

ASH WEDNESDAY



SUNG EUCHARIST WITH IMPOSITION OF ASHES

WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY 2026

7:30PM

ST CLEMENT'S CHURCH, SANDWICH



SCAN TO VIEW
ON PHONE/TABLET

INTRODUCTION

Today begins the most solemn season of the Church calendar, that of Lent.

On Holy Saturday, 4th April, we will let this building ring out with joy as we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, the eternal light of life in which we are invited to live at all times, in all places.

But that gift of light from God was bought at a great price. His Son, Jesus Christ, came into the world to unite us with God, but we rejected the ways of heaven and chose the easy path of sin and death.

In Lent we veil images of the Cross, and of the Saints, with sackcloth (an ancient English custom) as a reminder of how our sin separates us from God and heaven. We recall the sacrifice that Christ made for us, and how we are drawn back to God by His Blood, as we walk together towards his Last Supper on Maundy Thursday (2nd April) and Crucifixion on Good Friday (3rd April). By praying alongside and for one another we face the uncomfortable reality that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. But if we turn to Christ, and reject sin, death is not the final word. True joy awaits us at the end of this short season. May you be blessed this Lent.

¶ *All are welcome at our acts of worship, regardless of background or faith. If it is your custom, you are invited to receive Holy Communion, or otherwise you are welcome to bring this booklet up with you to receive a blessing.*

¶ *Throughout this booklet references to standing, sitting, and kneeling are all optional, and if you are unable to stand, or would prefer to remain sitting, please feel free.*

¶ *Stand as the Choir enter, and sing the opening of the
Lent Prose.*

Rector In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Rector The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

Rector Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians
have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's
passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of
penitence and fasting.

By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the
call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed
in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our
Lord.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to
the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and
repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading
and meditating on God's holy word.

THE COLLECT

Rector 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.

All **Amen.**

¶ *All sit*

THE FIRST READING

Shout out, do not hold back!
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practised righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgements,
they delight to draw near to God.
'Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?'
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,
and oppress all your workers.
Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.
Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?
Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

Isaiah 58:1-12

THE SECOND READING

So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

‘At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.’

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

THE GRADUAL HYMN

¶ *As the organ introduction begins, all stand to sing.*

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 dewdrops nightly shed,
Prowling beasts about thy way,
Stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.

Let us thine endurance share,
And awhile from joys abstain,
With thee watching unto prayer,
Strong 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 Choir lead the Lenten acclamation of the Gospel*

THE GOSPEL

Rector The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

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

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

‘Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Rector This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you, O Lord.**

THE SERMON

THE LITURGY OF PENITENCE

Rector O God the Father of heaven:

All **have mercy upon us.**

Rector O God the Son, Redeemer of the world:

All **have mercy upon us.**

Rector O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from
the Father and the Son:

All **have mercy upon us.**

Rector O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity,
three Persons and one God:

All **have mercy upon us.**

Rector Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our
forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins: spare us,
good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with
thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.

All **Spare us, good Lord.**

Rector From all evil and mischief; from sin, from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector From all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector From fornication, and all other deadly sin; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and Commandment,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy Nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector By thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgement,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy Nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation,

All **Good Lord, deliver us.**

Rector We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God: and that it may please thee to rule and govern thy holy Church universal in the right way,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector That it may please thee to keep and strengthen in the true worshipping of thee, in righteousness and holiness of life, thy Servant CHARLES, our most gracious King and Governor,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector That it may please thee to rule his heart in thy faith, fear, and love, and that he may evermore have affiance in thee, and ever seek thy honour and glory,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector That it may please thee to be his defender and keeper, giving him the victory over all his enemies,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector That it may please thee to bless and preserve Queen Camilla, William Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector That it may please thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances; and to endue us with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy holy Word,

All **We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.**

Rector Son of God: we beseech thee to hear us.

All **Son of God: we beseech thee to hear us.**

Rector O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

All **Grant us thy peace.**

Rector O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;
All **Have mercy upon us.**

Rector O Christ, hear us.
All **O Christ, hear us.**

Rector Lord, have mercy upon us.
All **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Rector Christ, have mercy upon us.
All **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Rector Lord, have mercy upon us.
All **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

¶ *All say together:*

All 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.

