

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



THE LITURGY OF ASH WEDNESDAY

7PM 05 MARCH 2025

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Clergy and choir process in silence

THE GATHERING

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

All Amen.

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

All and also with you

Introit: Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake

*[Tune: 'Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake' by Richard Farrant or John Hilton,
edited by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1998.*

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Introduction

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.

All Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.

Sit or kneel for

The Litany

The Collect - *The Collect is said after a moment of silence*

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

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

New Testament Reading – 2 Corinthians 5 v 20b - 6 v 10

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.

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Gradual 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.

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.

[G H Smyttan and Francis Pott]

Gospel Reading – John 8 vv 1 - 11

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

All Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

THE LITURGY OF PENITENCE

Confession

All 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 Imposition of Ashes

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.

At the imposition the minister says to each person:

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

At the end:

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.

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The Peace – *We stand*

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.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

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 oppressed;
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.

[Synesius of Cyrene, tr. A. W. Chatfield]

The table is prepared, and bread and wine are placed upon it.

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.

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.

Father, we give you thanks and praise
through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, your living Word,
through whom you have created all things;
who was sent by you in your great goodness to be our
Saviour.

By the power of the Holy Spirit he took flesh;
as your Son, born of the blessed Virgin,
he lived on earth and went about among us;
he opened wide his arms for us on the cross;
he put an end to death by dying for us;
and revealed the resurrection by rising to new life;
so he fulfilled your will and won for you a holy people.

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:

All **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.*

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 Hilda 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.**

The Lord's Prayer

Lord Jesus, remember us in your kingdom
and teach us to pray.

All 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.

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,

All we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes..

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Lamb of God,

All have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ

which he gave for you, and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,

and feed on him in your hearts

by faith with thanksgiving.

**All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.
Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

Communion Hymns

Drop, drop, slow tears,
And bathe those beautiful feet
Which brought from heaven the news and Prince of Peace.

Cease not, wet eyes,
His mercies to entreat;
To cry for vengeance sin doth never cease.

In your deep floods
Drown all my faults and fears;
Nor let his eye see sin but through my tears.

[Phineas Fletcher]

Father of heaven, whose love profound
A ransom for our souls has found,
Before thy throne we sinners bend:
To us thy pardoning love extend.

Almighty Son, incarnate Word,
Our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord,
Before thy throne we sinners bend:
To us thy saving grace extend.

Eternal Spirit, by whose breath
The soul is raised from sin and death,
Before thy throne we sinners bend:
To us thy quickening power extend.

Thrice Holy! Father, Spirit, Son,
Mysterious Godhead, Three in One,
Before thy throne we sinners bend:
Grace, pardon, life to us extend.

[Edward Cooper]

O love, how deep, how broad, how high!
How passing thought and fantasy
That God, the Son of God, should take
Our mortal form for mortals' sake.

He sent no angel to our race
Of higher or of lower place
But wore the robe of human frame,
And he himself to this world came.

For us baptized, for us he bore
His holy fast, and hungered sore;
For us temptation sharp he knew;
For us the tempter overthrew.

For us to wicked men betrayed,
Scourged, mocked, in crown of thorns arrayed;
For us he bore the cross's death;
For us at last gave up his breath.

For us he rose from death again,
For us he went on high to reign,
For us he sent his Spirit here
To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.

All honour, laud, and glory be,
O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee,
All glory, as is ever meet,
To Father and to Paraclete.

[Latin C15th tr. Benjamin Webb]

Prayers after Communion

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.**

Hymn

**O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!**

**Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made thee mourn
And drove thee from my breast.**

**The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.**

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

[William Cowper]

THE DISMISSAL

Responsory

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,
All that we might live through him.
If God loves us so much
All we ought to love one another.
If we love one another
All God lives in us.

The Dismissal Gospel - Luke 15 vv 4-7

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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Blessing

May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

All Amen.

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

All Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ.

All Thanks be to God.

The minister and people depart.

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