

THE PARISH OF
WITNEY



St Mary
the Virgin



First Sunday of Lent
The Eucharist
Sunday February 22nd 2026
10.45am

**Saint Mary's Church
in the Parish of Witney.**

We are an inclusive church embracing a hospitable Christianity.

Everyone is welcome at this service. If you usually receive communion please join us – or please come forward to receive a blessing.

If you are interested in becoming a part of what is happening through the church please speak to one of the welcomers afterwards. We also have Welcome Packs available with more information – please ask!

This service is live-streamed. If you do not want to appear on the stream please speak to the Welcomers or Duty Wardens.

Upcoming Events:

- **Wednesdays in Lent: Discussion Group**

Thinking about Worship, Thinking about God

Join members of the clergy team for teaching and discussion about what we do on a Sunday morning and how that links to what we think about God. 6.30pm, Winchester Room, St. Mary's Church.

The first session, on February 25th, is called 'Ritual and Riot'. We'll think about why liturgy matters by looking at the Ritualist controversy in the 19th century.

For spiritual counsel or sacramental confession during Lent please contact Hester or Chris.

The Lent Prose

*As the sacristy bell sounds all stand for the Lent Prose.
The choir sings and we repeat:*



The Procession

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.

Should not we Thy sorrow share
And from worldly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer,
Strong with Thee to suffer pain?

Then 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.

Words: G.H. Smitten, 1822-1870

Music: AUS DER TIEFE, 'M.H' in *Nurnbergisches Gesangbuch* 1676

The Greeting

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

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

The service is introduced.

Prayers of Penitence

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,
where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.
Let us confess our sins remembering before God
The times when we have fallen from temptation into sin.

After a short silence, all say

**All 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.
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.

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.

Kyrie Eleison

We sing together:

The musical score is written in a single treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of three staves, each with two measures. The first staff is labeled 'Choir/cantor' for the first measure and 'All' for the second. The second staff is also labeled 'Choir/cantor' and 'All'. The third staff is labeled 'Choir/cantor' and 'All'. The lyrics are: 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.' on the first staff; 'Chris - te e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son.' on the second staff; and 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.' on the third staff. The notes are quarter notes, with some measures containing eighth notes. The final note of the third staff is a half note with a fermata.

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.

All Amen

The Liturgy of the Word

We sit for the First Reading, Genesis 2.15-17, 3.1-7.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die." ' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm

The choir sings and the congregation repeats, also between verses



Psalm 32, (Chabanel psalms project, Jeff Ostrowski)

We sit for the Second Reading, Romans 5.12-19.

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

‘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.

Matthew 4.1-11

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Creed

Let us declare before God the faith of the Church:

**All 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.

Intercessions

The Intercessor may use the following response:

Lord in your mercy
All Hear our prayer.

Most Merciful God
**All Accept these prayers
For the sake of your Son
Our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

All stand

The Peace

Since we are 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 Offertory Hymn

We stand as the Offertory Hymn is sung and the gifts of bread and wine are placed upon the Altar.

You can give to the work of the Church by signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, or by using these bank details - Witney PCC, Sort Code 20-97-48, Account Number 00971626. There is also a card reader by the North Door, The bread, wine and money are all gifts from God and our offering of them back to God is a sign of the offering of our lives in the Lord's service.

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.

Words: John H Newman, 1865
Music: GERONTIUS, John B Dykes, 1868

Prayer over the Gifts

God of mercy and compassion,
your Word calls us home to faith and love.
accept all we offer you this day;
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
All and also with you
Lift up your hearts
All We lift them to the Lord
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
All 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:

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 4 Hea-ven and earth are full of your glo - ry, Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 6 Bles - sed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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.

Great is the mystery of faith
All Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

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 Mary the Mother of God,
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.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

The Priest breaks the consecrated host

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.

Agnus Dei



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy on us.

4
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy on us.

7
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world, grant us peace.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world;
happy are those who are called to his supper

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

All who are used to receiving Communion are welcome to do so here – please make your way to the altar as directed by the Sidesperson. If you do not wish to receive Communion, you are warmly invited to come forward for a blessing – please approach the president carrying this booklet. Gluten free wafers are available on request.

The Communion Hymn

Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin,
From worldly passions set me free,
And make me pure within.

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

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Thru' darkness and perplexity,
Point to the heav'nly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
And grant me this desire,
That I, with mind and limbs set free
May join the heav'nly choir.

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

Words: Synesius of Cyrene, c.365–414
Music: SOUTHWELL

Post Communion Prayer

Let us 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.

All 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 Notices

The Blessing

Please stand for the Blessing

The Lord be with you
All 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.

All Amen.

The Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Recessional Hymn

O for a heart to praise my God,
a heart from sin set free,
a heart that always feels Thy blood
so freely shed for me.

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
my great Redeemer's throne,
where only Christ is heard to speak,
where Jesus reigns alone.

A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
believing, true, and clean,
which neither life nor death can part
from Christ who dwells within.

A heart in ev'ry thought renewed
and full of love divine,
perfect and right and pure and good,
a copy, Lord, of Thine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
come quickly from above;
write Thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new best name of Love.

Words: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788
Music: STOCKTON

Let us bless the Lord
All Thanks be to God.



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