

# Ashburton and Moorland Team

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent

13<sup>th</sup> March 2022



## ¶ The Gathering

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

**Amen.**

### **Hymn – Thou didst leave thy throne**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5jeNxB6xAY>

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown,  
when thou camest to earth for me;  
but in Bethlehem's home was there found no room  
for thy holy nativity:

*Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus!  
There is room in my heart for Thee;*

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,  
proclaiming thy royal degree;  
but in lowly birth didst thou come to earth,  
and in greatest humility:

*Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus!  
There is room in my heart for Thee;*

Thou didst come, O Lord, with the living Word  
that should set thy people free;  
but with mocking scorn, and with crown of thorn,  
they bore thee to Calvary:

*Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus!  
There is room in my heart for Thee;*

Heaven's arches shall ring, and a choir shall sing  
at thy coming to victory,  
let thy voice call me home, saying, "Yet there is room,  
there is room at my side for thee!"

And my heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus!  
when thou comest and callest for me;

Emily Elliot  
(1836-1897)

## *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*

God spoke these words, saying, I am the Lord your God.  
You shall have no other gods before me.  
You shall not make for yourself a graven image.  
You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.  
Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.  
Honour your father and mother.  
You shall not kill.  
You shall not commit adultery.  
You shall not steal.  
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.  
You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's.  
**Amen. Lord, have mercy upon us  
and write all these your laws in our hearts.**

## *Confession*

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.  
Let us come to the Lord, who is full of compassion, and  
acknowledge our transgressions in penitence and faith.

**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.**

*Kyrie Eleison*

Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

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.**

## ***The Collect***

Almighty God,  
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,  
that they may return to the way of righteousness:  
grant to all those who are admitted  
into the fellowship of Christ's religion,  
that they may reject those things  
that are contrary to their profession,  
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
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***

*Genesis 15.1-12,17-18*

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.' But he said, 'O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.'

He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.'

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Philippians 3.17 – 4.1*

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn – Take my life and let it be**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvEY4SqqCbo>

Take my life, and let it be  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days,  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move  
at the impulse of thy love;  
take my feet, and let them be  
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing  
always, only, for my King;  
take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold,  
not a mite would I withhold;  
take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine;  
it shall be no longer mine.  
take my heart, it is thine own;  
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure store;  
take my self, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

Francis Ridley Havergal  
(1836-1879)

## ***Gospel Reading***

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.

**Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

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

*Luke 13.31-35*

At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." '

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## ***The Sermon***

In the light of the Russian attacks on Ukraine, it puts the first of today's readings, from Genesis, in a different light. It's about new people taking over someone else's country – Abram is promised by God that his descendants will have ownership of all the land from Egypt to the Euphrates – that is roughly Israel, Jordan and Syria today.

And it's also relevant that the gospel is about how to live in a country that has been invaded – Israel was invaded by the Romans seventy years before Jesus' birth, and throughout his life he encounters Roman soldiers who are the occupying force.

Paul, writing some years after Jesus' death, is grappling with the right way of living, whoever is in power. "Don't set your mind on earthly things" is his message.

They say that "History repeats itself" and that seems very true of today. I've heard quite a few people recently saying that Putin seems to be behaving like Hitler. Perhaps we can also learn a few lessons from further back in time in the Middle East.

Abram was a wandering herdsman based in Iraq, just south of Baghdad. One night he received a dream from God saying that he was to head over to the coastal Mediterranean and settle his tribe down as farmers. And his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. It sounds a beautiful image.

But we don't hear anything of the battles that must have been fought to gain control of the land. However, after the exile to Egypt brought about by famine, we know that Moses led the Israelites back to Israel ready for conflict as they had, for example, to fight for the city of Jericho.

There are some very distasteful stories in the Old Testament about the violence used – for example in Deuteronomy 9 God says "Know then today that the Lord your God is the one who crosses over before you as a devouring fire; he will defeat them and subdue them before you, so that you may dispossess and destroy them quickly, as the Lord has promised you."

