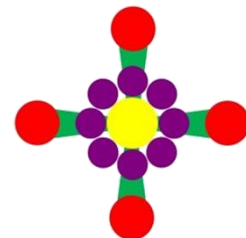


**The Benefice of  
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme  
7th February 2021  
Second Sunday before Lent**



Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

The Lord of glory be with you.  
**The Lord bless you.**

**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.**

Penitence

'I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness  
but shall have the light of life.'

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought, in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love, and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed, 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 lead us out from darkness to walk as children of light. Amen.**

The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins,  
time for amendment of life, and the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## Glory to God

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

Let us pray that we may know and share the light of Christ,

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 Reading: **Proverbs 8:1, 22-31**

Does not wisdom call,  
and does not understanding raise her voice?  
The Lord created me at the beginning of his work,  
the first of his acts of long ago.  
Ages ago I was set up,  
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.  
When there were no depths I was brought forth,  
when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped,  
before the hills, I was brought forth—  
when he had not yet made earth and fields,  
or the world's first bits of soil.  
When he established the heavens, I was there,  
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,  
when he made firm the skies above,  
when he established the fountains of the deep,  
when he assigned to the sea its limit,  
so that the waters might not transgress his command,  
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,  
then I was beside him, like a master worker;  
and I was daily his delight,  
rejoicing before him always,  
rejoicing in his inhabited world  
and delighting in the human race.

**Gospel: John 1: 1-14**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Both of today's readings talk about "beginnings" and it is certainly a time when we can notice new things starting all around us.

This week we were told that we have "passed the peak" of the epidemic in the UK and that numbers of cases, deaths and hospital admissions are "beginning" to fall. It is a sign of hope which can give us an encouragement on our journey. It is not the end though, but hopefully the beginning of the end.

When I did the Coast to Coast walk, each leg of the fourteen day journey included at least one peak. There was certainly pain on the way up as I could feel my lungs and legs aching with the climb. Getting to the top was a wonderful feeling, reaching the peak in the joy that the climb was done! But sometimes the way down was tough and brought new pains. This time it was my knees that took the punishment and the blisters on my feet!

Beginnings are certainly not endings, although they mark a clear change and move us away from one ending behind us and set our eyes looking forward to a new goal.

When the snow came this week I noticed something that also gave me great encouragement. When the same amount of snow fell the previous time, the whole garden was buried under it, only the shrubs and bushes could be seen, even then under a thick blanket of snow. But this week out from the snow poked the spiky green leaves and flower spikes of the daffodils. In the days between the snowfalls they had grown enough to prevent being buried. This time they stood proud and defiant, a sign of an unbeatable beginning, a looking towards turning our back on winter and turning to face the spring.

The story of God is filled with this momentum. Out of endings come beginnings, out of darkness comes light, out of death comes life.

In ten days we begin our journey of Lent on Ash Wednesday. It is another point of beginning and as we start this journey I would like to encourage you to do three things:

1. Take time to think back: Usually in Lent we give things up and I would be encouraging you to consider what you might give up this year. But this time I'd like to suggest something rather different. All of us have given things up over the last year. Take time to think what you have lost during our COVID year. For some this will be people, loved ones, family or friends; for some it will be freedom and social interaction; for some it will be livelihoods or income. Take time to think about what you have lost. The book of Ecclesiastes says that there is a time to mourn, take time in Lent to recognise and carry the sense of loss.

2. Search for God's beginnings in you: "The story of God is filled with this momentum. Out of endings come beginnings, out of darkness comes light, out of death comes life." What is God trying to begin in you? Where is God seeking to shine his light? Where is new life coming, even perhaps from the things that now are lost?

3. Sign up to be part of "The Lent Encounter!" This is a Daily Lent Course for 2021 which is run by The Bible Society. Each day there is a Bible Verse, an inspiring image, a video reflection and a practical challenge. [Click here to sign up](#)



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.**

### Prayers of Intercession led by Beverly Hirst

Blessed are you, Lord God Almighty.  
You are the giver of life and power;  
all energy, all strength comes from you.  
We come to you for renewal and refreshment.  
We come to rest in your presence that we may find strength and hope in you.  
We pray for all who preach the word and administer the sacraments,  
that they may find great strength from your presence.  
May the Church be a place of stillness and refreshment.  
May your people show that you give joy and peace to their lives. Amen.

Lord God we especially ask for joy and peace through your Church.  
In these times of lockdown and restrictions, we ask that our faith will sustain us.  
May the Church community through the pastoral care, the newsletters and telephone calls,  
give comfort to those living alone, to those who feel they have limited support.  
We ask you to bless our homes, family, neighbours and friends.  
Make us all truly aware of each other and give support to each other.  
Lord God, we wait before you.

**Renew our strength.**

We pray for the governments and powers of the world.

We pray that they use their powers properly, that the poor and weak are protected, and no one is exploited. We pray especially at this time for those caught up in wars and violence. To those in Myanmar caught up in the military coup, we pray for peaceful outcomes in all areas of conflict across the world.

Lord God, we wait before you.

**Renew our strength.**

We pray for and remember all those involved in the vaccine programme, all the professionals and volunteers who give their time freely.

Let us pray also for all those who are ill in hospital with coronavirus, for all those who are caring for them. Please give them strength and resilience to continue.

Let us also pray for those who are ill at this time and remember especially those named on the notice sheet and those who we know personally.

We also remember and pray for all the families who cannot be with loved ones who are ill or who live in Care and Nursing homes.

Lord God, we wait before you.

**Renew our strength.**

We give thanks that Christ is our healer and our redeemer; he will not allow us to be lost. We pray for loved ones departed who are renewed and refreshed in the love and light of God.

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

**The Peace**

In the tender mercy of our God,  
the dayspring from on high has broken upon us,  
to give light to those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you

## The Lord's Prayer

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.

## Final Responsory

Assist us with your grace, heavenly Father,  
**that we may continue in holy fellowship,**  
**and walk in goodness the way you have prepared for us;**  
Here we bless one another in your name.  
**Help us, who now go in peace, to shine with your light in the world.**

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us, and remain with us always.  
**Thanks be to God. Amen.**



[Click here to sign up](#)