated the joyful feast
of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Today we recall the holy day
on which he was presented in the temple,
fulfilling the law of Moses
and at the same time going to meet his faithful people.
Led by the Spirit, Simeon and Anna came to the temple,
recognised Christ as their Lord, and proclaimed him with joy.
United by the Spirit, may we, in this house of God,
welcome Christ the Lord.
Here we shall recognise him in the breaking of bread
until he comes again in glory.*

So reads the introduction to the Candlemass Liturgy which we celebrate this coming Thursday 02 February at 12 Noon. Candlemass is the 40th Day of Christmas and so traditionally the end of the Christmas season.



Failure (Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2023) is by the new Bishop of Kensington, Bishop Emma Ineson. In 2019, Emma Ineson wrote about ambition and what it means for Christians to be successful. And then there was a global pandemic . . . Suddenly failure began to feel very much more familiar than success. But what is failure? What did Jesus think of it? What did he say about sin, mistakes and generally mucking things up? At the start of this wonderfully humorous and encouraging book – which will end at the cross – it's suggested that our tendency to lump all kinds of failure together could be a bit unhelpful. A more nuanced understanding of what sort of failure we're dealing with might just allow us to make friends with it and respond more appropriately.

This idea leads us 'Towards an (Imperfect) Theology of Failure', based on key Christian thinking, and Emma poses the question of whether sin is an individual or corporate thing. Looking at the church, we consider, what is God's purpose for it? And in the light of key concerns such as safeguarding and racial justice, how might we re-examine concepts of success and recognize and measure failure?

As the book draws to an end, we are reminded of our calling to live life to the full, to take risks despite our fears. We are bound sometimes to fail! Yet gazing at Jesus – who looked like the greatest failure of all – we may discern in the heartache, vulnerability and humility of failure, the glory of the Cross.

If you would like a copy then please write your name on the list in the porch.

In Your Prayers This Week

Please pray for our Diocese, our Parish and for its needs;

The Sick *Those who are known to us personally and those whose names are read out in Church, the patients and staff of The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, the elderly & housebound those who live within Henry Nihill House, Knights Court & Whitchurch Lodge.*

The Departed

Those who continue to die as the result of all wars, conflict or the violence of others

Recently Patricia Sommariva

Years' Mind Ann Atkins, Pat Auger, Rose Baccarini, Derek Barnes, Brian Barrett, Doreen Bartleman, Frances Booth, Terry Bowden, Meg Bushnell, Lionel Byrne, Alan Cawley Austin, Lillian Chapman, Marian Connell, Rene Cootes, Carlos Da Fortuna, Dorothy Darby, Doris Davies, Reg De Viel, Robina Dixon, Krystyna Driver-Williams, Joan Ducker, Thora Emmerson, William Goodbrand, Harris Graham, Madeline Gray, Rose Green, George Hancock, Ernest Hawkins, Wilf Heppolette, Pete Hill, Margaret Holder, Dorrie Humpheries, Marjorie Hunt, Anne Huntley, Babs Ives, Frank Johnson, Beryl Kearns, John Keeble, Gerald Keen, Michael King *priest*, Arnold Lawson, Rosella Matthey, Alice McGowan, John McKenzie, David Mullery, Olwyn Norman, Louis O'Reardon, Baby Alfie Payne, Iris Saywell, Dorothy Sharratt, John Southren William Sperinck, Norman Stockton, Doreen Sutton, John Talbot *priest*, Betty Wilson.



***Our Altar Flowers this week
have been donated by Ernie Sailor
in memory of his late mother Lena Wise's birthday
may she rest in peace and rise in glory!***

The flowers behind our altar each week (apart from during Advent and Lent) are a beautiful symbol of our offerings to God. It's a way that we praise Jesus for the life and hope that He gives us and a way that we honour loved ones and give thanks for our blessings.

At S Lawrence's, we invite all members of the parish to contribute flowers in offering. If you'd like to donate altar flowers in memory, thanksgiving, or celebration, please speak to Brenda Marney. Your flower dedication will appear in this newsletter on your designated Sunday.



THIS WEEK AT S LAWRENCE LITTLE STANMORE

- 29 Sun** **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**
10:00 **The Parish Eucharist**
- 31 Tue** *S John Bosco, Priest on Tuesday of Week 4 in Ordinary Time*
09:30 **The Eucharist**
- 02 Thu** **The Presentation of the Lord - Feast**
12:00 *The Eucharist followed by soup lunch*
- 05 Sun** **FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**
10:00 **The Parish Eucharist**

 Rector: Fr Paul M Reece SSC
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*If you have any pastoral concerns or would like to request prayers for yourself
or friends/family, please get in touch using our email
or you can use the contact page on our website*

Daily Hope is a 24 hour free phone line for Christian worship and prayer
Call (free) 0800 804 804

Paws for Thought aka The Tail End
*I don't think people realize how much strength
it takes to pull yourself out of a dark place mentally
So if you've done that today, or any day, I'm proud of you.*
as found by Bertie the Rectory Retriever