Anglican Church
Ipswich Anglican Community

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

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St Paul's Church• Ipswich
15 March 2026

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Introit Hymn

Your Hand of God has guided [TIS 456]

The Invocation

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.

The Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
And also with you.

Welcome, Introduction & Acknowledgement of Country

Kids time with God

Scripture Sentence

'I am the light of the world,' says the Lord; 'those who follow me will have the light of life.'

John 8.12

Prayer of Approach

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.

Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy)

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Penitence

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off.

Silence may be kept.

Let us then ask for mercy, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

These words of assurance from the First Letter of John declare that:
If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the offering for our sins, and not for us only, but for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

Collect

Gracious God,
in order that we children of earth
might discern good from evil
you sent your Son to be the light of the world:
as the light of Christ shines upon us,
may we learn what pleases you,
and live in truth and goodness;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

1 Samuel 16.1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.' And the Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say, "I have come to sacrifice to the Lord ." Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.' Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, 'Do you come peaceably?' He said, 'Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord ; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.' And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord 's anointed is now before the Lord .' But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.' Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Jesse made seven of his sons pass before

Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen any of these.' Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.' He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd:
therefore can I lack nothing.
2 He will make me lie down in green pastures:
and lead me beside still waters.
3 He will refresh my soul:
and guide me in right pathways for his name's sake.
4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
for you are with me, your rod and your staff comfort me.
5 You spread a table before me
in the face of those who trouble me:
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup shall be full.
6 Surely your goodness and loving-kindness
will follow me all the days of my life:
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Second Reading

Ephesians 5.8-14

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—
for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.
Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord.
Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.
For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly;
but everything exposed by the light becomes visible,
for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,
'Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.'

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want [TIS 10]

The Gospel

John 9.1-41

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had said this, he spat on the

ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.' They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.' They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.' Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.' The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.' So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you

also want to become his disciples?' Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' He answered, 'And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him. Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us together affirm the faith of the church.

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made
of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

The celebrant says.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, giving thanks for the light of Christ that restores and renews.

A minister continues

God of light and mercy,
you open blind eyes and awaken weary hearts.
Shine on your Church with the brightness of your truth.
Bless Jeremy our Archbishop, Cameron our Regional Bishop,
and all who shepherd your people in faith and gentleness.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of creation,
in sunlight and shadow you hold all things in being.
Renew the face of the earth,
and teach us to see your beauty in every living thing.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of the nations,
give wisdom to those who lead,
courage to those who speak for the voiceless,
and peace to all whose lives are darkened by war or fear.
May justice and compassion meet in our common life.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of compassion,
you draw near to the broken, the anxious, and the forgotten.
Bring healing to the sick, hope to the despairing, and rest to all who watch and wait tonight.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of eternal love,
you gather your children from every time and place.
We remember the faithful departed,
and those we love but see no longer.
Grant them your peace and let light perpetual shine upon them.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer

God of joy and renewal,
as we journey through this Lenten season,
refresh our hearts with the promise of Easter light.
Open our eyes to your presence in all we meet,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer

Please join me as we pray the Ipswich Anglicans Prayer together:

God of new beginnings,
bless our Ipswich Anglican community
with a fresh vision for the future,
with generous hearts to love one another,
and with courage for the changes we now embrace.
Draw us more deeply into the mystery of Christ,
so that we draw closer to you and to each other.
Make us a blessing to the city of Ipswich
as we walk together
into the future you have prepared for us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

Grant that what we have asked in faith
we may by your grace receive,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREETING OF PEACE

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross.

We meet in his name and share his peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn

Sing Praise and Thanksgiving [TIS 107]

During the offertory hymn the Sacrament which has been reserved from the 7.00-am Eucharist for use at this service will be brought to the Altar. The regular offertory prayer for the collection is then said.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

COMMUNION

In place of the usual Great Thanksgiving Prayer, the following words are said by the lay Minister.

The Gospel of St Luke tell us that:

> At supper with his disciples on the night he was betrayed Jesus took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, "this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

The Ipswich Anglican community of which we are members, has taken this bread and wine, and given thanks over it according to our Lord's command. I bring you these Holy Gifts so that you may share in the communion of our Lord's body and blood. For these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Invitation to the Table

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Holy things for holy people.
Broken things for broken people.

Please note that intinction (dipping the bread) is forbidden as it is a health risk; it also introduces gluten to the wine, which is a further health risk to those who have a gluten allergy. Please ask the priest if you require a gluten free wafer.
If you do not wish to drink from the cup but want to acknowledge the sacramental presence, please feel free to pause briefly before the chalice and say 'Amen'.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Prayer after Communion

God of life and death,
from the fullness of yourself
you have created all that is;
through the power of your love
you call us towards you;
in the giving of your Son
our salvation has been wrought.
Our flowering and our passing,
all the seasons of the vine,
belong to you.
Bless us now and in all our days,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Kids Time with God

Notices

May the God of peace equip you with everything good for doing his will, working in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. **Amen**

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

Recessional Hymn

Lord, your almighty word [TIS 447]

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