Rector Dear friends in Christ, I invite you to receive these ashes as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

God our Father,
you create us from the dust of the earth:
grant that these ashes may be for us
a sign of our penitence
and a symbol of our mortality;
for it is by your grace alone
that we receive eternal life
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

All **Amen.**

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

¶ *The Rector and people receive the imposition of ashes, during which the Choir sing 'Call to Remembrance' (Richard Farrant). The Rector says to each person:*

Rector Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

¶ *Once the ashing is completed, this prayer is said:*

Rector God our Father,
the strength of all who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers;
and because, in our weakness,
we can do nothing good without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in keeping your commandments
we may please you, both in will and deed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

OFFERTORY

¶ *During this hymn, the altar is prepared*

**LORD Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin;
From earthborn passions set me free,
And make me pure within.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,
With care and woe opprest;
Let me thy loving servant be,
And taste thy promised rest.**

**Lord Jesus, think on me,
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be thou my health and life.**

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
When flows the tempest high:
When on doth rush the enemy
O Saviour, be thou nigh.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
That, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see,
And share thy joy at last.

Rector Merciful Father, turn us from sin to faithfulness and from disobedience to love, and prepare us to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Rector The Lord is here.

All **His Spirit is with us.**

Rector Lift up your hearts.

All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Rector Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

¶ *The Celebrant give thanks to God for his mercy and love, and the hope of the Light of Christ today. This leads into:*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of hosts, Heav'n and earth are
 full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to thee, O Lord most high.
 Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the name of the Lord:
 Ho - san - na in the high - est.

¶ *All kneel or sit*

¶ *The Celebrant offers bread and wine to God, who gives them back to us as the Body and Blood of Christ. The prayer concludes with all joining boldly:*

All Amen.

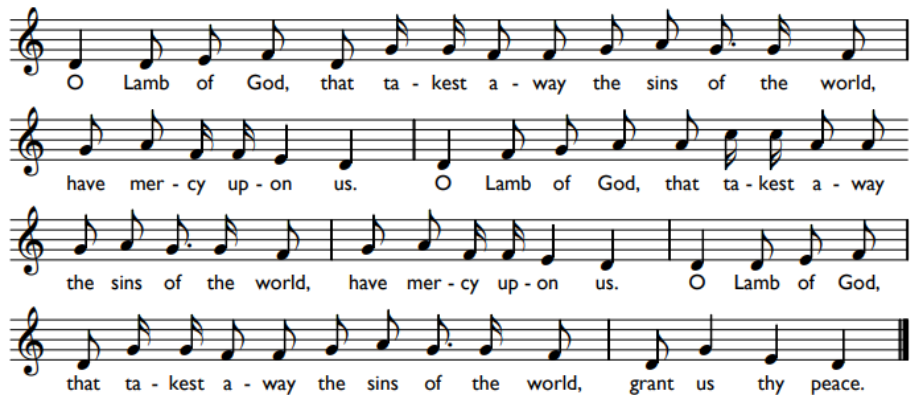
THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Rector 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



O Lamb of God, that ta - kest a - way the sins of the world,
have mer - cy up - on us. O Lamb of God, that ta - kest a - way
the sins of the world, have mer - cy up - on us. O Lamb of God,
that ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

HOLY COMMUNION

Rector Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

All **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but speak the word only and I shall be healed.**

¶ *All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. If you would prefer to receive a blessing, please come forward holding this booklet in your hands and the priest will bless you.*

¶ *The Choir sing Psalm 51:1-13 and 'Jesu, grant me this I pray' (NEH 382)*

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Rector Let us pray.

¶ *All stand*

Almighty God,
you have given your only Son to be for us
both a sacrifice for sin
and also an example of godly life:
give us grace
that we may always most thankfully receive
these his inestimable gifts,
and also daily endeavour
to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

All **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.**

THE FINAL GOSPEL

Rector The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

Rector Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

Rector This is the Gospel of the Lord

All **Praise to you, O Lord.**

THE BLESSING

Rector 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.

All **Amen.**

Rector Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

¶ *All depart in silence.*

¶ *The Rector is available in St Margaret's Chapel for any who seek a quiet conversation.*