

## **Christ Church, Ipswich**

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026*

*Family Worship for The Second Sunday in Lent  
with Holy Communion*

Hello, I hope you are well.

For this Second Sunday in Lent, our readings will be Genesis 12:1-4a, Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 and John 3:1-17.

Let us worship God together:

### **Call to worship – Psalm 121**

I lift up my eyes to the hills- from where will our help come?

**Our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

God will not let your foot be moved;  
the God who keeps you will not slumber.

**The God who keeps us neither slumbers nor sleeps.**

The LORD is your keeper;  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

**The sun shall not strike us by day nor the moon by night.**

The LORD will keep you from all evil; God will keep your life.

**The LORD will keep our going out and our coming in  
from this time on and forevermore.**

### **R&S 586 All my hope on God is founded**

1 All my hope on God is founded;  
he doth 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.

2 Human pride and earthly glory,  
sword and crown betray our trust;  
what with care and toil is builded,  
tower and temple, fall to dust.  
But God's power  
hour by hour  
is my temple and my tower.

3 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  
new-born worlds rise and adore.

4 Daily doth the almighty giver  
bounteous gifts on us bestow;  
his desire our soul delighteth  
pleasure leads us where we go.  
Love doth stand  
at his hand;  
joy doth wait on his command.

5 Still from earth 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) altd.\* based on Joachim  
Neander (1650-80)  
William Y. Fullerton. (1857-1932)

### **A prayer of confession and an assurance of forgiveness**

Long ago, Eternal Majesty, You called Abram and Sarah to follow You, to leave their home, their family, and all that was known and secure; we thank You for their faith.

At night, Embodied Word, Nicodemus came and spoke with You, seeking to understand the demands You make, yet not quite risking the commitment; we understand his reluctance.

In our time, Enlivening Spirit, You call us to leave our complacency, to see our world as it really is, and, through the simple things of bread and wine, You transform us.

Help us, Eternal One, to hear and respond to Your insistent call.  
 Forgive us when we hear but don't follow,  
 when we turn our ears to other sounds;  
 when the silent music of Your praise is overcome with our own noise.  
 Forgive us when we refuse to analyse the ills of our world,  
 and when we use complexity as an excuse to do nothing.  
 Forgive us, O God, and give us time to change. Amen.

Hear, O people, good news!  
 Whilst we are still far off, God runs to embrace and welcome us home.  
 Know you are forgiven,  
 know you are given time to change;  
 know you must forgive others and find the courage to forgive yourself. Amen.

### **A prayer of thanksgiving**

God, you may call us to new lands, new experiences on our journey. Thank you that you go before us, that you provide for us, that your love surrounds us. Wherever we go, you are with us; may we honour you, wherever we are. **Amen.**

### **A prayer of thanks and dedication for all our giving**

Eternal God, long ago You called folk to follow you, to change their lives, to join a radical new movement to change the world.  
 Bless these gifts of our love, that we return to You,  
 and help us to see You at work in our world, so we can join in. Amen.

#### **Old Testament Reading**

**Genesis 12:1-4a**

**(OT page 9)**

#### *The Call of Abram*

12 Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

<sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

#### **Epistle Reading**

**Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

**(NT page 142)**

#### *The Example of Abraham*

**4** What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup>For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup>For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.'<sup>4</sup> Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup>But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

#### *God's Promise Realized through Faith*

<sup>13</sup>For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup>If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup>For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup>For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup>as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

**R&S 38 Thou whose almighty word**

1 Thou whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight;  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel-day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light!

2 Thou who didst come to bring  
on thy redeeming wing  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
now to all humankind  
let there be light!

3 Spirit of truth and love,  
life-giving, holy dove,  
speed forth thy flight;  
move on the waters' face,  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
and in earth's darkest place  
let there be light!

4 Holy and blessed Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might,  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the world far and wide,  
let there be light!

