

# The Ashburton & Moorland Team

3<sup>rd</sup> before Lent



## ¶ The Gathering

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

**Amen.**

### **Hymn – Blest are the pure in heart**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xw7u0oDHqcU>

Blest are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see our God;  
the secret of the Lord is theirs,  
their soul is Christ's abode.

The Lord who left the heavens  
our life and peace to bring,  
to dwell in lowliness with men,  
their pattern and their king.

Still to the lowly soul  
he doth himself impart  
and for his dwelling and his throne  
chooseth the pure in heart.

Lord, we thy presence seek;  
may ours this blessing be:  
give us a pure and lowly heart,  
a temple meet for thee.

John Keble (1792-1866)

William Hall (1793-1861)

### ***Prayer of Preparation***

**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 worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## ***Prayers of Penitence***

### *The Summary of the Law*

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.**

### ***Confession***

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ  
to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven,  
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,  
firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments  
and to live in love and peace with all.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry 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 grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon us,  
pardon and deliver us from all our sins,  
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,  
and keep us in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### ***Gloria in Excelsis***

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### ***The Collect***

Almighty God, who alone can bring order  
to the unruly wills and passions of sinful humanity:  
give your people grace so to love what you command  
and to desire what you promise,  
that, among the many changes of this world,  
our hearts may surely there be fixed  
where true joys are to be found;  
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. **Amen.**

## .¶ The Liturgy of the Word

### *Readings*

*Jeremiah 17.5-10*

Thus says the Lord:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals  
and make mere flesh their strength,  
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.

They shall be like a shrub in the desert,  
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,  
in an uninhabited salt land.

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.

They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

The heart is devious above all else;  
it is perverse—

who can understand it?

I, the Lord, test the mind  
and search the heart,

to give to all according to their ways,  
according to the fruit of their doings.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## 1 Corinthians 15.12-20

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### ***Hymn – A new commandment***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT0yqUgPvP0>

A new commandment I give unto you:  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this shall all know that you are my disciples:  
if you have love one for another.  
By this shall all know that you are my disciples:  
if you have love one for another.

*(Repeat)*

Unknown  
Based on John 13:34-35

## ***Gospel Reading***

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Luke 6.17-26*

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

'Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

'Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

'Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

'But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

'Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## ***The Sermon***

I've always loved Marmite – it was my favourite tea-time snack as a child, partly because it was all we were allowed on the first slice of bread – on the second we could have jam, but I never really bothered about that. I always had Marmite on the second slice as well!

It had to be Marmite – I really didn't like Bovril!

Anyway, it turns out that I am now a statistic – classified as loving Marmite rather than hating it, according to the advertising! There's been a poll recently, and 33% of people love Marmite, and 33% hate it, with 24% not caring either way. Are you a lover or hater, or a "don't know"?

The thing is that it seems very unlikely that I will change. I see no need to, and I can't imagine not liking Marmite. And I guess it would be the same for those who hate it.

It's not just Marmite, it's all sorts of characteristics that are used to classify people. Surveys are done and we get put into categories such as extrovert or introvert, judgmental or tolerant, patient or impatient, caring or uncaring.

But a moment's thought shows me that this is an oversimplification, as if somehow we can't change our ways. But I think we can – it's hard, but do-able with God's help.

So today's passages are not about condemning half the population and praising the other half. There's no room for complacency if we think we are in the Blessed team.

The passages are really about how to spot what needs changing in ourselves, and seeking God's help to make the changes. The consistent message is that what matters is to love and trust in God, and not to trust solely in our own abilities.

And then some days I think I do really well, other days I seem to get everything wrong – some days I think God might praise me, other days I might feel he will condemn.



So, when we find in the bible that people are divided into sheep or goats, good or bad – with the right sort of people getting God’s blessing, and the wrong sort, God’s curse, what I suggest is that we assume that both sides apply to each of us.

Jeremiah points out what not to do:

“Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals  
and make mere flesh their strength,  
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.”

I’m sure there are times when I think I have all the answers, I have the strength, I can do it without God. So this is a warning to me about what I need to change. How do I change? I need to trust in the Lord more.

“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord”

And it’s worth thinking the same way about Jesus’ “Beatitudes” (a word derived from the Latin for “Blessed”).)

For me I can only engage fully with them if I try and reflect equally on what I get wrong, as much as on what I get right – as it were seeing myself on both sides at once.

