

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

Weekly Notices

25th August 2024

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Today's Collect

Almighty God, you search us and know us: may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today's Post Communion Prayer

God our creator, you feed your children with the true manna, the living bread from heaven: let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage until we come to that place where hunger and thirst are no more; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Next Week's Services: Sunday 1st September 2024

8.30 am	Rous Lench	Holy Communion*
9.30 am	Harvington	Morning Service
11.00 am	Church Lench	Holy Communion+
6.30 pm	Harvington	Holy Communion*

ST JAMES' HAT FESTIVAL

A creative display of hats, decorated with flowers. From birth to death, hobbies to careers, emergency services to military, the weird and wonderful to posh fancy hats, along with many from around the world. Visit St James' Church over the Bank Holiday weekend 24-26th August to see this fascinating collection.

For Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we bow our heads before you in this hallowed place, we pray that we might have the right attitude to this, your Church. Help us to be ever mindful that it is YOUR Church, even while we love it as our Church. Guide us in being good stewards of the building, but let us not be blinded by the beauty of it, so that our hearts rejoice in stained glass, shining brass and polished pews rather than in you.

May we always make space for your presence, O Lord.

Father, we pray for our community, and this Church as the symbol of your presence within it. May its walls never be so high and hallowed that we forget those who are outside them; may its doors never be so daunting that those in the community feel your house is no place for them. Let your presence seep through these walls and beyond these doors, Lord, and may we be bearers of your presence as we go about our daily lives.

May we always make space for your presence, O Lord.

We pray for the wider Church, Father, in our nation and in the world. May it represent the calm centre of your presence, extending your peace and welcome to all. May it be the source of your active presence as, in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, Christians set out to work for you in Jesus' name. We pray for all in the mission field, and for those who serve in charities that deliver food and aid to poor and war-torn countries. We pray for those involved in projects to bring water where it is needed, and to educate the young so that they may have a better chance at life.

May we always make space for your presence, O Lord.

Father, we bring before you all those known to us who are afflicted by illness - mental or physical. Please let them remember you, and that you are with them. We pray that they will make space for you, and not shut you out in their pain and bewilderment. Likewise, for those who are grieving, we pray that their grief will not become a darkness which allows for no light, but that they will let you in, bringing healing and love.

May we always make space for your presence, O Lord. Amen

This Week's First Reading: *Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18*

¹Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ²And Joshua said to all the people,

¹⁴'Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.'

¹⁶Then the people answered, 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.'

This Week's Psalm: *Psalms 34:15-22*

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open to their cry.

16 The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.

Psalm 34:15-22 continued

- 17 The righteous cry and the Lord hears them and delivers them out of all their troubles.
- 18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and will save those who are crushed in spirit.
- 19 Many are the troubles of the righteous; from them all will the Lord deliver them.
- 20 He keeps all their bones, so that not one of them is broken.
- 21 But evil shall slay the wicked and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
- 22 The Lord ransoms the life of his servants and will condemn none who seek refuge in him.

This Week's Second Reading: *Ephesians 6:10-20*

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which

Ephesians 6:10-20 continued

you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *John 6:56-69*

Jesus said to the crowd: ⁵⁶'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray

John 6:56-69 continued

him. ⁶⁵And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.'

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

Next Week's First Reading: *Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9*

Moses spoke to the people; he said: ¹So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ²You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. ⁶You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!' ⁷For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? ⁸And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? ⁹But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

Next Week's Psalm: *Psalm 15:1-8*

- 1 Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle? Who may rest upon your holy hill?
- 2 Whoever leads an uncorrupt life and does the thing that is right;
- 3 Who speaks the truth from the heart and bears no deceit on the tongue;
- 4 Who does no evil to a friend and pours no scorn on a neighbour;
- 5 In whose sight the wicked are not esteemed, but who honours those who fear the Lord.
- 6 Whoever has sworn to a neighbour and never goes back on that word;
- 7 Who does not lend money in hope of gain, nor takes a bribe against the innocent;
- 8 Whoever does these things shall never fall.

Next Week's Second Reading: *James 1:17-27*

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.

²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act – they will be blessed in their doing.

James 1:17-27 continued

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Next Week's Gospel Reading: *Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23*

¹When the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, ²they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' ⁶He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁷in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.'"

¹⁴Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.' ²¹For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²²adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'