John Marriott (1780-1825)

**Gospel Reading****John 3:1-17****(NT page 87)***Nicodemus Visits Jesus*

**3** Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. **2** He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' **3** Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' **4** Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' **5** Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. **6** What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." **8** The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' **9** Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' **10** Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? **11** 'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. **12** If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? **13** No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. **14** And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. **16** 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. **17** 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

**A Talk reflecting on today's readings, followed by a moment for personal reflection****Our prayers of intercession**

Lord, as we come to you today, our minds are full of questions. Just like Nicodemus, we want to know how and why. Thank you that you are a God who listens, a God who invites us to ask, a God who wants us to relate to you. So, here we are with our questions... some of which we name in our hearts right now.

Lord, we have so many questions

**Help us to listen for your answers**

Lord, today our first questions must be: **Why?** We come with heavy hearts asking why there are wars in Ukraine and Gaza and so many parts of Africa. We want to know why the leaders of so many nations want to wield power instead of bowing down to you. We ask why we have allowed ourselves to spoil your world with pollution and mismanagement of resources so that many millions starve while others have more than enough. Lord, these are heartfelt questions that we can't answer. But you are the God who sees. You are the God who will one day bring justice. You are the Lord to whom one day every knee will bow. In the meantime, Lord, show us how to be peacemakers. Show us how to work for justice. Help us to be the answer to our prayers.

Lord, we have so many questions

**Help us to listen for your answers**

Lord, we pray for our local community as we ask: **What?** Help us to see **what** you are doing and to follow you. We ask: What are you doing in our schools? We pray for pupils and teachers, for all who love you who are trying to show their friends and colleagues who you are. Thank you for a new openness to spirituality and for all those schools that have prayer spaces, allowing young people to connect with you.

We pray for local businesses and shops, our health facilities and community centres. We ask you to show us what we can do, as individuals or as a congregation, to serve those who work around us each day.

Lord, we have so many questions

**Help us to listen for your answers**

Lord, as we think of our neighbourhood, we ask: **Who?** Who needs to know the touch of your love this week? We think particularly of those we know who are in pain, especially... we pray for those we know who are sick....

Lord, wrap your loving arms around those who are sad today, we pray... give peace to those who are fearful or troubled or awaiting test results or a diagnosis...

Help those who struggle in any way, maybe at school, or because they are not as young as they once were.

And Lord, we also rejoice with those who are happy today: because of a birth, or good news, an exam passed, a successful interview, a birthday. Even if we are not feeling happy, give us the grace to rejoice with those who are.

Lord, we have so many questions

**Help us to listen for your answers**

Finally, Lord, we think about: **Where?** Where are you sending us this week? We picture the places that we expect to be going to: work, school, surgery, shops, friends' houses. Go before us, Lord, and prepare the way so that our words will be your words and our actions your actions. And Lord, some of us may be going to places we don't expect this week. Give us the courage to go to places that may be scary or unusual or new. Help us to know that you are with us every step of every day.

Lord, we have so many questions

**Help us to listen for your answers**

Lord, so often we bombard you with questions and demand answers. Help us this week to be quicker to listen than to speak. Help us to trust you in the storms and the calm. Help us to watch what you do and follow with courage and joy. And give us the grace to see when we can be the answers to our prayers.

**Thank you for being the God who listens to our prayers.**

**Amen**

### **Hymn     Here is love vast as the ocean**

Here is love vast as the ocean,  
loving kindness as the flood,  
when the Prince of life, our ransom,  
shed for us His precious blood.  
Who His love will not remember;  
who can cease to sing His praise?  
He can never be forgotten  
throughout heaven's eternal days.

On the mount of crucifixion  
fountains opened deep and wide;  
through the floodgates of God's mercy  
flowed a vast and gracious tide.  
Grace and love, like mighty rivers  
poured incessant from above;  
and heaven's peace and perfect justice  
kissed a guilty world in love.

After William Rees

**The children and Young People return ready for Holy Communion**

## Holy Communion

The Lord be with you: **and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts: **we lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God: **it is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is right and good, O Most High, to give you our thanks and praise,  
for you have called us to be Your Church,  
to shine as a light to the nations, to embody Your love, liberty, and life.

