

February 21, 2021 - First Sunday of Lent

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| Celebrant: | Rev. Robert Cooke |
| Music: | Tolson Barrington |
| Readers/Prayers: | Deborah Randell |
| Production: | Kevin McGrath |

Opening Hymn: It Is Your Name (Gregory Norbet)

It is your name we bear in our hearts
And we know it through Jesus' word of life.
All the love you have given to him.
In this we share, in this we share.

May we all be one in God's own life.
And see his presence so longing to be known.
And the path that we are free to choose
Will lead us on in search of what is real.

True to his name we hope to live forever.
Seeking peace that comes from deep within.
When we search for meaning beyond words
Will see a new day dawning in our world.

Greeting

The grace and peace of our Saviour Jesus Christ be with you,
and also with you.

Introduction

Dear friends 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.

As we prepare for Easter, when we shall reaffirm the baptismal covenant, let us observe a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word.

Collect of the Day

Let us Pray,
God of the wilderness,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these forty days
to grow in wisdom and prayer,
so that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

MARK 1:9-15

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Hymn: Forty Days and Forty Nights (G.H. Smyttan)

Forty days and forty nights
you were fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights
tempted and yet undefiled.

Burning heat throughout the day,
bitter cold when light had fled;
prowling beasts around your way,
stones your pillow, earth your bed.

Shall not we your trials share,
learn your discipline of will;
and with you by fast and prayer
wrestle with the powers of hell?

So if Satan, pressing hard,
soul and body would destroy:
Christ who conquered, be our guard;
give to us the victor's joy.

Saviour, may we hear your voice
keep us constant at your side;
and with you we shall rejoice
at the eternal Eastertide.

An Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God,

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

As we begin our Lenten journey, we are reminded of the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. Let us take this time to reflect on our own temptations and weaknesses and pray to God for the strength to live our lives following Jesus' example. We offer our prayers saying,

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way.**

Let us pray for our church, its members and our mission in ministry. For Sam, our Bishop and for St. Mark's dedicated leadership team. We pray for the Church of the Province of Central Africa and for the parishes of Brooklyn and Buchans. May we be brought closer to you, as we adapt to the changing needs of this world.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

We pray for those involved in the planning and preparation of St. Mark's upcoming Annual General Meeting. Guide us in the continued work of our parish community and the willingness to give service to others.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

As this province is in uncharted waters, we pray those in authority continue to provide leadership and direction. Grant them wisdom and the desire to make the best choices for your people.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

Dear God, we recognize the worries, fears and anxiety we have with this Covid outbreak. Calm our hearts and minds, and instill in us empathy and kindness for one another. Through your strength, help us to keep perspective.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

We pray for essential workers, guide and protect them as they put themselves in harms way to keep us safe. We especially pray for the healthcare workers and first responders who are working tirelessly to provide care during this lockdown. May we be diligent in our role in supporting these workers by adhering to the public health guidelines.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

We pray for those who are sick and suffering, whether in body, mind or spirit. We especially pray for Pam Janes, Brenda Cantwell, Shirley Cooper, Michelle, Rev. Jerry Colbourne, Ken Bartlett, Clark, Jim Chapman, and for those close to our hearts whom we now name silently or aloud. (Pause). Fill them with strength and courage and help us to be compassionate and understanding to their needs.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

We remember those who have recently died, especially Help us to support those who mourn, that they may find comfort in your presence and love.

Lamb of God: **guide us in your way**

Most merciful God, during this Lenten season, draw us closer to you. May our decisions reflect your will, our actions reflect our faith, and that we may be pleasing in your sight through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord's Prayer

Trusting in the compassion of God, we pray as our Saviour taught us,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Dear friends in Christ,
as we prepare for the Feast of Easter,
let us make ready our hearts
to reaffirm the covenant of our baptism.

Let us ask God to bring to light
the things now hidden in darkness,
and to disclose to us the secret purposes of our hearts.

How faithfully have we continued
in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

How faithfully have we persevered in resisting evil,
and whenever we fell into sin,
repented and returned to the Lord?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

How faithfully have we proclaimed
by word and example
the good news of God in Christ?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

How faithfully have we sought and served Christ
in all persons, loving our neighbours as ourselves?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

How faithfully have we worked
for justice and peace among all people,
respecting the dignity of every human being?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

How faithfully have we worked to safeguard
the integrity of God's creation,
respecting, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth?

Lord, have mercy,

Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Blessing

What does the Lord require? That you do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God. And the blessing of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit be with you this day and always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

The worship has ended; the service begins. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Closing Hymn: You Are Near (Dan Schutte)

Yahweh, I know you are near,
standing always at my side.
You guard me from the foe,
and you lead me in ways everlasting.

Lord, you have searched my heart,
and you know when I sit and when I stand.
Your hand is upon me protecting me from death,
keeping me from harm.

Where can I run from Your love?
If I climb to the heavens You are there;
If I fly to the sunrise or sail beyond the sea,
still I'd find You there.

You know my heart and its ways,
you who formed me before I was born
in the secret of darkness before I saw the sun
in my mother's womb.

Marvelous to me are Your works;
how profound are Your thoughts, my Lord.
Even if I could count them, they number as the stars,
You would still be there.