

Sunday 8th February

Second Sunday before Lent

Today's Collect

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and forever.

Next Week Services: Sunday 15th February

8:30am	Church Lench	Holy Communion
9:30am	Harvington	Morning Prayer
10:00am	Norton & Lenchwick	Service of the Word
11:00am	Rous Lench VH	Morning Service

Wednesday Mid-Week Eucharist – Harvington 11am

Notices; Donations for Caring Hands Food Bank when doing your weekly shop are always welcome –there are donation boxes in our parish churches.

This Week's First Reading: *Genesis 1.1-2.3.*

¹ In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ² the earth was a formless void of darkness, while wind swept over the waters.³ Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good; God separated the light from the darkness.⁵ calling the light Day, and darkness Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶ And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters.' ⁷ So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸ God called the dome Sky, the second day.

⁹ God then said, 'Let the waters under the sky gather, and let dry land appear.' And it was so.¹⁰ God called the dry land Earth, and the gathered

waters Seas. ¹¹ Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with the seed.' And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seeds, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with seeds within them. ¹³ Whilst there was evening and morning, the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, 'Let there be lights in the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be signs for seasons, days and years, ¹⁵ and let the lights in the dome of the sky give light upon the earth.' And it was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights-the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night-with stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and night, and separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening and morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ Then God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' ²¹ So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves. And God saw that this was good. ²² He blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' ²³ And there was evening and morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle, creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals of the earth and cattle, of every kind, and everything that creeps upon ground. ²⁶ Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image and likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle and all wild animals of the earth, every insect, reptile or creeping thing.' ²⁷ So God created humankind in his image; male and female he created them. ²⁸ He blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, birds of the air, and every living thing that moves upon the earth.' ²⁹ God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, bird of the air, and everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything he had made on the sixth day, and indeed, it was very good.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude.

² And on the seventh day God finished all his work, and rested. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because this was when God was able to rest from all the work that he had done in creation.

This Week's Second Reading: *Romans 8.18-25,*

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

This Week's Gospel Reading: *Matthew 6.25-end.*

²⁵ 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" ³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ 'So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Next Weeks Readings: *Exodus 24.12-end, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1.16-end, Matthew 17.1-9.*

Prayer of Intercession

Almighty and Ever-living God, on these days leading up to Lent, we gather to lift our hearts in prayer, confident that you hear our cries and will deliver us from all our troubles. As we navigate the winter months, we thank you for being the light that shines in the darkness, and we ask that you fill us with your presence.

Lord, we pray for your Church throughout the world. Make us truly the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Empower all Christians to reach out in charity and with mercy, shining Christ's light into the gloomy corners of our society. We pray for our local parish community, that our ministries may bring hope to the lonely and brokenhearted.

We bring before you our world leaders, especially in this time of economic and social uncertainty. Grant them wisdom to act with justice, to reduce poverty, and to work urgently for peace in nations torn by conflict. We pray for the marginalized, the homeless, and the refugee; may they find shelter and dignity. Lord, we remember the sick, the afflicted, and those suffering from mental illness or dementia. As we approach the World Day of the Sick, we ask for your healing presence to comfort them and strengthen those who care for them.

We lift up families and young people, asking for a blessing on all married couples living out their vocation. Strengthen us in times of trial, heal what is wounded within us, and renew our hearts with your compassion.

Finally, we silently bring our personal intentions before you, trusting in your divine love.

We make these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**