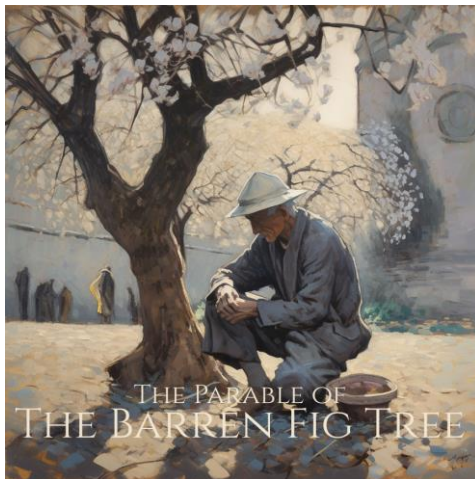


The Parish Church of St Matthew
Northampton

The Third Sunday of Lent

Year C



The call to repentance and a second chance

The Parish Mass

Sunday 23 March 2025

10.15 am

Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



Safeguarding *St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.*

Live streaming *Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.*

GDPR *Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.*

Toilet and baby changing facilities *may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.*

For younger children *In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-specific Christian resources is provided. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.*



Collection – ‘Building a Generous Church’



Our response to God's generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of St Matthew's is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

* * * * *

We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew's Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

Contactless giving - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

Giving on your smart phone - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

Giving online - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



This morning's readings

In this morning's Gospel we see how Jesus rejected the popular belief that accidents which befall people are inflicted by God as punishment for sin. Still, sin calls for repentance. And Jesus tells the Jews that they will lose the promises unless they repent. The barren fig tree symbolises the barren state of Israel. But God is patient. There is still time to repent, though that time is getting short.

The role of Moses prefigures the role of Jesus. Through Moses God saved his people, Israel, from slavery in Egypt. We are the new people of God, saved through the waters of baptism from slavery to sin, and now *en route* under the leadership of Jesus to the promised land of eternal life. We too are fed with food 'from heaven', namely, the Eucharist.

It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following prayer, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:

Reflection

It isn't the things you do, it's the things you leaven undone,
which give you a little heartache at the setting of the sun.
The gentle word forgotten, the letter you didn't write;
the flowers you might have sent, are your haunting ghosts tonight.
The stone you might have lifted out of your brother's way;
the little heart-felt counsel you were hurried too much to say.
The tender touch of the hand, the gentle and kingly tone;
which we have no time or thought for, with troubles enough of our own.

Setting

Communion Service in F

Herbert Sumsion 1899-1995

Order of Service

¶ The Gathering

- § **All stand** at the sound of the bell
- § *The sanctuary party and choir enter informally but reverently in silence and go to their places*
- § **All sit** with the priest for a period of silent prayer and recollection

- § **All stand** with the priest

Hymn

- § *The priest reverences the altar and honours it with incense*

All

**IN the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time:
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.**

**When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me:
Lo! It glows with peace and joy.**

**When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming,
Adds more lustre to the day.**

**Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.**

Words John Bowring 1792-1872

Music Wychbold
Walter Grenville Whinfield 1865-1919

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

The Greeting

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

The service is introduced

Prayers of Penitence

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
in this holy season of Lent
as we prepare to celebrate the presence of Christ
let us firmly resolve to keep God's commandments,
and confess our sins in penitence and faith:

The Ten Commandments

I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods but me.

All

Lord have mer- cy up - on us.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

All **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

You shall not dishonour the name of the Lord your God.

All



Lord have mer-cy up-on us, and in-cline our hearts to keep these laws.

Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

All **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

All Honour your father and mother.
Lord, have mercy upon us.


All You shall not commit murder.
**Lord, have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep these laws.**

All You shall not commit adultery.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

All You shall not steal.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

All You shall not be a false witness against your neighbour.
**Lord, have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep these laws.**

All You shall not covet anything which belongs to your neighbour.

All 
Lord have mer-cy up-on us, and write all these your laws in our hearts.

A period of silent reflection

Confession

All **Almighty God,
long-suffering and of great goodness:
I confess to you,
I confess with my whole heart
my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments,
my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking;
the hurts I have done to others,
and the good I have left undone.
O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you;
and raise me to newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Absolution

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive † you your sins
and make you holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

The Collect

Let us pray.

