

# St Andrews Clewer

## Lent, Holy Week and Easter at Home 2021



Lent is a season when many people make a special focus on enhancing their ever-growing relationship with God. Christ's life, ministry and death are remembered during this season. Also we reflect on stories from the Old Testament that point forward to the New. Lent can be a time to think about our journey of faith, the good bits and the bad, as we prepare ourselves for Holy Week and into the celebration of Easter.

### **What's in the Bag?**

In this bag are some objects, readings, actions and prayers to help you in that preparation.

*Here are some options for how to use your bag:*

- 1. Choose one night of the week and invite those around your table to pick one of the symbols as a starting point for conversation for the whole group, including children.*
- 2. For your own devotion, daily or weekly, choose one of the symbols for your own reflection as you make your way through the season of Lent, into Holy Week and Easter.*
- 3. Make your own prayer space in which to place your item for the week/day, so that after your devotion you can have it out as a reminder as you go about your daily life.*
- 4. You will need your bible to look up the text.*

*Let us pray*

Creator of my Life, renew me: bring me to new life in you.  
Touch me and make me feel whole again.  
Help me to see your love  
in the passion, death and resurrection of your son.  
Help me to observe Lent  
in a way that allows me to celebrate that love.  
Prepare me for these weeks of Lent  
as I feel both deep sorrow for my sins  
and your undying love for me.  
Amen

### **Hymn for the Season of Lent**

*This hymn is here to help accompany you as you work your way through the bag. There might be a particular verse that resonates with an object or text? You could also read this hymn as a way of leading into your time of prayer?*

1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
Forgive our foolish ways;  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,  
In purer lives Thy service find,  
In deeper rev'rence, praise.
2. O Sabbath rest by Galilee,  
O calm of hills above,  
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee  
The silence of eternity,  
Interpreted by love!
3. Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess  
The beauty of Thy peace.
4. Breathe through the heats of our desire  
Thy coolness and Thy balm;  
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still, small Voice of calm.
5. In simple trust like theirs who heard  
Beside the Syrian sea  
The gracious calling of the Lord,  
Let us, like them, without a word,  
Rise up and follow Thee.

## Starting Point Ash Wednesday

### Ashes- Genesis 3 v 19 and 2 v 7

*Small container with ashes*



Lent is a time when we, as individuals and as a community of disciples, remember who we are; creatures with a mortal body, who are living in a world which is also limited by time and mortality, but called to a pilgrimage, following Jesus who was crucified but raised beyond this earth to eternal life.

A journey where we often stumble and sin, and yet can still be forgiven and grow closer to God. At the start of Lent we go back to the beginning so that we might move forward.

The words used when we are marked with ashes (often from the Palm crosses of the previous year) remind us of the journey of our Lenten pilgrimage.

This year, though we cannot gather together on Ash Wednesday to be physically marked with Ash we can still share in the journey and seek to grow in our closeness to Christ. Let's walk this journey in faith and hope together, and in so doing, may we grow.

Perhaps mark the back of your hand with the ash. (Do not mix the ash with water as it creates a substance which may burn your skin). In church we mix the ash with oil so it sticks. If you are crafty you might want to mix the ash with PVA glue and paint a stone or a piece of card which can be left somewhere you will see it every day.

### Act of Penitence

We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

### *Imposition of Ashes*

*Hold your ash, dust or mud as we pray:*

God our Father and Mother, you create us from the dust of the earth: grant that this dust may be for us a sign of our penitence and a symbol of our mortality; for it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

*You invited to take a moment to mark themselves with a cross (using ash, mud or even household dust):*

Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

### *Absolution*

The Lord enrich you with his grace, and nourish you with blessings; the Lord defend you in trouble and keep you from all evil; the Lord accept your prayers, and +absolve you from your offences, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

## **Sand- 1 Kings 19 v4-9 and 11-13**

*A sealable bag filled with sand.*

There are many desert stories in the bible, here we see Elijah, he has predicted a drought and then hid himself away by the Wadi Cherith, east of Jordan (ch17/18).