Woe if I am rich – if I have more money than I need, how should I behave? Will I be generous or mean?

Woe if I am full – can I really feel satisfied with life if I have plenty and do nothing about those who are hungry ?

Woe if I am laughing now – does that mean that I stop sympathising with the unhappy? Of course not.

Woe if people speak well of me – might it go to my head? Am I becoming arrogant?

I’m sure I fall into all of these traps from time to time.

Woe to me.

So can I rightly claim any of the blessings?

Not really – I am not poor or hungry or weeping at the moment.

Do people hate me? Quite possibly, but probably because I've upset them!

I find it easy to forget that Jesus really was living with the poor and hungry and weeping – and that in a unjust society he was doing all he could to bring them the joy he promised.

And he also brought them the same message that Jeremiah was giving, that blessing is all about turning to God, calling him Father, trusting him to guide and encourage, and also to bring joy. It's really not like Marmite at all!

Amen.

### *The Nicene Creed*

**// 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.**

### ***The Peace***

**We are the body of Christ.  
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.  
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace  
and builds up our common life.**

**The peace of the Lord be always with us.**

### ***Hymn – O God our help in ages past***

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKP\\_XxCBDZY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKP_XxCBDZY)

O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of thy throne,  
thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is thine arm alone,  
and our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
or earth received her frame,  
from everlasting thou art God,  
to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight  
are like an evening gone;  
short as the watch that ends the night  
before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
bears all its sons away;  
they fly, forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
be thou our guide while troubles last,  
and our eternal home!

Isaac Watts  
1674 - 1748)

### ***Prayers of Intercession***

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

God of the prophets,  
God of Christ:  
we are reminded today  
that your blessings do not necessarily follow the logic of the world.

The world believes that the rich are blessed,  
but Jesus reminds us that it is the poor who are blessed,  
the poor in spirit  
and the materially poor as well.

We pray for a more just world  
in which all have enough and none are left behind.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Though we may be afraid of death,  
Jesus tells us that those who mourn are blessed.  
Help us to experience the truth of this mystery;  
bring healing and wholeness to those who are sick;  
and comfort those of us who have lost loved ones.  
Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

While people covet power,  
Jesus blesses the lowly;  
instruct us, O God, in the ways of humility;  
help us to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized;  
show us your presence in the faces of those the world forgets.  
Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Give us a hunger and thirst for righteousness;  
fill our hearts with love, overflowing with mercy;  
make our hearts pure, and give us a vision of your glory.  
Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

In a society divided by  
race, gender, class, ideology,  
and so many other labels that oppress minorities;  
remind us that we are all created in your image,  
each of us a beautiful reflection of you,  
each of us your beloved child.

Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Help us then to end our conflicts and wars,  
help us to be peacemakers and agents of reconciliation.  
Lord in your mercy

**Hear our prayer**

Gracious God,  
you have so richly blessed us with life,  
with love and joy,  
with hope in the midst of despair.  
Help us to be the salt of the earth.  
Help us to be the light of the world,  
sharing with others that which we have received,  
boldly proclaiming the good news of your love,  
finding the seeds of your kingdom within us  
and letting your way grow in our lives and throughout the world.  
Lord in your mercy  
**Hear our prayer**

**Merciful Father,  
accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. 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.**

*Silence is kept.*

**Hymn – All my hope on God is founded**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2oYTtyBSxk>

All my hope on God is founded  
he does still my trust renew;  
me through change and chance he guideth,  
only good and only true.  
God unknown, he alone,  
calls my heart to be his own.

Pride of man and earthly glory,  
sword and crown, betray his trust;  
what with care and toil he buildeth,  
tower and temple, fall to dust,  
but God's power, hour by hour,  
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,  
deep his wisdom, passing thought:  
splendour, light and life attend him,  
beauty springeth out of naught.  
Evermore, from his store  
newborn worlds rise and adore.

Still from man to God eternal  
sacrifice of praise be done,  
high above all praises praising  
for the gift of Christ, his Son.  
Christ doth call one and all:  
ye who follow shall not fall.

Robert Bridges  
(1844-1930)

## ¶ Ending

**Go before us, Lord, in all we do  
with your most gracious favour,  
and guide us with your continual help,  
that in all our works  
begun, continued and ended in you,  
we may glorify your holy name,  
and finally by your mercy receive everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

### *The Blessing*

The peace of God,  
which passes all understanding,  
keep our hearts and minds  
in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us and remain with us always.  
**Amen.**