Almighty God,
whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,
and entered not into glory before he was crucified:
mercifully grant that we,
walking in the way of the cross,
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All

Amen.

Dear friends, in his forty days in the desert wilderness
the Lord Jesus sought to draw close to the Father.
Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will open our hearts and minds
as the Word of God is proclaimed to us.

§ Sit

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Reader A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah.

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.
Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55.1-9

This is the word of the Lord.

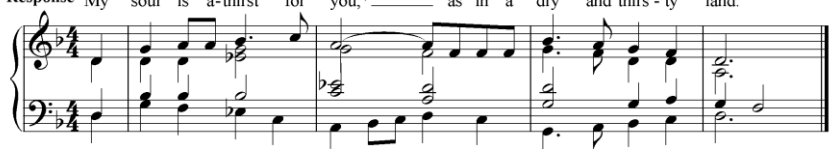
All

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Stephen Moore

Response My soul is a-thirst for you,* ——— as in a dry and thirs - ty land.



Choir O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you;
my soul is athirst for you.
My flesh also faints for you,
as in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.
So would I gaze upon you in your holy place,
that I might behold your power and your glory. **Response**

Your loving-kindness is better than life itself
and so my lips shall praise you.
I will bless you as long as I live
and lift up my hands in your name.
My soul shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness,
and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips, **Response**

When I remember you upon my bed
and meditate on you in the watches of the night.
For you have been my helper
and under the shadow of your wings will I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand shall hold me fast. **Response**

Psalm 63.1-9

Holy Gospel

Acclamation



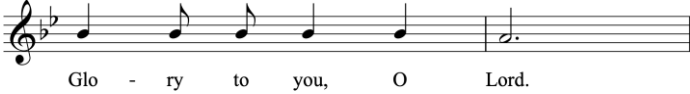
Praise to you, O Christ, King of e - ter - nal glo - ry.

Choir Repent, says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.
All **Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.**

§ We turn to face the Book of the Gospels

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

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



There were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, ‘Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.’

Then he told this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, “See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?” He replied, “Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”’

Luke 13.1-9

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Homily

§ Sit

Affirmation of Faith

§ Stand

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

All **Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with God,
but made himself nothing.
Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on high,
and given him the name above every name:
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

Priest The Lord is compassion and love. Let us now bring our petitions
before him.

§ Kneel

After each petition

All Lord, you are our helper and guide:
your hand holds us fast.

Priest God of grace,
you are that careful and patient gardener
who can produce fruit from the most unpromising of trees.
Help us to produce in our lives the fruits of true repentance.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

All **Amen.**

§ Stand

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Sign of Peace

Since we are justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's peace.

The Offertory

§ *The Gifts are presented to the presiding priest and the altar is prepared*

Hymn

§ *A monetary collection is taken towards our ministry and mission.
For alternative ways of giving please refer to the front of this booklet.*

All **O THOU, who dost accord us
The highest prize and guerdon,
Thou hope of all our race:
Jesu, do thou afford us
The gift we ask of pardon
For all who humbly seek thy face.**

**With whispered accusation
Our conscience tells of sinning
In thought and word and deed;
Thine is the restoration,
The work of grace beginning
For souls from every burden freed.**

For who, if thou reject us,
Shall raise the fainting spirit?
'Tis thine alone to spare:
That thou to life elect us,
Through our Redeemer's merit,
Shall be thy people's lowly prayer.

O Trinity most glorious,
Thy pardon free bestowing,
Defend us evermore;
That in thy courts victorious,
Thy love more truly knowing,
We may with all thy saints adore.

*Words Summi largitor praemii 6th Century
based on a translation by John William Hewlett 1824-1886*

*Music Innsbruck
Traditional song set by Heinrich Isaac c1450-1517
Harmony by Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750*

Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

Prayer over the Gifts

O Lord, be pleased with these sacrificial offerings,
and grant that we who beseech pardon of our own sins
may take care to forgive our neighbour;
we ask this through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

All The Lord be with you
 and also with you.

All Lift up your hearts.
 We lift them to the Lord.

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
 It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline
we may grow in grace
and learn to be your people once again.
Through fasting, prayer and acts of service
you bring us back to your generous heart.
Through study of your holy word
you open our eyes to your presence in the world
and free our hands to welcome others
into the radiant splendour of your love.