Elijah has hard lessons to learn, running away, hiding, learning to ask and accept help, he is weary, the time away has taken its toll. But step by step Elijah does what God wants him to do. He learns to listen.



*Open the sand and touch it*

I wonder ...

- Have you ever felt that you have been tested?
- When have you walked on hard, barren or stony ground?
- How disciplined are we about hearing the quiet voice of God?
- What is God asking of us as we emerge from this panic?
- Where might God be sending us to?

It's not easy to hear the still small voice, practice sitting for 5 mins a day in meditation.

### **Here are a few steps to help you meditate:**

- Find a quiet space. Make sure there is nothing to disturb you before you start meditation.
- Sit in a comfortable position. You can sit on top of a cushion or blanket, in a chair, place your feet flat on the ground and your hands on your knees. Don't tense up your body, let your shoulders drop.
- Breathe gently. Focus your attention on each inhale and exhale
- Let distractions come and go. If your mind wanders, acknowledge the thought that has distracted you, but do not dwell on it. Then, gently bring your attention back to your breathing.

Prayer:

Holy God, help us when we walk through the difficult places in our lives. Help us to know that the closer we walk to you, the closer you will be to us. Amen.

Finish your quiet time by saying the Lord's Prayer.

## Stone- Genesis 28. V10-19

### Stone

The story of Jacob, here he is having deceived his father and robbed Esau of his entitlement of his father, Isaac's, blessing. Jacob leaves his family and home in Beer-Sheba, he's out on his own, with his thoughts of his behaviour and actions and without much hope for the future. As night falls, he lays down to sleep using a hard stone as his pillow. And he dreams. God comes to him in his dream and Jacob understands that he will not be on his own, God will be with him and he will be blessed. Life was not easy for Jacob, he wrestled, he deceived, but he was richly blessed and went on to have many sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel, he is known as a father of the faith.



Take the stone in your hand, turn it over, are there any sharp edges or smooth sides, is it cold to touch?

How are you sleeping at the moment, is your pillow comfy or does it feel hard? Do you dream?

What did you dream last night?

They say that dreams are our subconscious thoughts and when things are unsettled or we have things on our minds, it can affect our sleep.

Before you sleep tonight, switch off your screens and hour before bed, then hold the stone and pray for the things on your mind and then count your blessings, 10 if you can!

What not change your pillowcase, put some lavender oil drops on it or a lavender bag in the case.

Sleep well knowing you are loved by God, he's got this, he will never leave you.

### *Compline- night prayers*

Before the ending of the day,  
Creator of the world, we pray  
That you, with steadfast love, would keep  
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,  
From fears and terrors of the night;  
Tread underfoot our deadly foe  
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done  
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;  
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath  
Our souls are raised to life from death.

## Bread- Mark 14 v 12-25

### *Wafer*

Food is something we all need to be able to live and bread is the staple diet of many countries and cultures around the world. Bread fills us and gives us energy. Breaking bread together, sharing a meal together is a wonderful occasion.



And when we're travelling, especially if it's a difficult journey, we need to stop for food and drink. They keep us going and give us energy to face the really tough bits ahead. Think about a journey and a place-perhaps an unusual one!- where you stopped for a meal or a picnic.

- Talk about how you felt before and afterwards.
- Take out the bread wafer and put it on a plate in front of you.
- Can you think of stories from the bible that involve being fed by bread?
- It seems to be important to God that we are fed and nourished, most especially by God himself.

All over the world believers have the opportunity to gather together as a community to share the Eucharist-to be fed and nourished by God, something we have not been able to do so much of lately.

Jesus met with his friends in the upper room and shared a last supper together. They were celebrating the Passover, as was their culture, but the disciples didn't realise that this was the beginning of the end, this was the last time they would sit together and share bread. They could not possibly imagine what lay ahead.

*With the wafer in your hands, read the words of the text verse 22.*

*'Take, eat, this is my body broken for you, do this in remembrance of me'*

Break the bread and share it between you to remind yourself how the communion meal can feed and sustain us as we follow Jesus. Talk about the wonderful and mysterious way it can give us "a piece of God" to help us and to keep us going as we journey in a place of wilderness.

