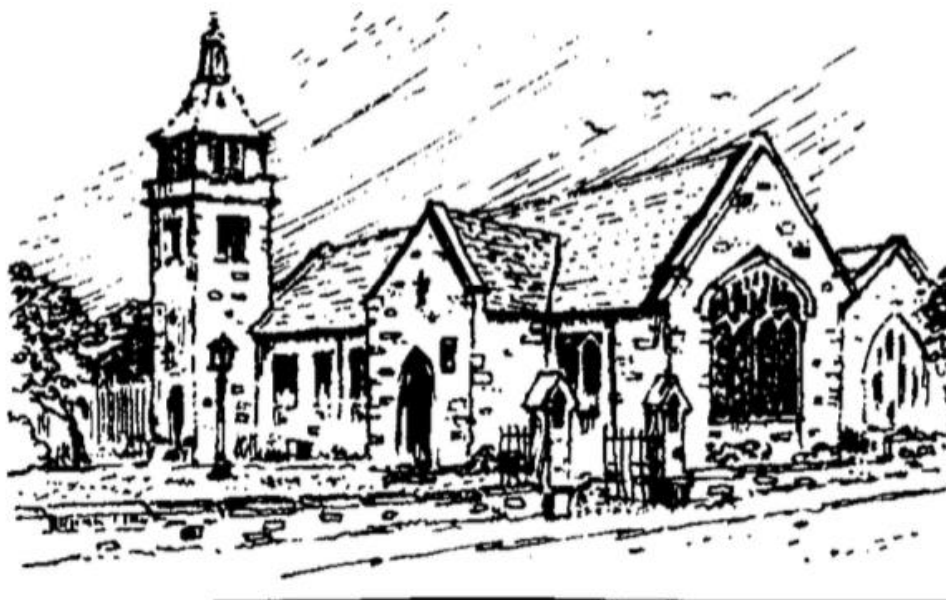


**ST CUTHBERT'S
SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLINTON**

**First Sunday of Lent
Sunday 21 February 2021**



**COVID-19
Services Online on our YouTube Channel**

HYMN 202 – Forty days and forty nights

Forty days and forty nights
you were fasting in the wild;
forty days and forty nights,
tempted still, yet unbeguiled.

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

So shall peace divine be ours;
holy gladness, pure and true:
come to us, angelic powers,
such as ministered to you.

Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
ever constant by your side,
that with you we may appear
at th'eternal Eastertide.

*George Hunt Smyttan (1822-1870) adapted by Michael Forster (b.1946)
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Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the
Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

**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.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil. For the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by the Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are but did not sin, give us grace to discipline ourselves in submission to your Spirit, that as you know our weakness so we may know your power to save; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Genesis 9.8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be

a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.’

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3.18-22

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL HYMN 199 – Forgive our sins as we forgive

‘Forgive our sins as we forgive’,
you taught us, Lord, to pray;
but you alone can grant us grace
to live the words we say.

How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs, and will not let
old bitterness depart?

In blazing light your Cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
what trivial debts are owed to us,
how great our debt to you!

Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls,
and bid resentment cease.
Then, bound to all in bonds of love,
our lives will spread your peace.

*Rosamond E. Herklots (1905-1987) alt. ©Oxford University Press
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GOSPEL: Mark 1.9-15

Hear the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Mark. **Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was
baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming

up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

SERMON

May the words of my lips and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to you, Lord.

A few weeks ago I felt an immense excitement and joy as I looked out of my window at a stunning and vivid rainbow. It was so beautiful and I found myself imagining myself undertaking the crazy search for the fabled pot of gold at the elusive end of the rainbow. But I couldn't do so, as I was in Tier 4 and it certainly wouldn't have been in the Edinburgh Council area! But it did raise in me a sense of hope and maybe that's an indication of how we should be approaching this very different Lent season. As Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, 'For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope.....But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.' Hope, patience:

how can we feel able to adopt such positive attitudes as we enter this very different Lent season?

Well, for a start I consider that Nicki's Lent Calendar is an excellent guide. Since we're already in a situation of giving up so much, instead of giving up foods or treats in our usual manner, it does indeed seem much more appropriate to do something positive each day. It may be purely as an encouragement to ourselves, or to feel gratitude for some very real blessings God has given us, or it may be taking the opportunity to reach out to others who may be lonely or suffering. In fact, establishing a firmer relationship with God and reaching out to others would be a way of using our 'wilderness' experience of life in the pandemic as a way of strengthening ourselves, enabling us to move forward in faith and hope, just as Jesus was strengthened for his ministry during his temptations in the wilderness of the desert.

So, do our readings give us some pointers for our journey through Lent this year? Well, I believe that our readings from Genesis and Mark's Gospel do lead us to two helpful reflections. Firstly, there's the importance of trusting in God and accepting the need to follow his will, and secondly, the significance of looking outwards, acknowledging that God's covenant is with all living things and that humankind bears the responsibility for stewardship.

Like Noah, we too may find God's will strange and disturbing. Despite there being no signs of such a disaster, Noah was asked to build an Ark, as God was about to send a

devastating flood over all the earth. Nonetheless, Noah obeyed. Jesus, prepared for ministry after his baptism, found the Spirit urging him into the desert. He too obeyed his Father's will. So, Noah, his family and pairs of animals were stuck in the Ark for 40 days, unable to go anywhere else due to the flood waters, and Jesus spent 40 days alone in the desert, facing constant temptations. These were wilderness situations, and we too are facing our own wilderness situation, amidst the ongoing restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Noah came through his period of isolation and Jesus defeated all temptations, returning from his forty days in the desert to begin his vital ministry on earth. Like Jesus we too are tempted, tempted to break the Covid regulations, to drive to the coast or visit our family, especially since, unlike Noah and Jesus we are uncertain as to how long this will last. But if we can accept that God is with us through all the temptations and distress, that he wants us to grow closer to him and serve him in new ways, then, like Jesus, we too could move forward with hope and renewed courage as the pandemic's hold on society lessens.