As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast
with joyful hearts and minds we bless you for your mercy
and join with saints and angels for ever praising you and singing:

Choir Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.
 heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
 Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

§ *Remain standing*

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and as we follow his example and obey his command,
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us his body and his blood;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way,
after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:

Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Deacon

Je - sus Christ is Lord:

Response

Lord, by your cross and re - sur - rec - tion you have set us free.

You are the Sa - viour of the world.

Therefore, heavenly Father,
 we remember his offering of himself
 made once for all upon the cross;
 we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
 we look for the coming of your kingdom,
 and with this bread and this cup
 we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Accept through him, our great high priest,
 this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,
 and as we eat and drink these holy gifts
 in the presence of your divine majesty,
 renew us by your Spirit,
 inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son,
 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,
 we worship you, Father almighty,

President

in songs of e - ver last - ing praise

Response

Bless - ing and hon - our and glo - ry and power

be yours for e - ver and e - ver. A - men.

§ *Kneel*

The Lord's Prayer

Trusting in the compassion of God,
 let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All **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.**

Breaking of the Bread

All Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Agnus Dei

Choir O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,
that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.

Invitation to Communion

All Come and receive the living Lord.
May we live in him and he in us.

Giving of Communion

The sparrow has found a house and the swallow a nest
where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.

Blessed are they who dwell on your house,
they will always be praising you.

Spiritual Communion – *for those at home*

Act of Reception

All In union, blessed Jesus,
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,
for creation and all the blessings of this life,
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,
and resurrection,
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,
I pray you to come into my heart.
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,
my soul, and my mind.
Let nothing separate me from you;
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.
Amen.

Motet

Choir

Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake,
lay not our sins to our charge,
But forgive that is past,
and give us grace to amend our sinful lives.
To decline from sin and incline to virtue,
that we may walk in a perfect heart, in a perfect heart before thee,
now and evermore. Amen.

*Music Richard Farrant 1530-1580
or John Hilton the elder 1565-1609?*

Hymn

All

**LORD, in this thy mercy's day,
Ere it pass for ay away,
On our knees we fall and pray.**

**Lord, on us thy Spirit pour,
Kneeling lowly at the door,
Lest it close for evermore.**

**By thy night of agony,
By thy supplicating cry,
By thy willingness to die,**

**By thy tears of bitter woe,
For Jerusalem below,
Let us not thy love forgo.**

**Grant us 'neath thy wings a place,
Lest we lose this day of grace,
Ere we shall behold thy face.**

Words Isaac Williams (1802-1865)

*Music St Philip
Henry William Monk (1823-1889)*

§ *All sit for a period of silent reflection and thanksgiving*

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

§ *Stand*

Merciful Lord,
grant your people grace to withstand the temptations
of the world, the flesh and the devil,
and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

**God of our pilgrimage,
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.
Refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Hymn

All

HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! The rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place,
My never-failing treasury filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus! My shepherd, brother, friend,
My prophet, priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.

**Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.**

**Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.**

Words John Newton 1725-1807

*Music St Peter
Alexander Robert Reinagle 1799-1877*

Notices for the Community

§ *Sit*

¶ Sending Out

§ *Stand*

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

Solemn Blessing

All May you be strong in faith and active in good works.
Amen.

All May you do with loving hearts what the Lord asks of us.
Amen.

All May your worship of God be reflected in the way you live.
Amen.

All And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Dismissal

The Mass is ended, go in peace.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Organ Voluntary

Toccata in B flat minor [Pièces de Fantasia] *Louis Vierne 1870-1937*

§ *Please remain standing until the procession has departed*

§ *Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary.*

Next Sunday

Mothering Sunday

30 March

10.15 am All Age Mass for the Parish Family
with Welcome of the Recently Baptised

5.30 pm Congregational Evensong

Our thanks are due to Mandy and Mark Ludlow
who have generously financed
the production of this week's service booklet.

**Please take this booklet home
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,
and then re-cycle it.**

Copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England.
All of the official *Common Worship* publications are being published by Church House Publishing.
Church Copyright Licence No. 248548. Streaming Licence No. 93626.

St Matthew's Parish Church, The Parish Office, 27A The Drive, Kingsley, Northampton NN1 4RY
Tel: 01604 791251 www.stmatthews-northampton.org.uk office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk