

ST MARK AND ALL SAINTS, READING

SUNDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2026

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

*Whoever you are,
wherever you are on life's journey
you are welcome here.*

THE GATHERING

*All the words are in this service sheet. Please join in with the words printed in **bold type**.*

At the start of the service a bell is rung and the procession enters as we stand to sing the opening hymn.

ENTRANCE HYMN

Forty days and forty nights
Thou wast fasting in the wild;
Forty days and forty nights
Tempted, and yet undefiled:

Sunbeams scorching all the day;
Chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
Prowling beasts about thy way;
Stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.
Shall not we thy sorrows share,
And from earthly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer,
Glad with thee to suffer pain?

And if Satan, vexing sore,
Flesh or spirit should assail,
Thou, his vanquisher before,
Grant we may not faint nor fail.

So shall we have peace divine;
Holier gladness ours shall be;
Round us too shall angels shine,
Such as ministered to thee.

Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
Ever constant by thy side;
That with thee we may appear
At the eternal Eastertide.

THE GREETING

✠ 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.

The priest welcomes us and introduces the theme of the service.

PRAYER 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.
Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word, and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

**Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy, Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.**

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.
Amen.

The priest invites us to pray silently and then prays the collect:

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness,
and was tempted as we are, yet without sin:
give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit;
and, as you know our weakness,
so may we know your power to save;
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

Please sit

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Romans 5.12-19

Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned – sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so the act of righteousness of one leads to justification and life for all. For just as by the one person's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN PSALM 32

Tune All Saints (*Who are these like stars*)

Our gradual Hymn is a congregational setting of today's psalm.

As we stand and sing the Gospel Book is carried into the midst of the congregation, reflecting God's coming among us in Christ. Please turn to face it.

**Blessed the one who is forgiven,
whose offence is set at nought,
whose iniquity is driven
from the Lord, and out of thought,
in whose mind there is no lie,
no deceit or evil eye.
While my weary bones were silent,
through my groaning all day long;
day and night I was defiant,
when your heavy hand was strong,
sap within was dried away,
like an arid summer day.**

**I declared my violation,
and did not conceal my sin.
I decided on an action,
to confess my guilt within.
You forgave my sinful ways,
guilty past, and evil days.**

**Faithful ones will rise to pray you,
in the time of their distress.
Floods and waters never sway you,
as you guard me through the test,
you, my rock and hiding place,
where we ever sing your praise.**

THE GOSPEL
Matthew 4.1-11

Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.
Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.
The Lord is a great God, O that today you would listen to his voice. Harden not your hearts.
Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written,

"One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."'

Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour; and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.'

Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,

and serve only him.””

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

THE SERMON

A brief period of silence may follow for us to reflect on the address and the readings today, then the priest invites us to stand to declare our faith.

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.**

Sit or kneel to pray

THE INTERCESSIONS

During the prayers these or other responses may be used

**Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.**

And at the end of the prayers we say

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

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

Stand

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.**

We greet those around us in the peace of Christ, shaking hands and saying "Peace be with you"

OFFERTORY HYMN

**Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.**

**O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
a second Adam to the fight
and to the rescue came.**

**O wisest love! that flesh and blood,
which did in Adam fail,
should strive afresh against the foe,
should strive and should prevail;**

And that a higher gift than grace

should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and his very self,
and essence all-divine.

O generous love! that he, who smote
in Man for man the foe,
the double agony in Man
for man should undergo;

And in the garden secretly,
and on the cross on high,
should teach his brethren, and inspire
to suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
and in the depth be praise:
in all his words most wonderful,
most sure in all his ways.

When the altar is prepared and the offerings received the president leads the offertory prayers.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this bread
to set before you,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this wine to set before you,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us the cup of salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

Generous God, as we gather around your table called and welcomed by Christ we present this
money, symbol of all the gifts you give to us.

**use it, use us, in the service of your world
to the glory of your name. 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 indeed right and good to give you thanks
and praise, almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son.
For in these forty days you lead us into the desert
of repentance that through a pilgrimage of
prayer and discipline we may grow in grace
and learn to be your people once again.
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you
bring us back to your generous heart.
Through study of your holy word you open
our eyes to your presence in the world and
free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendour of your love.
As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast
with joyful hearts and minds we bless you for
your mercy and join with saints and angels
for ever praising you and singing:

**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.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:
**Dying you destroyed our death,
Rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

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 [N 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

We kneel or sit as silence is kept before the Lord's Prayer.

**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.**

The priest breaks the consecrated bread, saying

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.**

The priest invites the people to receive Communion, and says

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.

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 your peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

Before I take the body of my Lord,
Before I share his life in bread and wine,
I recognise that sorry things within:
These I lay down.

The words of hope I've often failed to give,
The prayers of kindness buried by my pride,
The signs of care I argued out of sight:
These I lay down.

The narrowness of vision and of mind,
The need for other folk to serve my will,
And every Word and silence meant to hurt:
These I lay down.

Of those around in whom I meet my Lord,
I ask their pardon and I grant them mine,
That every contradiction of Christ's peace
Might be laid down.

Lord Jesus Christ, companion at this feast,
I am empty now my heart and stretch my hands,
And ask to meet you here in bread and wine
Which you lay down.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Once communion has been shared we stand when the priest invites us to pray.

Lord God,
you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;
by it you nourish our faith,
increase our hope,

and strengthen our love:
teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread,
and enable us to live by every word
that proceeds from out of your mouth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

**God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us as we go forward
on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ
our Lord.
Amen.**

NOTICES

*We sit to listen to any notices about parish events.
Banns of Marriage may be announced.
If your Birthday falls this week please tell us we would love to celebrate with you.*

THE DISMISSAL

Stand

THE BLESSING

The Lord be with you
And also with you

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

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

CLOSING HYMN

**O Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end;
be thou for ever near me,
my Master and my Friend:
I shall not fear the battle
if thou art by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if thou wilt be my guide.**

**O let me feel thee near me:
the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,
around me and within;
but, Jesus, draw thou nearer,
and shield my soul from sin.**

**O let me hear thee speaking
in accents clear and still
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
thou guardian of my soul.**

O Jesus, thou hast promised
to all who follow thee,
that where thou art in glory
there shall thy servant be;
and, Jesus, I have promised
to serve thee to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
my Master and my Friend.

O let me see thy foot-marks,
and in them plant mine own;
my hope to follow duly
is in thy strength alone:
O guide me, call me, draw me,
uphold me to the end;
and then in heaven receive me,
my Saviour and my Friend.

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England (2000).

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