

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

Sunday 7th December Second Sunday of Advent

Today's Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Today's Post Communion

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Next Week Services: Sunday 14th December

8:30am	Church Lench	Holy Communion
9:30am	Harvington	Family Service
11:00am	Abbots Morton	Carols, Gifts, Communion

Notice: Please don't forget to donate to 'Helping Hands' trust. This charity provides care packages and services to individuals facing homelessness and hardship in the Warwickshire area.

Prayer of Intercession

God of hope, though the night seems very long, and though cold winds blow, light fades and spring seems a distant dream; you will never leave us. The poor are so often denied justice, and the needy are left in distress, we often feel we have different priorities to those of your kingdom, renew our trust in you. Give us faith to watch for the morning.

We wait for you, O God.

God of hope, though politics sometimes does not connect with our daily lives, when leaders fail us, may we believe that a new world is possible. We are far off our climate targets, and sometimes it feels like there is little climate leadership, and we have failed to protect this fragile earth, its peoples and all its creatures, renew our trust in you. Give us faith to watch for the morning.

We wait for you, O God.

We live in such troubled times when so many parts of the world are at war or in conflict, the suffering of Ukraine continues as the weather gets harsher, Sudan is in crisis and Central America is under threat. Life is a daily struggle for many, choosing between heating and eating, constantly worrying about debt and rising prices and feeling overwhelmed by worry, may we find rest in you. Give us faith to watch for the morning.

We wait for you, O God.

God of hope, many are lonely and in distress, sick or far from home, bring your healing to all who are in need today. You come to us as a child and reveal to us the wisdom of the powerless. Teach us to walk more humbly with you. Give us faith to watch for the morning.

We wait for you, O God.

This Week's First Reading: *Isaiah 11.1-10.*

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put it's hand on the adder's den. ⁹ They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

This weeks Psalm: *Psalms 72.1-7,18,19.*

- 1 Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.
- 2 May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.
- 3 May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

Continued: *Psalm 72.1-7,18,19.*

4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

5 May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.

7 In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be his glorious name for ever;
may his glory fill the whole earth.

Amen and Amen.

This Week's Second Reading: *Romans 15.4-13,*

⁴ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written, 'Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name'; ¹⁰ and again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles,

Continued: *Roman's 15.4-13.*

with his people'; ¹¹ and again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him'; ¹² and again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.' ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *Matthew 3.1-12.*

3 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."' "

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹ Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

Next Week's First Reading: *Isaiah 35.1-10.*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.'

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Next Week's Psalm Reading: *Magnificat.*

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

Next Week's Psalm Reading Continued: *Magnificat.*

- ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
- ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
- ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
- ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
- ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
- ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
- ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Next Week's Second Reading: *James 5.7-10.*

⁷ Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Next Week's Gospel Reading: *Matthew 11.2-11.*

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' ⁴ Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."

¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

