

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 Lord my God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mTb-cN6lvk>

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed;

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
how great thou art, how great thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

Then sings my soul...

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die – I scarce can take it in
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

Then sings my soul...

When Christ shall come with shouts of acclamation
and take me home – what joy shall fill my heart!

Then shall I bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, 'my God, how great thou art!'

Karl Boberg
(1859-1940)

Then sings my soul...

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 1.1 – 2.3

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Romans 8.18-25

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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)

Gospel Reading

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

Matthew 6.25-34

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

‘So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

They say that you only really appreciate the value of something when you lose it. So Adam and Eve must have felt when they were sent out of the beautiful Garden of Eden – what have we done, why have we thrown away our chance to live for ever in our perfect home?

We can see from the wonderful creation story that we've heard this morning that God trusted the people he created to appreciate and look after their home, indeed their planet.

He created humankind, and gave them dominion over all the fish of the sea, the birds, the animals, everything. He trusted them to look after his creation wisely and well.

But Adam and Eve betrayed his trust, and with that precedent, it's tragic and inevitable that everyone, ever after, would continue to betray God's trust.

What use have we made of our dominion? Have we looked after it well?

Yes and no. Here on Dartmoor with our traditional farming; with many people working to enhance our beautiful scenery; with thousands of people visiting each year to "get away from it all" in a natural environment, there are times when it feels a bit like the Garden of Eden.

And even cold and frosty nights or endless rain don't really matter – ours is a beautiful part of God's creation where people and wildlife can flourish together.

Not without labour though – like Adam, we have to till the ground, manage the trees, keep the gorse at bay by swaling. But to a large extent nothing much has changed for hundreds of years – our mediaeval ancestors would recognise Dartmoor with no difficulty.

So our dominion of this special area of the world has generally been very positive.

And yet, somehow, without really noticing it, some aspects of our lifestyle have led to the inexorable rise in CO2 and other

greenhouse gases, and the entirety of earth is at risk as the climate lurches from one extreme to the other – drought last summer, floods this winter.

What's been happening is that driving to work, flying abroad for our holidays, importing avocados – all sorts of things have been subtly increasing Global Warming by releasing CO₂ into the atmosphere without us noticing.

Add to that the ever-increasing demand for food production to feed the world's five billion inhabitants is causing rain forests to be cut down, wilderness ploughed up, fertile land is degrading into deserts – the world is in pain.

Our “dominion” is slowly killing it.

Because this has crept up on us, it's hard to feel responsible – everyone has a car, we need to keep our houses warm, it's the government's responsibility to provide gas and electricity.

Because it's a collective, long term problem, it doesn't fall into the normal category of sin – it's not easy to confess something almost completely out of our control.

But we are all aware that our dominion over the natural world has, in many places, led to the loss of wildlife and the extinction of dozens of animals and I guess we're all supporting actions that might lead to a reversal of this trend – the recent Biodiversity Summit created a global plan for action – and there's lots of other good news in this direction.

For example we can rejoice that at last the blue whale population is increasing after centuries of decline – we've moved a very long way from the days in my childhood when we bought whale meat as food for our dog.

But countless species are sadly in rapid decline – birds, insects, plants, mammals – primarily because in many places, natural habitats are shrinking fast due to human pressures. The Amazon being a prime example.

We are learning that dominion over God's world carries with it the responsibility for God's wonderful creation.

We do this well locally, but it's evident that we're not doing it well globally – as David Attenborough reminds us so often.

We're also not good at keeping people safe from well-known problems like earthquakes. It's so shocking to see the tragedy of loss of life from the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

Earthquakes are well-understood (though not easily predicted) aspects of nature that we ignore at our peril. Earthquakes are mentioned in the bible – St Paul escaped from a prison because the doors opened in an earthquake.

The problems are known, and buildings can be built to higher standards that resist earthquakes, but they cost more. So the pressure of the need to build more housing more quickly and more cheaply has contributed to the tragic, catastrophic loss of life.

We pray that the lessons will be learnt and the countries will be given the resources to rebuild effectively.

Being given dominion over the world comes with great responsibility, not just for Christians, but for everyone. Being caretakers of our planet is not easy, but our calling is to do all we can to preserve God's beautiful world. His creation is wonderful, and today, as we celebrate it, we commit to caring for it better.

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 – Think of a world without any flowers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsoC1lhBAdE>

Think of a world without any flowers,
think of a wood without any trees,
think of a sky without any sunshine,
think of the air without any breeze.
We thank you, Lord, for flowers and trees and sunshine,
we thank you, Lord, and praise your holy name.

Think of a world without any animals,
think of a field without any herd,
think of a stream without any fishes,
think of a dawn without any bird.
We thank you, Lord, for all your living creatures,
we thank you, Lord, and praise your holy name.

Think of a world without any people,
think of a street with no-one living there,
think of a town without any houses,
no-one to love and nobody to care.
We thank you, Lord, for families and friendships,
we thank you, Lord, and praise your holy name.

Doreen Newport
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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.
In particular we pray for those responding to the earthquakes in
Turkey and Syria,
And for all the international aid agencies helping there
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 Syria and Turkey
coping with the loss of loved ones.
In particular those living without adequate shelter, water or food,
that they may be given support and supplies,
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 – Lord for the years

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

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land in this our generation,
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, for our world when we disown and doubt you,
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you:
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us,
self on the cross, and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Words: Timothy Dudley- Smith
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¶ 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.