

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

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December**

Third Sunday of Advent

### **Today's Collect**

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, now and for ever.

### **Today's Post Communion**

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit, that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

### **Next Week Services: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December**

9:30am	Harvington	Holy Communion
3:30pm	Harvington	Christingle
6:30pm	Church Lench	Carol Service
6:30pm	Rous Lench	Christmas Carol Service

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**

For light to know and to follow the truth, let us pray to the Lord. Make the Church a powerful witness to the light that has come into the world. Through the preaching of the word, and through the water of baptism, may God's people be gathered into one body and may our works make a true difference to your world.

### **Lord in your Mercy Hear our Prayer**

Grant that the messengers of God may be heard throughout the world. Give us strength to know that our voice is worthy to carry your message. Where material wealth and comfort fill humanity with thoughts of greed and inequality, bring the light which reveals the true joy of living. Make us messengers of the Gospel in our daily lives and give strength to all in our community who labour to make known the mighty works of God.

### **Lord in your Mercy Hear our Prayer**

Bring peace to places of conflict, both at home and abroad. When you people stand in the shadows of evil give them the strength to step into the light, loving and trusting in your protection. We think particularly of Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen, Sudan and central America but we know that you love and help are needed everywhere.

### **Lord in your Mercy Hear our Prayer**

Have mercy on all who suffer in body, mind, or soul. Let the light of hope shine through their darkness and give them comfort in their affliction. We give thanks for the departed who were cleansed by the water of baptism and have passed over the great water to eternal life. May they rest in peace and may light perpetual shine upon them.

### **Lord in your Mercy Hear our Prayer**

**This 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<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.<sup>4</sup> 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.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;<sup>6</sup> 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;<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.

**This weeks Psalm: *Magnificat*,**

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

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

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

**This Week’s Second Reading: *James 5.7-10*,**

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup>

You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

<sup>7</sup> 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? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> 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."

<sup>11</sup> 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.

**Next Week's First Reading: *Isaiah 7.10-16.***

<sup>10</sup> Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will

**Next Week's First Reading Continued: *Isaiah 7.10-16.***

give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

**Next Week's Psalm: *Psalms 80.1-8, 18-20.***

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

6 You make us the scorn of our neighbours;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

8 You brought a vine out of Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.

18 Then we will never turn back from you;  
give us life, and we will call on your name.

**Next Week's Psalm Continued:***Psalm 80.1-8,18-20.*

19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

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

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Next Week's Gospel Reading:** *Matthew 1.18-end.*

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and

said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel',

which means, 'God is with us.' <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

