

Holy Communion for the 2nd Sunday before Lent

**Therefore...
DO NOT
WORRY**

MATTHEW 6:25-34

The Stour Valley Benefice

Cavendish, Clare, Hundon, Poslingford, Stoke-by-Clare & Wixoe

- A short introduction to the Season -

There is nothing “ordinary” about Ordinary Time! It is called this simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered. The Latin word ‘ordinalis’, refers to numbers in series, from which we get the English word ‘order’.

The numbered weeks of Ordinary Time represent the ordered life of the Church – a period in which we live our lives neither in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons), nor in reflection or penance (as in the seasons of Advent and Lent), instead the Church focuses on growth and renewal, and looks forward in expectation of the second coming of Christ.

This season of growth and renewal is represented in our use of Green liturgical decorations and vestments.



Spiritual Communion

The term ‘Spiritual Communion’ has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.

In joining with Revd Mark today as he celebrates the Eucharist from his own home, you too are able to join with him in communion. The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly ‘eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ’, although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, ‘I am the Bread of Life’.

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn – Thou, whose almighty word

- 1 Thou, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight;
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel-day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.
- 2 Thou, who didst come to bring
on thy redeeming wing
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
O now to all mankind
let there be light.
- 3 Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy Dove,
speed forth thy flight;
move on the water's face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.
- 4 Holy and blessed Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might;
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth far and wide
let there be light.

John Marriott (1780-1825)

The Greeting

Priest: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
All: and also with you.

Prayer of Preparation

All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Penitence

Priest: God so loved the world that he gave us his only Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry 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 grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

Absolution

Priest: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your

sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Gloria is sung

All: 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.

The Liturgy of the Word

The Collect for the 2nd Sunday before Lent

Priest: Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading – Genesis 1.1 – 2.3

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God

called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights - the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night - and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

Priest: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading - Romans 8.18–25

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for

the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Priest: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel – Matthew 6:25-34

Priest: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you - you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

'So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Priest: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

The Creed

Priest: My brothers and sisters in Christ, let us declare our faith in God.

**All: We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

cf Ephesians 3

Prayers of Intercession

Priest: Let us pray to God, the giver of all beauty in heaven and earth.

Inspire your Church with zeal to seek the Kingdom, setting aside all worldly concerns that may lead away from the goal. Let your people live each day as if it were the first and last of your purpose for us, to make known the righteousness which is not our own but the fruit of your bounty.

As we give thanks for beauty of the natural world, we pray that it may not be lost through human greed and folly. May those who have control of change act responsibly, as knowing that they are stewards of a treasure not of their making, a glory beyond the riches of the kings and rulers of the earth.

When troubles come in our lives and we are concerned for ourselves or those near to us, make us free from the anxiety that destroys hope and show us the way that is opening before us. Confident in the love that sustains what love had created, let us seek to do your will in all things.

Comfort those who are weighed down by worry about food and clothing and other bodily needs. Help the individuals and the agencies working for the relief of poverty and give generous compassion to all who have enough to spare for others.

Bless in your nearer presence those who have ended their span of life and entered into beauty beyond anything they knew upon earth. May they find peace in the Kingdom where anxiety has gone and there is no more fear, because God's righteousness is all in all.

We pray through Christ who has taught us to trust and not to be afraid.

Merciful Father

All: **Accept these our prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

Priest: Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.

Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.
The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Preparation of the Table

Priest: With this bread that we bring
All: We shall remember Jesus

Priest: With this wine that we bring
All: We shall remember Jesus

Priest: Bread for his body,
wine for his blood
gifts from God to his table we bring
All: We shall remember Jesus.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Priest: The Lord is here.
All: His Spirit is with us.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right to give thanks and praise.

Priest: It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places to give you thanks and praise, holy Father, heavenly King, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
For he is your living Word; through him you have created all things from the beginning, and formed us in your own image.
Through him you have freed us from the slavery of sin, giving him to be born of a woman and to die upon

the cross; you raised him from the dead and exalted him to your right hand on high.

Through him you have sent upon us your holy and life-giving Spirit, and made us a people for your own possession.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and singing:

All: 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, who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Priest: We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son. On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them and said: 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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross. Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation, we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Christ is the bread of life:

All: When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.

Priest: Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth. Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms and bring us with The Blessed Virgin Mary, St Peter, St Paul, St John the Baptist, St Leonard and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Priest: As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All: 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.

Breaking of the Bread

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
All: **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

The Agnus Dei

**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.**

Giving of Communion

Priest: God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
All: **Jesus Christ is holy
Jesus Christ is Lord
To the glory of God the Father.**

Prayers after Communion

Priest: God our creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All: **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.**

The Blessing

Priest: God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love, defend you on every side, and guide you in truth and peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: In the name of Christ. Amen

Hymn – Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

- 1 Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
o'er the world's tempestuous sea;
guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us
for we have no help but thee;
yet possessing every blessing,
if our God our Father be.
- 2 Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
all our weakness thou dost know;
thou didst tread this earth before us,
thou didst feel its keenest woe;
self denying, death defying,
thou to Calvary didst go.
- 3 Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
love with every passion blending,
pleasure that can never cloy:
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston (1791-1867)



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



For more information about our Benefice, including details of upcoming special services, events and activities for all the family, please visit:

www.stourvalley.org.uk



facebook.com/StourValleyCofE



@StourValleyCofE

Christian Copyright Licence No. 523438

Common Worship: Times & Seasons and New Patterns for Worship, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2006.

Scripture quotations from *The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, is copyright © The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the USA, 1989.

Intercessions taken from *Hear our Prayer: Gospel based intercessions for Sundays, Holy Days and Festivals*,
© 2003 Raymond Chapman, Published by The Canterbury Press Norwich.

(February 2026)



Although not all of us are able to meet in church for services, it is important to remember that the work of the Church continues, as do many of the ongoing costs in maintaining our historic buildings as well as supporting the ministry in this benefice and the wider church.

Remember that if you are able, please Gift Aid your donation as it means that we can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate from the Government at no extra cost to you – resulting in your £20 donation now being worth £25!

If you wish to donate regularly to your church, please consider signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, please ask Revd Mark or one of the churchwardens for a pack or sign up online at:

www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/

Alternatively, you can make an online donation to your chosen church through your smartphone by scanning the relevant QR Code below:

**Clare with
Poslingford**



Stoke by Clare



Cavendish



Wixoe



Hundon

