

ARCH Group's aim: "To show our love for God and You"

Weekly Notices
18th February 2024
First Sunday of Lent

Today's Collect

Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today's Post Communion 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 true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Next Week's Services: Sunday 25th February 2024

9.30 am	Harvington	Holy Communion+
11.00 am	Church Lench	Family Service
11.00 am	Abbots Morton	Morning Service

For Prayer

Lord, we thank you for the beauty of your world whilst acknowledging all that we do to spoil its beauty. We think of times this week when we have seen your world spoiled by the selfishness of others: the litter dumped in our hedgerows, plastics polluting our rivers and streams, sewage pouring into our seas. Remind us of times when we have failed to be good stewards of your world this week, perhaps when we couldn't be bothered to recycle our waste, when we have bought more than we needed, when we've driven the car when we could easily have walked. Forgive us for our part, Lord. Turn around, repent and rejoice in the covenant with God.

Lord, help us to make a fresh start with one another and you.

Lord God, we bring our hurting world to you. Gaza and Israel remain in the headlines as we see such suffering on our TV screens. We remember the people of Ukraine as well as many other war-torn parts of the world that never make it to the headlines. But you see the hatred and the fear. We pray for those in our communities who are struggling to live in peace, remembering families where there is breakdown and mistrust; young people bullied at school; the abuse that happens behind closed doors that may be known only to you. Lord, give us wisdom to know how and where to step in and help. Give us the courage to be peacemakers in our homes, our schools, our places of work. Turn around, repent and rejoice in the covenant with God.

Lord, help us to make a fresh start with one another and you.

Lord God, we thank you that you chose to make a covenant with us - that you chose to be part of our lives. Show us how to walk more closely with you as your covenant people. Teach us how to bring your covenant love into our everyday situations. We picture in our minds our homes and families, our daily routine, those who visit us: in the silence of this moment, give us a vision of how we can make a difference this week... We move our thoughts to our school, our place of work or places we regularly attend. Help us to be more attuned to your presence with us this week. Go before us, leading the way, so we don't stray from your paths. Help us to reflect your love. Remind us of the need to be kind, even when others are not kind to us. Let the rainbow light of your love shine out through us to all those we come into contact with this week. Turn around, repent and rejoice in the covenant with God.

Lord, help us to make a fresh start with one another and you. Amen

This Week's First Reading: *Genesis 9:8-17*

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and 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. ¹¹I 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.' ¹²God 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: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I 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. ¹⁶When 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.' ¹⁷God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

This Week's Psalm: *Psalms 25:1-9*

- 1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies triumph over me.
- 2 Let none who look to you be put to shame, but let the treacherous be shamed and frustrated.

Psalm 25:1-9 continued

- 3 Make me to know your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths.
- 4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you have I hoped all the day long.
- 5 Remember, Lord, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions, but think on me in your goodness, O Lord, according to your steadfast love.
- 7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; therefore shall he teach sinners in the way.
- 8 He will guide the humble in doing right and teach his way to the lowly.
- 9 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

This Week's Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

¹⁸Christ 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, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who 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 persons, were saved through water. ²¹And 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,

1 Peter 3:18-22 continued

²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *Mark 1:9-15*

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Next Week's First Reading: *Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16*

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless.

²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 continued

¹⁵God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.'

Next Week's Psalm: *Psalm 22:23-31*

- 23 Praise the Lord, you that fear him; O seed of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, O seed of Israel.
- 24 For he has not despised nor abhorred the suffering of the poor; neither has he hidden his face from them; but when they cried to him he heard them.
- 25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation; I will perform my vows in the presence of those that fear you.
- 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord shall praise him; their hearts shall live for ever.
- 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before him.
- 28 For the kingdom is the Lord's and he rules over the nations.
- 29 To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.
- 30 Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,
- 31 And proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

Next Week's Second Reading: *Romans 4:13-25*

¹³The promise that Abraham would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

Romans 4:13-25 continued

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations'). Abraham believed in the presence of the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations,' according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ²³Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him,' were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Next Week's Gospel Reading: *Mark 8:31-38*

³¹Jesus began to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit

Mark 8:31-38 continued

their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'