

**Parishes of Elstead,
Thursley, Shackleford and Peper Harow**



Lent

Service of the Word for the Season of Lent

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Welcome to the Season of Lent

The Christian community is invited into a season of study and repentance, for a period of forty days. This reminds us of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence; from the middle ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross.

During the season of Lent, Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. Gloria in excelsis is not used.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetareor Refreshment Sunday) was allowed as a day of relief from the rigour of Lent, and the Feast of the Annunciation almost always falls in Lent; these breaks from austerity are the background to the modern observance of Mothering Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

As Holy Week approaches, the atmosphere of the season darkens; the readings begin to anticipate the story of Christ's suffering and death, and the reading of the Passion Narrative gave to the Fifth Sunday its name of Passion Sunday.

Source: Common Worship—Tides and Seasons

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Source: Common Worship—Tides and Seasons

The Gathering

HYMN

Forty days and forty nights
thou wast fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights
tempted, and yet undefiled.

Sunbeams scorching all the day;
chilly dew-drops nightly shed;
prowling beasts about thy way;
stones thy pillow, earth thy bed.

Let us thine endurance share,
and awhile from joys abstain,
with thee watching unto prayer,
strong with thee to suffer pain?

And if Satan, vexing sore,
flesh or spirit should assail,
thou, his vanquisher before
grant we may not faint nor fail.

So shall we have peace divine;
holier gladness ours shall be;
round us too shall angels shine,
such as ministered to thee.

Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by thy side;
that with thee we may appear
at the eternal Eastertide.

George Hunt Smyttan (1822-1870), Francis Pott (1832-1909)

The Greeting

The Lord our redeemer be with you
and also with you.

Words of Welcome are said and Notices are given

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Opening Prayer

God of our days and years,
we set this time apart for you.
Form us in the likeness of Christ
so that our lives may glorify you.
Amen.

The 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

Let us confess to God our sins and the shortcomings of the world; its
pride, its selfishness, its greed; its divisions and hatreds.

God our Father, we are sorry
for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly,
and acted ungratefully.
Father in your mercy:
forgive us and help us

We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,
but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.
Father in your mercy:
forgive us and help us

We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,
but ignore the cry of the hungry.
Father in your mercy:
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Father in your mercy:
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We are thoughtless,
and do not care enough for the world you have made.
Father in your mercy:
forgive us and help us

We store up good for ourselves alone,
as if there were no God in heaven.
Father in your mercy:
forgive us and help us

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.
Amen.

The Collect

Let us pray for grace to keep Lent faithfully.

Silence is kept.

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

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Genesis 9.8–17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature

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on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.” So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

Second Reading 1 Peter 3. 18- end

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

At the end of each reading the reader says

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN 🎵

Now when peace like a river attendeth my soul,
And when sorrows like sea billows roll,
Then whatever my lot You have taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

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Now when peace like a river attendeth my soul,
And when sorrows like sea billows roll,
Then whatever my lot You have taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well with my soul when the storms of winter blow,
And the cares of this world take their toll.
In the heat of the day there is grace enough to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

And when satan should tempt me and trials should come,
Let this blessed assurance control:
For He sees every weakness and knows every fear,
And has shed His own blood for my soul.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1.9–15

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

This is the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

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Sermon

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Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but Thee;
Yet possessing every blessing
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
All our weakness Thou dost know,
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
self denying, death defying,
thou to Calvary didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy;
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston, altd.

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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Prayers of Intercession

The following response may be used

Lord, meet us in the silence:
and hear our prayer.

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

The Lord's Prayer

Believing the promises of God, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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.**

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The Peace

Christ is our peace.
If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.
The old has passed away:
behold, everything has become new.

2 Corinthians 5.17

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace

HYMN

God is working his purpose out, As year succeeds to year;
God is working His purpose out, And the time is drawing near;
Nearer and nearer draws the time, The time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God,
as the waters cover the sea.

From utmost east to utmost west wherever feet have trod,
by the mouth of many messengers goes forth the voice of God,
'Give ear to me, ye continents, ye isles, give ear to me,
that the earth may be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.'

What can we do to work God's work, to prosper and increase
the love of God in all mankind, the reign of the Prince of Peace?
What can we do to hasten the time, the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea?

All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed;
vainly we hope for the harvest-time till God gives life to the seed;
yet nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
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Arthur C. Ainger.

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The Blessing and the Sending Out

God of compassion,
through your Son Jesus Christ
you have reconciled your people to yourself.
As we follow his example of prayer and fasting,
may we obey you with willing hearts
and serve one another in holy love;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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