**Morning Prayer The Second Sunday of Lent**

**Sunday 23rd March 2025 at 9.30 (call in from 9.15)**

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85649430168?pwd=QzFzNytXM01TQTc5cTROaHc2aElvZz09

Meeting ID: 856 4943 0168

Passcode: 336782

**Telephone instructions:**

\* Dial: 0131 460 1196  
  
\* You are then welcomed to Zoom and asked to type in the meeting ID ie. 856 4943 0168  
  
\* If the next instruction is to add your personal ID just press # to ignore  
  
\* When passcode requested type numbers i.e. 336782 plus #.  
  
\* At this point you should be admitted to the call.****

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**Preparation**

Creator God, as we gather today,  
we know we have often failed to choose well.  
Be with us, as we hear again  
the stories of your limitless love  
and measureless grace.  
**Amen.**

Are you thirsty? Are you hungry? Are your pockets empty?  
Come, eat, drink and be satisfied.  
For money cannot buy such soul-enriching fare  
as you will find in the presence of our holy, merciful God.

**Amen.**

**A prayer of confession**

Father God, you give us the gift of abundant life,  
providing for our physical and spiritual needs.  
We’re sorry for taking your provision for granted.  
We’re sorry: when we lose sight of your loving mercy  
and get wrapped up in our own self-indulgent desires;  
for failing to rejoice and sing your praises;  
for focusing on the negatives instead of the positives;  
for being judgemental and not giving others a second chance.  
**We repent, Father God:**  
**help us to turn around and to bear good fruit.**

**Assurance of forgiveness**

God has mercy on all who turn to him.  
He freely pardons and forgives our sins.  
**We are free to begin anew.**  
**Amen.**

**The Word of God**

*First Reading* Isaiah 55: 1-9

### Invitation to the Thirsty

**55**“Come, all you who are thirsty,  
    come to the waters;  
and you who have no money,  
    come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
    without money and without cost.  
**2**Why spend money on what is not bread,  
    and your labour on what does not satisfy?  
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,  
    and you will delight in the richest of fare.  
**3**Give ear and come to me;  
    listen, that you may live.  
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,  
    my faithful love promised to David.  
**4**See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,  
    a ruler and commander of the peoples.  
**5**Surely you will summon nations you know not,  
    and nations you do not know will come running to you,  
because of the Lord your God,  
    the Holy One of Israel,  
    for he has endowed you with splendour.”

**6**Seek the Lord while he may be found;  
    call on him while he is near.  
**7**Let the wicked forsake their ways  
    and the unrighteous their thoughts.  
Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them,  
    and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

**8**“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
    neither are your ways my ways,”  
declares the Lord.  
**9**“As the heavens are higher than the earth,  
    so are my ways higher than your ways  
    and my thoughts than your thoughts.

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

Psalmody Psalm 63 1-9

**1**You, God, are my God,  
    earnestly I seek you;  
I thirst for you,  
    my whole being longs for you,  
in a dry and parched land  
    where there is no water.

**2**I have seen you in the sanctuary  
    and beheld your power and your glory.  
**3**Because your love is better than life,  
    my lips will glorify you.  
**4**I will praise you as long as I live,  
    and in your name I will lift up my hands.  
**5**I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;  
    with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

**6**On my bed I remember you;  
    I think of you through the watches of the night.  
**7**Because you are my help,  
    I sing in the shadow of your wings.  
**8**I cling to you;  
    your right hand upholds me.

**9**Those who want to kill me will be destroyed;  
    they will go down to the depths of the earth.

*All* **Glory to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever.**

**Amen.**

**The Word of God**

*Second Reading*  Luke 13: 1-9

### Repent or Perish

**13**Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. **2**Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? **3**I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. **4**Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? **5**I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

**6**Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. **7**So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

**8**“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. **9**If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*We pause to reflect on the readings before turning to prayer.*

**Hands holding up a cross

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**Intercessions**

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

Lord, we come to you admitting our weakness and failure.  
Thank you for giving us the chance to turn around and start afresh with you.

Indeed, Lord, you are the God of second chances and we know, in our lifetimes, you have been the God of third and fourth chances, forgiving and restoring us a countless number of times. We are profoundly grateful. We know that without you, we would have no hope and yet, because of your love, we remain your children – even if rather wayward children at times.

