

**Sunday 25 February 2024**

# The Second Sunday of Lent



Lake Minnewanka in Banff, Canada © Tracey Whitefoot, on Twitter.

**Sermon** © Dean Stott.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

The hymns are YouTube links. To hear the hymns please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

**HYMN 1** [The cross of Christ](#)

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

## The Welcome

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

**All Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All And also with you.**

## The Preparation

**All 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.**

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.’

And 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.

**All Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

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 confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

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

**All**    **Amen.**

*It is usual to omit the Gloria during Lent.*

### **The Collect for the Second Sunday of Lent**

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.

**All**    **Amen.**

## First reading

A reading from the First Book of Moses called Genesis

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face [in worship]; and God said to him,

'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

*Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from St Paul's Letter to the Romans

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. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. 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, 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. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations,' according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning

the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.'

Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him,' were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. *Romans 4:13-25*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 [In the cross of Christ I glory](#)** (click on this link to hear the hymn)

## **Gospel reading**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' And they answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.' *Mark 8:27-38*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

May I dare to speak in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My grandmother was a jolly woman who had many talents. She loved to paint portraits, various scenes and was quite accomplished. She made wedding cakes and was great at baking. She had a lovely quiet personality and a peaceful disposition; but all that would change though on a Saturday afternoon as she followed the wrestling on the television. It was a key event in her week, something to look forward to and we would watch together whenever I visited. She would shout and wave at the television as she cheered for her favourite wrestler. There was a lot of drama, play acting and theatrics as each wrestler attempted to get their opponent to totally submit to them. She loved it.

In Jesus' time, a person carrying their own cross was in total submission. It literally meant carrying it to the site of your own crucifixion. Jesus' followers would have understood what he meant and the very serious nature of what 'carrying your own cross' entailed. The cross they would carry would have been a heavy piece of wood, not smooth and planed down. The cross bar carried was estimated to be around 32–41 kilograms in weight and a whole cross around 136 kilograms. Weakened by torture, scourging and beatings, the cross would feel even heavier. The act of carrying your cross would have been an act of total submission as they carried the instrument of their impending death to a place of execution.

When Jesus carried his cross, he fell and Simon of Cyrene had the cross put upon him by the Roman soldiers. On the one hand we can see that this is just a soldier getting the cross to the place of execution and forcing someone else to carry it. But, on the other, we can see just how far our Lord and Saviour would go to humble himself for us. To put himself in such a low position in such a place of weakness that the one who created it all needed help.

Carrying your cross in Jesus' time meant being totally and utterly in submission to your captors. Imagine Jesus who had the power to heal the sick, raise the dead and to cast out demons being totally and utterly in submission and actually choosing to be so for you and for me.

Jesus carried his cross out of extreme love for us and he tells us to take up our own cross, deny ourselves and follow him. To carry our cross, then, is to submit to Jesus in all the areas of our life. To humble ourselves to him in service and adoration. To put Jesus at the heart of everything, to be totally and completely his. There can be no half-hearted measures, we must examine ourselves, and confess and deal effectively with our sin. We must look at our motives for doing the things

we do. Our thoughts and actions must be totally modelled on Jesus. We must strive whole heartedly to completely submit to his love and to remove anything that is in opposition to our walk with him.

To submit totally to Jesus means to imitate him, to be like him in nature. To grow and grow more into his likeness and image. To love like him. To care like him. To forgive like him. To give of yourself like him. To lay down your life for others like him. To truly follow him in all his ways. Not just the parts we like but in every aspect of life. It is an intentional disowning of the self or stepping away from you being primary in your life and putting Jesus first. Putting his ways, commands and teaching at the forefront of everything.

Someone once said to me that it is easy to be a Christian. You can eat what you want, if you make a mistake you're forgiven. But it is not easy at all is it? To love some of the most difficult people, to forgive terrible things, to be a true servant to others, to wash one another's feet in love ... all of it requires a constant focus on Jesus. To be daily topped up by Christ's love and generosity of spirit. To allow him to take the strain and to lead the way.

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. This sounds really confusing, but if we really carry our cross we die to self, are changed and are set free from this life to do God's will. We are set free to stop chasing what the world considers to be valuable, essential or desirable for humankind. The currency of the Kingdom of God is love and as we lose this life of self we gain the eternal love and our true identities in Jesus. We take on a new Christ like identity full of his peace, faithfulness, joy and gentleness of spirit saving our lives for the Gospel.

Submission to God is not about being forced to do so, it's about willingly, wanting to. Jesus willingly did the Father's will. It was achieved by remaining close to God in prayer.

Submitting to Jesus as Lord and Saviour of our lives might mean that we lose friends, relationships, status, promotion or job, or even liberty. There is a potential cost. But what you gain is a transformed eternal life with him in you and you in him.

The apostle Paul said he considered everything that he gained a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For who's sake he lost all things. He said he considered them garbage that he may gain Christ.

To take up your cross and lose your life for Jesus is to gain your true eternal life in the Lord and is priceless. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? It is no good at all. In this relatively short and troubled earthly life nothing can compare to the love and life found in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
the source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.**

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

## Prayers of intercession

With confidence and trust let us pray to the Father.

For the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church ...  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

For the mission of the Church,  
that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel  
to the ends of the earth,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

For those preparing for baptism [and confirmation] ...  
and for their teachers and sponsors,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**



For peace in the world ...  
that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow  
among nations and peoples,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer ...  
for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger;  
that they may be relieved and protected,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

For those whom we have injured or offended,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God,  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of holiness ...  
let us pray to the Father.

Lord of compassion,

**All in your mercy hear us.**

God our Father,  
in your love and goodness  
you have taught us to come close to you in penitence  
with prayer, fasting and generosity;  
accept our Lenten discipline,  
and when we fall by our weakness,  
raise us up by your unfailing mercy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

Merciful Father,

**All** accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

## The peace

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

**All** And also with you.

**HYMN 3** [Lift high the Cross](#)  
[The power of the Cross](#)

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness,  
to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him;  
and the blessing of God the Almighty:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All** Amen.

**HYMN 4** [When I survey the wondrous cross](#)  
[When I survey the wondrous cross](#)  
[When I survey the wondrous cross](#)

[\(traditional version\)](#)

[\(virtual choir, different tune\)](#)

[\(modern version\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All** In the name of Christ.  
**Amen.**

# The Liturgy of the Sacrament

## Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Father, you made the world and love your creation.  
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.  
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death.  
And so we gladly thank you,  
with saints and angels praising you, and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
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, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All**     **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.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All**     **Though we are many, we are one body,**  
          **because we all share in one bread.**

**All**     **Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

**All** We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.  
But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.  
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us.  
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

### **Prayer after Communion**

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.

**All** Amen

**All** Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.