Turning to my second point: the Covenant and stewardship. In our Genesis reading we learn that, following Noah's stewardship of the living creatures of the earth, God made a new covenant with him, his descendants and all living creatures, that never again would be send a flood to 'destroy all flesh.' And he gave the sign, his arc in the clouds, the rainbow, like the one that I saw a few weeks ago. This sign of hope, this sign of God's will for humankind, his will for us to be faithful stewards of the earth, as intended at

creation, I believe to be a significant pointer for us. We are all now well aware of the damage humankind has inflicted on God's beautiful creation, particularly over recent decades. May Lent be a time to reflect on Noah's good stewardship and on how each of us, in our own small way, can reach out and help to alleviate the damage, either in our practices or by supporting helpful schemes financially. May we work towards feeling ourselves 'bound to all in bonds of love' as urged by our Gradual hymn.

So, in conclusion, tough though it may seem at the moment, by using Nicki's Calendar this Lent, deepening our trust in God and reflecting on ways to improve our stewardship of the earth, may we rediscover the joy of serving the God who loves us. As Noah came through the waters of the Flood and Jesus moved through the waters of baptism and then the temptations of the desert, may we also as disciples, baptised with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, emerge from the wilderness of the pandemic with a greater sense of love, hope, compassion and caring. **Amen.**

Revd. Dr. Margaret Dineley

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love. We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high. We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

On this first Sunday of Lent, help us, as we struggle with our daily challenges, to fix our minds on the sufferings and temptations of Jesus Christ.

Help us, as we struggle, to see Him, far from home and friends, tortured by hunger, yet not using miraculous powers for selfish ends; desiring the subjection of the world to his Father's will, yet refusing to give honour to the devil; longing to open our eyes to the glory of God, yet not stooping to sensational means.

*Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Help us, as we struggle, to look steadily at this picture of Him who suffered such pain for us and to behold and absorb His great love.

Help us, as we struggle to face this world where so much selfishness, pride and unkindness abound, to face up to our limitations and to bring our lives back to Christian ways.

*Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

Help us, as we struggle, to listen to God's word as conveyed through His son Jesus so that we look carefully at our self-centred lives and try our best to reflect His ways. Help us, as we struggle, not to be negative about other people – or even ourselves – but to leave judgment where it belongs – with Him who serves us all with faithful care and love.

*So shall peace divine be ours
Holy gladness, pure and true;*

*Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

And, finally, help us, as we struggle, to be thankful for what you have given us, especially for the new hope we have due to the vaccine; help us to react to it positively and gratefully with other people in mind, strangers as well as those close to us, and to speak and behave graciously and generously, particularly in these testing times. Let us 'believe in the good news', as Jesus urged us to do, at whatever level it comes.

*Keep, O keep us, Saviour dear,
Ever constant by your side,
That with you we may appear
At the eternal Easter tide.*

*Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.***

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

Caroline Seville

OFFERTORY HYMN 36 – And can it be

And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain?
For me, who him to death pursued?

*Amazing love! How can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me? (repeat)*

He left his Father's throne above
so free, so infinite his grace;
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race;
*'tis mercy all, immense and free;
for, O my God, it found out me.*

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
*bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ my own.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

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Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made;
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands;
it will become the cup of our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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.

Worship and praise belong to you, maker of light and darkness. Your wisdom draws beauty from chaos, brings a harvest out of sorrow and leads the exiles home.

In Christ your Son enemies are reconciled, debts forgiven and strangers made welcome.

Your Spirit frees us to live as sons and daughters in our Father's house.

We who by Christ's power follow the way of the Cross, sharing the joy of his obedience, now offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven singing the hymn of your unending glory:

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.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father, for Christ in whom the world is reconciled. Lifted on the Cross, his suffering and forgiveness spanned the gulf our sins had made. Through that dark struggle death was swallowed up in victory, that life and light might reign.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, recalling the night of Israel's release, the night in which the sons of Egypt died, your Chosen One, himself the First-Born, freely offered his life.

At supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks.

He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command. We recall his blessed passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension; and we look for the coming of his Kingdom. Made one with him, we offer you these gifts and with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by his life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles and prophets, St Cuthbert, and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end.

Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.

Lord, unite us in this sign.

LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us, we are bold to say:

**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.**

COMMUNION

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.**

A PRAYER FOR US TO PRAY AT HOME:

**God of infinite mercy, we thank you for Jesus our Saviour,
who feeds his people and gives them eternal life.**

**Though we cannot consume the gifts of bread and wine,
we thank you that we do receive Christ's saving presence,
the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of his
passion. Grant that we may continue for ever
in the Risen Life of our Saviour.**

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND SENDING OUT

Give thanks to our gracious God
Whose mercy endures for ever.

POST COMMUNION

Father, your steadfast purpose is the completion of all things in your Son. May we who have received the pledges of the kingdom, live by faith, walk in hope and be renewed in love, until the world reflects your glory and you are all in all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

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

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ.
Amen.

Weekly Prayer:

Lord God on this first Sunday in Lent, we remember the trials and temptations of your son Jesus Christ in his journey through the wilderness, and how he triumphed over all. In our prayers we think of the difficult journeys in life encountered by so many people in the world. We pray that in their different times of need, they may find discernment to see their way ahead, and strength to overcome whatever problems they face. We pray that faith may be deepened in this period of Lent, and all may walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