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

Lord, as we think about the disasters that Jesus spoke about, we remember things we have heard on the news this week that have shocked or saddened us. We remember particularly…. the Middle East as the ceasefire has crumbled and more people are dying. We think of the progress of diplomacy between Russia, the USA and Ukraine. Lord, may your words of peace and love rule in these places. May conflict cease and goodness return.

We also pray for those places which are no longer in the headlines but are still seen and remembered by you…

We thank you for the aid agencies that work tirelessly to bring supplies, medicines and comfort. Lord, may your people be fed, clothed and given safety wherever they find themselves. These are big prayers, Lord, but you are a big God.

And we pray for the people or places that never make the news, where only you see the hurt and the pain. We know how much it grieves your heart of love. We pray for those who are trafficked or abused…  those who suffer from addictions and long to be free... those who are in prison…  or feeling desperately alone... . We long to see the world restored to the way in which you intended it. Lord, may your kingdom come.

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

 Lord, we think of those who we have struggled to give a second chance to this week… perhaps a friend or colleague who let us down; someone in our class who was annoying; someone in a shop who was rude or someone who cut us up in traffic; a family member that was trying our patience. We pray for each of those people now, whether they are known to us or just an incident we remember... Give us the grace to forgive and the patience to accept situations that we cannot control.

And we think of all those who have given us second chances this week... We pray for them now with gratitude for their kindness and patience.

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

 Lord, we bring to you all those we know who are suffering for whatever reason. We pray for those who are sick… those who are sad… those who have had a difficult diagnosis and don’t know what will happen next… the confused and anxious… especially (prayer list)

Lord, you care about each and every situation we face – we do not have to go it alone. We ask that you will bring your peace into each situation we have just prayed for. May there be restoration and healing and renewal of hope no matter how hard everything may seem.

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

 Lord, as we go forward into the new week, may we go from here restored and refreshed by having spent time with you. Send us out, filled with your love, to be peacemakers and forgivers. Help us to see you in the eyes of everyone we meet this week and to serve them as if it is you we are serving. Give us a new strength and determination to follow your way no matter how hard, challenging, or glorious it is!

Lord, we choose to turn back to you.  
**Help us to start afresh: renewed and restored.**

**Amen**

*The Collect for the Third Sunday of Lent*

We beseech thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*All* **Amen.**

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Trusting in the compassion of God,

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 it is 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.**

Loving God,  
thank you for your promise to do something new in each of our lives.  
Help us to give people a second chance, as you do for us,  
today, in the week ahead and always.  
**Amen.**

**Blessing**

Christ give us grace to grow in holiness,

to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him;

and the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

be with us, and all those we love and pray for,

today and always.

*All* **Amen**

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**What’s on…**

**Exe Valley Community Lunches**

The next lunch is at Oakford Village Hall on Thursday 10 April at 12.30pm. Please let the church office if you will be joining us.

**Agape Meal Maundy Thursday**

Agape Meal at Cruwys Morchard Village Hall on Thursday 17 April at 6.30pm. Please let the office know if you will be joining us.

**Prayer Breakfast at The Rectory**

The next prayer breakfast will be at 9.00am on Saturday 26 April 2025. Everyone welcome.

**Prayer Chain**

The Exe Valley Mission Community are starting a telephone prayer chain. If you like to be included for prayer or know someone who would like to be included, please contact Steph at the church office 01884 250417. Only first initials will be used on the prayer chain to ensure total confidentiality.

**Coffee and Chat with Steph**

Steph will be at Banburys from 10.15am on Friday 11April for coffee and a chat if you would like to join her.

**Practicing the Way – A course for Lenten Discipleship**

Steph will be running this course during Lent at The Rectory Withleigh.

Thursday 13, 20 & 27 March and Thursday 3 April at 11.00am & 7.00pm.

Please come along when you can and encourage others to sign up. Please let the church office know when you can come. 01884 250417

**Contacting Church Office**

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10.00am -12 noon

Email: [office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org](mailto:office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org) Tel: 01884 250417 or 07733949295

**Giving**

**Giving to the Exe Valley Mission Community**

If you would like to make a contribution to the work of The Exe Valley Mission Community please make a gift using the Exe Valley Group of Churches BACS details. Please use the reference EVMC Services.

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