

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March**  
Third Sunday of Lent

**Upcoming Events**

- 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> March - Lent Lunch, The Lenches Club.
- Fri 27<sup>th</sup> March - 'EggHeads' Easter Quiz!, Abbots Morton Village Hall, £6 per person, Provide your own drinks.  
ALL WELCOME!

**Today's Collect**

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Next Week Services: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March (Mothering Sunday)**

9:30am	Harvington	Morning Prayer
10:00am	Norton & Lenchwick	Holy Communion
11:00am	Abbots Morton	Holy Communion
11:00am	Rous Lench	Morning Prayer
11:00am	Church Lench	Holy Communion

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

Notice;

- ❖ Adverts for the Arch Messenger must be emailed to [tom@archbenefice.org.uk](mailto:tom@archbenefice.org.uk) by 9<sup>th</sup> March.

**This Week's First Reading: Exodus 17.1-7.**

<sup>1</sup> The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> So they quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?"

<sup>3</sup> But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" <sup>4</sup> Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me."

<sup>5</sup> The LORD answered Moses, "Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.<sup>6</sup> I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

**This Week's Second Reading:** *Romans 5.1-11,*

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope.

<sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

<sup>11</sup> Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

**This Week's Gospel Reading:** *John 4.5-42.*

<sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. <sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "will you give me a drink?" <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

<sup>11</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” <sup>16</sup> He told her, “Go, call your husband to come back.”

<sup>17</sup> “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. <sup>18</sup> The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

<sup>19</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

<sup>21</sup> “Woman,” Jesus replied, “Believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do not know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time has now come when the true worshipers worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and we must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, “I know that Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” <sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you – I am he.”

<sup>27</sup> Just then Jesus’ disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

<sup>28</sup> Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup> “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” <sup>30</sup> They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” <sup>33</sup> Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” <sup>34</sup> “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. <sup>35</sup> Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They’re ripe for harvest. <sup>36</sup> Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup> Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of the labour.”

<sup>39</sup> Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. <sup>41</sup> And because of his words many more became believers. <sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

**Next Weeks Readings:** *1 Samuel 16.1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5.8-14, John 9.*

## Prayer of Intercession

O God, When suffering arises, preserve your church. Give to pastors, deacons, bishops and all servants of your gospel the endurance that produces character and the hope that will never disappoint.

Lord In your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

When the waters run dry, sustain this earth, Send water to places languishing with drought, and bring relief to places damaged by floods.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

When quarrels ensue, soften our hearts. Quell hostilities between nations and peoples, and reconcile all humans across the lines of race, class, nationality, moral conviction, religion, and all else that divides or oppresses.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

When your people thirst, satisfy their needs. Send water and food to all who need nourishment. Grant welcome, to all who are excluded. Show your mercy to any in need.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

O God, when death draws near, we rejoice in the promise of life with you. We remember all who have entered eternal rest, and we pray that you bring us the hope of sharing your glory, as we continue to celebrate the life you have given to us.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Amen.**