

HOME WORSHIP FOR 21 FEBRUARY, THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

OPENING PRAYER

We go into the wilderness with Jesus, we feel the need to get away to reflect and to pray.

We stay in the wilderness with Jesus, we sense the power of the Tempter calling us to the easy, self-serving way.

We endure with Jesus in the wilderness, aware of a Supportive Presence showing us a faithful way, a compassionate path.

We return with Jesus from the wilderness, renewed in body, mind, and spirit, ready to be about God's work.

Prepare us for our Lenten journey, O God; give us the courage to venture into the challenging place of heart and spirit.

Come with us on our Lenten journey, O God; strengthen us that we might learn and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Join us with others on our Lenten journey, O God; in faithful solidarity, we will search out dark forces of oppression and defeat them with the light of Jesus Christ.

Be with us at the end of our Lenten journey, O God; that at the foot of the cross we might look up and understand your wonderful love. Amen.

CONFESSION AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Lent is a good time to look carefully at our pattern of life and faith in your presence, O Most Understanding God.

Where we have followed the path of deception, change our direction.

Where we have not taken the feelings of others into account, give us sensitivity.

Where we have hung back from working for the common good, bring us back into fellowship.

Where we have ignored the practice of prayer and forsaken the Word, faithfully renew us.

Where we have missed opportunities to stand with the powerless, give us courage.

God hears our prayers and stands ready to bring us a fresh start as members of the family of God. We will renew our faith and practice; we will begin again with joy and determination.

God stands ready to help us rededicate ourselves to the Christian way. Pardon and peace are ours! Thanks be to God! Amen.

MEMORY VERSE – try to memorise this verse from today's readings.

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. (1 Peter 3:18)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Lord God, we come with all our muddled priorities, and conflicting agendas, to be made whole as the Body of Christ; to renounce evil so as to be equipped to announce the kingdom of peace.

With our God: all things are possible.

Lord God, we come with the world's clamour ringing in our ears, with comfort zones beckoning us, but the pain of injustice refusing to be shut out. We come for the world's healing, and for an end to all lying and deceit.

With our God: all things are possible.

Lord God, we come with the demands of home, family, work and expectations warring in us for space and attention. We come on behalf of those too busy or too exhausted to pray; that our daily lives may be washed in your peace, ordered in holiness and lit up with your joy.

With our God: all things are possible.

Lord God, we come with the needs and sorrows, pain and suffering of our brothers and sisters all over the world, who are aching – physically, emotionally or spiritually; we come to ask your comfort and healing love.

With our God: all things are possible.

Lord God, we come with thankfulness for the gift of life, and for the call to holiness. Give us the grace to respond to your calling.

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

CLOSING PRAYER

You challenge us to reflect and serve, O God.

Give us honesty in our looking back; give us generosity in our relationships; give us hope in the midst of turmoil; give us energy to take on faithful endeavours; give us patience when all does not go according to plan; give us endurance as we walk the testing Lenten path.

We believe that by his dying Christ destroyed death for ever. We have been crucified with Christ and live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. May he send us out to glory in his cross, and live no longer for ourselves but for him, who died and was raised to life for us. Amen.