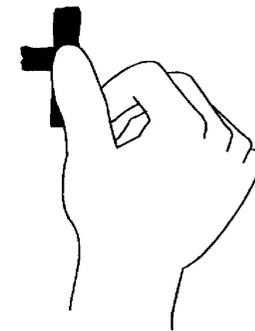


The United Benefice of Kelvedon and Feering
The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Kelvedon
The Parish Church of All Saints, Feering



ASH WEDNESDAY

An online service for the beginning of Lent

GATHERING

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

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit:
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy:
long-suffering, and of great goodness.

GREETING

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All **and also with you.**

INTRODUCTION

Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection.

It became the custom of the Church to prepare for this by a season of penitence and fasting. At first, this season of Lent was observed by those who were preparing for Baptism at Easter and by those who were to be restored to the Church's fellowship, from which they had been separated through sin.

In course of time the Church came to recognize that, by a careful keeping of these days, all Christians might take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and 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 meditation on God's holy word.

All **Lord, give us grace to desire you with our whole heart;
that so desiring, we may seek and find you;
and so finding, may love you;
and so loving, may hate those sins
from which you have delivered us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

This is love, not that we loved God,
All **but that he loved us and sent his Son.**

He is the sacrifice for our sins,
that we might live through him.

If God loves us so much
we ought to love one another.

If we love one another
God lives in us.

BLESSING

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.**

DISMISSAL

Glory to God, whose power, at work among us,
can do infinitely more than all we can ask or conceive;
All **to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

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THE PEACE

Being justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
All: **and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**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.**

FINAL PRAYERS AND RESPONSES

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. **Amen.**

THE COLLECT *The Special Prayer for Ash Wednesday*

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

A short silence is kept.

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 lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Old Testament: ISAIAH 58. 1-12

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah:

¹ 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.
² 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.
³ '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.
⁴ 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.

⁵ 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?

⁶ Is this not 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?

⁷ 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?

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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,

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

¹² 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
that we may show your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Silence is kept.

**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, our God. Amen.**

THE SIGN OF FORGIVENESS

Dear friends in Christ, as a sign of the spirit of penitence
with which we shall keep this season of Lent,
I invite you to mark on your head in water the sign of the cross,
the symbol of our salvation.

This prayer is said for the water to be used for the sign of the cross:

God our heavenly Father,
grant that this water may be for us a sign of our penitence,
a sign of your cleansing, forgiveness and saving love,
and a sign of the grace and new life you alone can give us
in Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Priest and people may mark their foreheads with the sign of the cross.

Each person may say:

Lord, wash me of my sin, and cleanse me of all my iniquity.

This prayer is said:

May the Father forgive us
by the death of his Son,
and strengthen us to live in the power of the Spirit
all our days. **Amen.**

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Lord, have mercy.

We confess to you, Lord:

all our past unfaithfulness:
the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives.

Lord, have mercy.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways,
and our exploitation of other people.

Lord, have mercy.

Our anger at our own frustration
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

Lord, have mercy.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts
and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

Lord, have mercy.

Our negligence in prayer and worship
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

Lord, have mercy.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done:

for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgements, for uncharitable thoughts
towards our neighbours and for our prejudice and contempt
towards those who differ from us.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation
and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

Favourably hear us, for your mercy is great.

We say together **PSALM 51.1-18:**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your loving-kindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offences.
- 2 **Wash me through and through from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.**
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 **Against you only have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight.**
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak,
and upright in your judgement.
- 6 **Indeed, I have been wicked since my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.**
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 **Purge me from my sin and I shall be pure;
wash me and I shall be clean indeed.**
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 **Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquities.**
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 **Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your holy Spirit from me.**
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again,
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
- 14 **I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall return to you.**

- 15 Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
O God of my salvation.
- 16 **Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.**
- 17 Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice,
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
- 18 **The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Second Reading *from the New Testament:* **Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21**

Jesus said to the disciples:

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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.

¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

ADDRESS

SELF-EXAMINATION AND CONFESSION

Let us now call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father,
have mercy on us.

God the Son,
have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,
have mercy on us.

Trinity of love,
have mercy on us.

**Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart,
and mind, and strength.

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.

We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Lord, have mercy.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us.

We have not been true to the mind of Christ.