Why not have a go at making bread, or make a cake for a friend or neighbour?

### *Prayer*

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;  
by it you nourish our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and strengthen our love;  
teach us always to hunger for him who is the living bread,  
and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## Candle

*Tea light*



### **John 8:12-15**

*When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said,  
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will  
never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."*

### **Matthew 5:14-16**

*You are the light of the world.*

Have you noticed the first flowers of spring are snowdrops, with bright white heads ringing like bells? In the darkness of the weather and dullness of the earth these small white flowers can be spotted so easily. And the yellowness of the daffs, trumpeting the arrival of spring! Small bursts of light and colour to bring hope that we are leaving winter behind, Spring has sprung.

Lent begins in the dimness of late winter and ends with the burst of bright spring. Day always follows the night.

Through the OT Creation Story we hear that we are given two great lights, one for the day and one for the night and, in the NT we learn that Jesus is the light for all times and seasons, for everyone, everywhere and will never go out.

Candles are used for all our worship at church and at home, be it grace at meal times, for school assemblies or personal prayer time. Lighting a candle is a symbol of hope, Jesus is, according to John's gospel, 'The Light of the world' and that Light insists: 'You are the light of the world. Don't be hiding under some bushel basket.' We walk in His light and carry that light in all we do and say every single day.

So where do you shine?

How do you keep your light lit?

- Put some matches near your tea light and then turn out the lights so that it is as dark as possible. Now light your tea light.
- What does the light do to the darkness? How does it make you feel?
- When we pray in the darkness or the difficulty we find ourselves in, it is as if we light a candle in that darkness. We can see around us and know that God has heard us right where we are and however we are feeling.
- When things overwhelm or upset you, try lighting a candle and spending a few moments being with God in prayer. You don't even have to say anything, because God is with you where you are.

Prayer:

Light of the world, walk among us, illuminating God in our midst. Amen

## Jesus' humanity

### *Clothes peg*



## Hebrews 2. v14-18 and 4.v14-16

Because Jesus was, as we confess, fully human, he gets us, understands us from inside our skin, and knows from experience that we're each capable of great things, Godly things. And no matter what we do, he keeps on inviting us to join us in his work which has become our own.

*I am forever speculating about how much Jesus knew. As God, of course, He would know everything. Did that knowledge affect His human knowledge? I tend to side with those who say that His human knowledge was incomplete. I find comfort in thinking of Him also in the dark, following blindly the Father's will. He was asked to fail, to be conquered, to be hounded out of the city and to die as a criminal. Could He see through all that to the victory to follow? It is difficult to tell. I find it good to wrestle with such questions, and in prayer to ask the Lord to enlighten me. What happened to the Master will surely happen to the disciple; we, too, will suffer hardship, and perhaps for no apparent reason. (Ian Petit, The God who Speaks)*

How did Jesus show his humanity?

He sat children on his knee, he cried at the death of Lazarus, the healing stories, the way he showed hospitality by feeding the 5000.

Jesus showed us how to truly live, he could only do this by being truly human himself.

How then do we live this Lent?

As you enter this Lent, what might you plan to do over these 40 days?

Why not paint, sew, photograph, craft etc, human gifts that can inspire us, create something for yourself or to give to someone?

Prayer:

Christ has no body but yours,

No hands, no feet on earth but yours,

Yours are the eyes with which He looks

Compassion on this world,

Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,

Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,

Yours are the eyes, you are His body.

Christ has no body now but yours,

No hands, no feet on earth but yours,

Yours are the eyes with which he looks

compassion on this world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours. *St. Teresa of Ávila (attributed)*

## **Palm Cross**

**Matthew 26: 14-end of chapter 27** (*Passion narrative*)

On this day, we reflect on Jesus being welcomed as a King, a Saviour, on his entry to Jerusalem.

We pray for our parish, our communities and all those around us, especially those who have difficult journeys or decisions ahead of them.



