

The Ashburton & Moorland Team

2nd before Lent



¶ The Gathering

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

Amen.

Hymn – O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

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

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!

John Monsell
(1811-1875)

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,
you have created the heavens and the earth
and made us in your own image:
teach us to discern your hand in all your works
and your likeness in all your children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,
now and for ever.

Amen.

.¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Readings

Genesis 2.4b-9, 15-25

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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.’

Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.’ So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

‘This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.’

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Revelation 4

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.

And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,
'Holy, holy, holy,
the Lord God the Almighty,
who was and is and is to come.'

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,
'You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn – Praise to the Holiest in the height

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDk4PCyIQg>

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.

John Henry Newman
(1801-1890)

Gospel Reading

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

Luke 8.22-25

One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they put out, and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A gale swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. They went to him and woke him up, shouting, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

I can well remember when I first looked down a microscope and saw tiny animals and plants. They were living in what had looked like almost clear water. This miniature world was amazing and incredibly beautiful – I'd never seen anything like it – it was wonderful.

These days, of course, microscopes are far more powerful, and yet even at much higher resolutions, there are still amazing, intricate structures to be seen at a far smaller scale.

And then, when we look at the stars and galaxies through ever more powerful telescopes, I am again struck by the beauty and intricacy of the heavens.

It's as if God had put as much work into designing and making tiny details and cosmic spectacles as he did in creating the earth and sky. His creation is astounding in its scale and beauty!

So the theme of today is that of appreciating God as craftsman, as the creator of life and beauty, to offer him praise and thanksgiving for his wonderful works.

As well as creating our beautiful world, God also created us, and gave us a natural instinct to appreciate, and wonder at, the beauty and majesty of his creation; and therefore to appreciate, and wonder at, the majesty of God himself.

Indeed, one of his purposes in creating a man and a woman, Adam and Eve, was that they, and then us, would appreciate and value all that he had made.

It's like God put on the greatest show ever, and then, wanting an audience to enjoy it, he created people. His brilliant plan was that his people would be inspired and awed by the wonder of his creation, and would come to praise it and the creator of such beauty.

Imagine Adam being created into a dusty plane, like a desert, and then, with the waters of the stream beginning to flow past, watching God "making grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." Adam must have been stunned! What a spectacle.

And then God created Eve as a companion to share his life. When Adam first saw Eve, he must have fallen in love with her beauty, and she with him.

Perhaps the main purpose of God's creation is his intention that the human spirit naturally and instinctively enjoys beauty in all its forms.

Like entering the stillness of an oak wood, with the birds hopping around and maybe a stream in the distance – one can almost hear the moss growing – like it did in the Garden of Eden.

Like visitors coming to the moor for the first time and being stunned by the tors and the vistas, the valleys and hills, the heather and the gorse in bloom.

Like us making a journey to see a beautiful mountain or a sandy bay.

Like the joy of a new-born baby, who is, of course, the most beautiful baby in the whole world!

Behind all such natural beauty is God's creative hand. It sounds so simple in the collect:

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth
and made us in your own image:

But God was a craftsman. The world we live on, the earth, is not just jumbled together like breeze-blocks on a building site, but shaped into awesome mountain ranges and beautiful islands, meadows and lakes.

And when we gasp in awe at a sunset or a rainbow it's like a burst of joy, praising the Creator of such beauty.

This is worship, worship at its best, enjoying God's glory and beauty. Like stepping outside of ourselves, putting our small ambitions aside, and entering into the presence of God's majesty, where we offer praise and thanksgiving.

It was a vision of God's majesty that inspired St John the Divine, writer of the book of Revelation. There's a short phrase which marks his entry into his vision – the most beautiful he had ever seen. "At once I was in the spirit." He writes.

He had an extraordinary vision composed of light, and jewels, and singing, and, at it's heart, celebrating the four gospel writers, those who captured for all time the story of Jesus. A lion, an ox, a human and an eagle.

It was like he'd crossed a threshold from ordinary experience to extra-ordinary – entering a spiritual vision of “glory and honour and power to the one who sits on the throne.”

It's this sort of vision of the glory of God that has caused generations past to create our beautiful churches, to build stunning cathedrals, to paint pictures, to make tapestry, to carve wood and stone, to make shrines and chapels. All trying to capture a fragment of God's glory.

And in these marvellous settings, to sing God's praise - ‘Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God Almighty.’ Bringing the finest music as further offering to God.

Moments of glory that I find, in my experience, can't be summoned to order, but when experienced are never forgotten.

Reminders to me that it's God's world, and we are safe in it. Just as the disciples were reminded by Jesus in the storm that it was God's world, and they were safe in it.

Our hymns today all reflect the theme of praising God – it's my hope that this morning we might all experience something of God's majesty in our praise.

Praise be to God.

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 – Holy, holy, holy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SHDNs7Dt5M>

**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

**Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.**

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth, and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Reginald Heber
(1783 - 1826)

Prayers of Intercession

United in the company of all the faithful
let us offer our prayers to God,
the source of all life and holiness.

Merciful Lord,
strengthen all Christian people by your Holy Spirit,
that we may live as a royal priesthood and a holy nation
to the praise of Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Bless Robert our bishop, and all ministers of your Church,
that by faithful proclamation of your word
we may be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
into a holy temple in the Lord.
Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Empower us by the gift of your holy and life-giving Spirit,
that we may be transformed into the likeness of Christ
from glory to glory.
Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Give to the world and its peoples
the peace that comes from above,
that they may find Christ's way of freedom and life.
Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Hold in your embrace all who witness to your love in the service of the poor and needy;
all those who minister to the sick and dying;
and all who bring light to those in darkness.

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Touch and heal all those whose lives are scarred by sin or disfigured by pain,
that, raised from death to life in Christ,
their sorrow may be turned to eternal joy.

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Remember in your mercy all those gone before us,
who have been well-pleasing to you from eternity;
preserve in your faith your servants on earth,
guide us to your kingdom,
and grant us your peace at all times.

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 – Praise my soul the King of heaven

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

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him, still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless;
Alleluia, alleluia!
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us,
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia, alleluia!
widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
praise with us the God of grace.

Henry Francis Lyte
(1792-1847)

¶ 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.