

Sunday 3rd May

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Today's Collect

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Next Week Services: Sunday 10th May

10:00am	Harvington	Holy Communion
10:00am	Norton & Lenchwick	Church @ 10
10:00am	Rous Lench	Church @ 10
11:00am	Church Lench	Lay Led (Church @ 11)

Mid-week Eucharist: 11:00am Wednesdays at St James', Harvington

Upcoming Events

- Quingo! (Quiz & Bingo) – 16th May 5pm, St James' Church Harvington
- OpenExhibition: 10am-4pm everyday (Except Fri Morning and Sun)
- **The Knitted Bible** 21st May - 5th June, @ Evesham Methodist Church.
- Rous Lench Annual Pig Roast – 27th June. Willing helpers can contact Fran on Herdmanfrances@gmail.com.
- Flower Festival Weekend – 26th, 27th and 28th June.

This Week's First Reading: Acts 7.55-end.

⁵⁵ But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

⁵⁶ 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!'

⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him.⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

This Weeks Psalm: Psalm 31.1-5, 15-16.

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.
- 3 Be my strong rock, a fortress to save me,
for you are my rock and my stronghold;
guide me, and lead me for your name's sake.
- 4 Take me out of the net that they have laid secretly for me,
for you are my strength.
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.
- 15 'My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.
- 16 'Make your face to shine upon your servant,
and save me for your mercy's sake.'

This Week's Second Reading: 1Peter 2.2-10,

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation- ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture: 'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'⁷ To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, 'The

that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner',
⁸ and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *John 14.1-14.*

¹⁴ 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.² In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.'

⁵ Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?'

⁶ Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

⁸ Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.'

⁹ Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"?'

¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

Next Weeks Readings: *Acts 17.22-31, Psalm 66. 7-end, 1Peter 3.13-end, john 14.15-21.*

Prayer of Intercession

God of glory, you have built your church on Christ the cornerstone. We pray you Inspire lay leaders, deacons, pastors, and bishops to proclaim forgiveness and your steadfast love to all whom they encounter.

Merciful God, **Hear our Prayer.**

God of Majesty, you bring forth plants and animals, skies and seas, mountains and valleys. Protect all you have made from the ravages of pollution and climate disaster.

Merciful God, **Receive our Prayer.**

God of mercy, you intend governments and social service agencies to be instruments of peace and justice. Guide political leaders to turn away from greed and be lead by their people with respect and confidence. We pray leaders may find the compassion to share the wealth of charity as intended; helping others and raising up advocates for those who seek assistance.

Merciful God, **Hear our Prayer.**

God of well-being, you soothe those in distress, console all who grieve, provide for people in need, and comfort those who are sick. Instill caregivers with a sense of purpose to be your healing hands in this world.

Merciful God, **Hear our Prayer.**

God of community, you call us together as your people for mutual support and to lay witness to your love in the world. Make your presence known among those unable to attend worship today.

Merciful God, **Receive our Prayer.**

God of all eternal life, you have prepared swelling places for your people, so that we are never seperated from you. We give you thanks for the faithful departed who witnessed your mighty acts in word and deed.

Merciful God, **Hear our Prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of all life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen saviour.

Amen