It was this background of violent conquest in the land around the city of Jerusalem that was the setting for Jesus' life. The Romans were, in fact, a peaceful occupier at this time – the encounters Jesus had with them are heart-warming stories such as Jesus healing the legionary's daughter. And the soldiers seeking advice about their behaviour. "Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'"

I feel sure that it was Jesus' hope that whoever was in overall power in his country would allow all the different races and creeds to co-exist.

So when the Pharisees came to warn him that his life was in danger from Herod, he almost joked about it, calling Herod an “old fox.”

But Jesus was very upset that there was the potential for violent conflict again in Jerusalem – it did indeed culminate in the violent destruction of the city and temple by the Romans forty years later. So he gave us his wonderful image of himself as a mother hen, gathering her brood under her wings. (Very different from the God of the Old Testament being in the forefront of the army.)

In the face of the violence in Ukraine, isn't it amazing that people on the ground are behaving just as Jesus wished? Protecting the vulnerable, helping women and children to safety, trying to prevent bloodshed.

And I guess it's the same reaction that most of us are feeling today – wanting to protect all those at the risk of harm, to save them somehow – sending money and supplies, pressing for sanctions against Russia, offering safe homes for refugees.

But it's really hard when we feel so powerless, and perhaps guilty that we can't do more.

And yet, over the coming months and years, we will all be bearing the burden of increased fuel prices and other inflationary rises – as we tighten our belts, can we see this as a way of supporting Ukraine?

St Paul encourages us to move away from seeking physical comfort, away from setting our minds on earthly things. He uses the image of our belly being our God to ridicule a lifestyle that depends on physical well-being. “Our citizenship is in heaven,” he reminds us. It's our spirit that matters – it's as fruits of the spirit that justice and peace, love and goodwill flourish.

The people who are staying behind in Ukraine are clearly putting their bodies, their lives, at risk as they focus on keeping the spirit of the country alive. We can rejoice that so many of them are bravely showing their indomitable spirits.

Paul would recognise them as “standing firm”, getting their priorities right, setting aside bodily comfort, injuries, even life itself, to join in supporting and encouraging the people in their communities.

Keeping the spirit alive, looking to Jesus – for “blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”.

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.**

**I / We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

### ***The Peace***

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'

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

### ***Hymn – There's a wideness in God's mercy***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jq6NdOsCdOU>

There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in his justice  
which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more keenly felt than heaven:  
there is no place where earth's failings  
have such gracious judgement given.

For the love of God is broader  
than the scope of human mind;  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.

But we make his love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify his strictness  
with a zeal he will not own.

If our love were but more simple,  
we should take him at his word;  
and our lives would see more gladness  
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

Frederick William Faber  
(1814-1863)

## *Prayers of Intercession*

In the power of the Spirit,  
let us pray to the Father,  
through Christ the saviour of the world.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For forgiveness for the many times we have denied Jesus,

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For grace to set aside bodily comforts  
and seek the spiritual path you lay out before us.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For leaders of nations,  
that they may promote the wellbeing of all their citizens.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For those who are responsible for maintaining law and order,  
both within their own country, and internationally  
that the common life of all people may be ordered

in justice and mercy,

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For those who have the courage and honesty  
to work openly for justice and peace,

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For those whose lives are at risk  
in the battlegrounds of the world,

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For those in the darkness and agony  
of living without adequate shelter, water or food,  
that they may find support and encouragement,  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

For those who, weighed down with hardship,  
failure, or sorrow,  
feel that God is far from them,  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

For those who are sick, at home or in hospital,  
that those caring for them  
might bring healing and relief from pain,  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

For those who have lost loved ones,  
and are suffering grief and loss.  
Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

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

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.**

### ***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

Almighty God,  
you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:  
keep us both outwardly in our bodies,  
and inwardly in our souls;  
that we may be defended from all adversities  
which may happen to the body,  
and from all evil thoughts  
which may assault and hurt the soul;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## *The Blessing*

Christ give us grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny ourselves,  
take up our cross  
and follow him;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us and remain with us always.  
**Amen.**