*You are invited to join in this simple liturgy.  
Hold your palm cross in your hand.*

Entering our city on a donkey, what do we do?

**We shout welcomes and wave palm leaves**

Entering our lives and disrupting our way of life, what should we do?

**Lay our cloaks at his feet and give our lives to him**

Challenging our daily routines and beliefs, what do we do?

**Shout crucify and turn away**

Yet despite this, what does God do?

**Love us, forgive us and welcome us home**

### *Palm Cross Blessing*

We pray God of all people and all places, the cross is a symbol for us of your boundless love and compassion. Bless this cross we pray, the hands that hold it, the homes that have it, May it be a reminder of your great love for us in Christ. Help us to take up our own cross daily and follow you; In the name of Jesus our Redeemer. Amen.

You may wish to put your palm cross by your front door or in the window to remind yourself that whatever journey you are on, God goes with you.

Prayer:

True and humble king, hailed by the crowd as Messiah,  
grant us the faith to know you and love you,  
that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory.  
Despite our failings;  
God is Good, All the time,  
All the time, God is good.  
God will always love us, forgive us and welcome us home  
For this we give thanks. Amen

## The Cross

Nail

**John 19: 16-22.**



Lent is a journey of self examination, a wilderness time - over the weeks we have remembered the dust where we come from, travelling through the desert, trying to rest on stoney ground, needing food and the light of hope, our humanity and our fickleness of cheering one minute and shouting crucify the next, and finally standing in the shadow of the cross ....the nails of crucifixion

Put the nail on the table in front of you and spend time looking at it. When your ready take the nail in your hand...roll it around and feel the weight and sharpness of it

- What does the nail make you think about what happened to Jesus on the cross?
- How might understanding the nail as a symbol of God's love help you to live and walk in the wilderness places of your life?

*We pray:*

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you:  
because, by your holy cross,  
you have redeemed the world.

*Pause*

I love you, Jesus my love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart of having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again but grant that I may love you always; and then, do with me what you will.

*Meditation* It is all grace. It is not even that there is a door which Christ has unbolted, and we, standing outside it, have to stretch out our hand, lift the latch, and walk through. We are already inside. When our Saviour became man and undid the sin of Adam, he did not command the cherubim with the flaming sword to return to heaven so that we could re-enter Eden. He picked up the walls of Eden and carried them to the farthest edge of Ocean, and there set them up so that they now girdle the whole world. All we are asked to do is to open our eyes and recognise where we are. Once we have done that, then we shall look down at ourselves and our filthy bodies and our tattered clothes, and we shall say, 'I am not fit to be here, in Paradise'; and we shall ask for baptism to wash us clean, and for the white robe of chrism to clothe us in the righteousness of the Lord. But not in order that we may be saved - simply because this is fitting for those who have been saved. (*John Austin Baker*)

*We pray:*

Blessed God, who bore our sin and sorrow on the Cross, grant us the grace to follow your teaching and example, to love our neighbour in our thoughts, words and deeds, for your name's sake. Amen

## Heart

### John 3. V16

A love heart to remind you of the great love that God feels for you. Remember, love conquers death. And there is nothing, NOTHING that separates you from the love of God.



*Fling wide your front door and let rip!*

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

**Alleluia!**

He has defeated the powers of death.

**Alleluia!**

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

**Alleluia!**

He has the words of eternal life.

**Alleluia!**

*Then ring your doorbell or bang a pan for a few seconds.*

We pray:

Thank you loving God for walking with us through this time  
of wilderness and isolation.

Thank you that love is stronger than death.

Help us to appreciate anew the gift you gave us in your Son.

Keep us strong as we watch and wait, till we can gather  
together in one place once more,

Help us to grow in faith and show us signs of your Kingdom  
here on earth.

We want to see you here more clearly among us.

You give us hope as we seek to live in peace and love and  
serve you in our lives; for this we thank you, Alleluia!

Amen

A rectangular box containing the words "Happy Easter" written in a flowing, black cursive script on a light-colored background.

*from Revd Rosie and the church family at St Andrews*

