

The Bride Valley Service for Sunday 28th February 2021
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

The Greeting

The Lord our redeemer be with you
And also with you.

God of our days and years,
We set this time apart from you.
Form us in the likeness of Christ
So that our lives may glorify you.
Amen.

Hymn

Let us hear our Lord's blessing on those who follow him.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are those who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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 magnify your holy name;
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Readings:

Genesis 17.1-7,15,16

17When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

15 God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Romans 4.13-end

13 For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

16 For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ²³Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Sermon: Bishop Andrew

Confession and Forgiveness

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind,
And with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

**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.**

**Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.**

May almighty God,
Who sent his Son into the world to save sinners,
Bring you his pardon and his peace, now and forever.
Amen.

Hymn

Lord of all hopefulness,
Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like,
No cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking,
And give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord,
At the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled
At the plane and the lathe,

Be there at our labours,
And give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord,
At the noon of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment,
Whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping,
And give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord,
At the end of the day.

Prayers

In Lent we ask again what you require of us, and we get the same answer – ‘to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God’. May that call ring true in the life of our church. Keep us turned outwards in service of others and inwards in love of you. We pray particularly for those making decisions about when and how to resume services in church buildings.

Lenten Lord, **hear our prayer.**

It’s been said that Lent is Easter in disguise, but remind us, Lord, that Easter doesn’t come cheaply, that Lent can’t be trivialised. Ask us the hard questions of lent – how are we living before you? How does it go with your soul? If we have to give things up, enable us. If we have to take more things on, show us. If we have to relish life more fully, give us opportunity.

Lenten Lord, **hear our prayer.**

Lent reminds us of our own poverty, if we measure wealth in terms of spiritual well-being, emotional maturity and moral confidence. But we pray also for those who know the sharp poverties of money, livelihood, opportunity and health. We pray especially for those who are ill and uncertain about the future, for those facing medical treatment this week, and for those whose lives have been reduced to a bed or a chair. We bring particular people to you now ...

Lenten Lord, **hear our prayer.**

Help us Lord, to be attentive this Lent, to listen to our hearts, to the preoccupation of others, and to your quiet voice speaking through everything. We are so easily distracted, so keep us in the case, being attentive, listening to the truth, loving. Here, Lord, is a token of our attentiveness – a minute of silent prayer, bringing our lives before you, asking for grace ... *(silence for a full minute).*

Lenten Lord, **hear our prayer.**

The Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Collect

Almighty God, by the prayer and discipline of Lent may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings, and by following in his Way come to share in his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Conclusion

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**Though he was divine,
He did not cling to equality with god,
But made himself nothing,
Taking the form of a slave,
He was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
And was obedient to death,
Even the death of the cross,
Therefore God has raised him on high,
And given him the name above every other name:
That at the name of Jesus
Every knee should bow,
And every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
To the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Final Prayer

God of compassion,
Through your Son Jesus Christ
You have reconciled your people to yourself.
As we follow his example of prayer and fasting,
May we obey you with willing hearts
And serve one another in holy love;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.