Through the waters of baptism,

You call us to live lives worthy of our calling,  
to be signs of contradiction to the values of our world,  
and to encourage each other to the ways of holiness.

Around this table You meet and nurture Your people, with Your very self.  
Through the mystery of this bread and wine You lift us into your presence  
and so with the choirs of angels in heaven,  
and with all Your creation we sing to Your praise and glory:

### Ash Grove Sanctus

The Rev'd Michael Forster (b1946) © Kevin Mayhew Ltd 1995 Tune: The Ash Grove

**O holy, most holy,  
the God of creation,  
for ever exalted  
in pow'r and great might.  
The earth and the heavens  
are full of your glory.  
Hosanna, hosanna  
and praise in the height!**

**How blessed is He  
who is sent to redeem us,  
who puts ev'ry fear and  
injustice to flight;  
who comes in the name of  
the Lord as our saviour.  
Hosanna, hosanna  
and praise in the height!**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night, in which he was betrayed,  
took bread and when he had given thanks to you, O Most High,  
broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.

The same way after supper, he took the cup  
and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and saying:

Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Lord Jesus, we commemorate your death on the Cross,  
we celebrate your resurrection and we await your coming.

Eternal God, let your Holy Spirit move in power over us  
and over these earthly gifts of bread and wine,  
that they may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ,  
and that we may become one in him.

May his coming in glory find us ever watchful in prayer,  
strong in truth and love, and faithful in the breaking of the bread.

Then, at last, all peoples will be free, all divisions healed,  
and with your whole creation, we will sing your praise,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours,  
almighty Majesty, for ever and ever. Amen

### The Breaking of Bread

Jesus said, 'This is my body which is for you;  
do this in memory of me'.

### *Sharing the Bread*

Take this in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

### **The Lifting of the Cup**

In the same way,  
he took the cup after supper, and said:  
'This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood.  
Whenever you drink it,  
do this in memory of me.' 1 Corinthians 11:25

### *Sharing the Wine*

Drink this and remember that Christ's blood was shed for you and be thankful.

### **Prayer following Holy Communion**

Having now by faith received the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, let us give thanks:

Merciful God of all creation, holy Parent of all people through our Lord Jesus Christ who united all things in His fullness, we join Your whole creation in exultant praise of Your bountiful goodness. You have now touched us with new life and filled us with new hope that Your reign will come, that the hungry will be fed, that the oppressed will be set free from evil, that Your reconciling work will be done, that love and faithfulness meet together, that justice and peace will kiss each other and the whole creation filled with your glory.

**Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power, and might,  
be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen**

*(Liturgy adapted from the Church of South India's Shorter Form of Holy Communion)*

### **The Lord's Prayer** (sung)

#### **R&S 344 God of grace and God of glory**

1 God of grace and God of glory,  
on thy people pour thy power;  
crown thine ancient Church's story;  
bring her bud to glorious flower.  
Grant us wisdom,  
grant us courage,  
for the facing of this hour.

2 Lo! the hosts of evil round us  
scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!  
From the fears that long have bound us,  
free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom,  
grant us courage,  
for the living of these days.

3 Cure thy children's warring madness;  
bend our pride to thy control;  
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,  
rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom,  
grant us courage,  
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

4 Save us from weak resignation  
to the evils we deplore;  
let the gift of thy salvation  
be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom,  
grant us courage,  
serving thee whom we adore.

H. E. Fosdick (1878-1969) altd.

### **The Blessing**

May the One who, through the waters of baptism, has made you part of the Church, sustain and strengthen your faith. May the One who, through loving kindness, feeds you with His own self at His own table, give you the grace to challenge and change our world. May the One who, in mysterious ways, has guided the Church throughout the ages, guide you in your everyday discipleship.

And may the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you and those whom you love, now and always, Amen.

### **The Grace is shared with one another**

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