

# BENEFICE OF ARICONIUM

**08<sup>th</sup> February**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent**

## 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 for ever.

## Readings

Old Testament          Genesis 1. <sup>1-thru</sup> 2. <sup>3.</sup>  
New Testament          Romans 8. <sup>18-25.</sup>  
Gospel                      Matthew 6. <sup>25-end.</sup>

It is a particular sort of person who has ambitions to be a politician and I suspect that the majority of us wouldn't touch the job with a bargepole. We may well moan about our leaders, but they have an impossible task in trying to run the country on a limited (and already grossly overdrawn) budget. Limited funds have to be prioritised for getting the best value for the benefit of the greatest majority.

In today's Gospel reading, which is part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it plain what the Christian priority should be - 'Strive first for the Kingdom of God'.

How many times over our own lives have we prayed for the coming of the Kingdom using the words of the Lord's Prayer? Prayers are often answered, but not always in the way that we may want or expect. Do we *really* want the Kingdom of God to come?

Think of the implications - no more wars; no more worldly leaders; no more poverty, disease, homelessness, crime; no more lots of other things! So far, so good - all very positive. So what's the problem? Well, there is to be Judgement when the secrets of all hearts will be disclosed.

Everyone of us will be called to account for those things that we have done wrong. Yes, God is merciful - he is also patient and long-suffering. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom and also for forgiveness - but that is given to us in the way that we offer it to others.

Unlike the politicians, our priority must be the Kingdom but Jesus tells us not to worry and take each day as it comes - each day has enough problems of its own. We must however, be careful what we pray for – even unthinking repetition may well be answered. We need to take each day and at the beginning, place it into God's hands and walk through it with him. We are told to 'strive first for the Kingdom of God and his righteousness' - then

all the rest falls into place. It is not just a good idea or an option - but a priority from the mouth of Jesus.

*Martin.*

**Services next Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February – Sunday next before Lent**

Weston-under-Penyard	Family Communion	11.00 a.m.
The Lea	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Hope Mansell	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Aston Ingham	Village Praise	10.30 a.m.
Linton	Morning Worship	11.00 a.m.
Upton Bishop	Parish Communion	10.30 a.m.

## Forthcoming Services & Events

**BENEFICE LENT COURSE: Bread of Life Lent Course, is a 6 week course about the Eucharist, it starts on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 7pm LEA Church.**

**LINTON. Bible Book Club** Bible Book club is an informal monthly book club reading through the Bible one book at a time. The next Bible Book Club will be on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February at Wrens Nest. In February we will be discussing the three letters of John. Each session is stand alone and starts with refreshments at 10.30am, everyone welcome. Contact Charlotte for more information.

**LINTON. Lent Discussion Group** Following a very enjoyable Lent discussion group last year based on Hamilton there will be meetings on Friday evenings in February and March, starting on 20<sup>th</sup> February. This year we will be using the book A Beautiful Friendship: A Lent course based on the film Casablanca. We will be looking at themes of sacrifice, repentance, suffering, loss and hope using clips from the film as a basis for the discussion. Everyone welcome, contact Charlotte if you want more details.

**WESTON:** The new season of Bible Studies will recommence at Penyard Rise, HR9-7PH on 22nd January 2026 at 2.30 pm. Tony & Mary Pitt 07534510614.

**UPTON BISHOP** have a BCP communion Service at 9.30 am on the first Wednesday of each month. A quiet midweek service. All welcome"

*Please be aware that if you have any events you would like to advertise here, do please contact Debs directly (details below) and she will be pleased to include them.*

**Please pray** for all who are sick, Mary Salmon (*WuP*)

**Please pray** for all who have died, Gerry Lowth (*WuP*), Amanda Simpson (*UB*), Malcolm Ives (*UB*), David Bailey (*AI*), Steph Watts (*HM*), Joy Kinsman (*WuP*)

Rev David Howell: **07903 790049** email: [revdavidhowell@icloud.com](mailto:revdavidhowell@icloud.com)

Rev Ewan Gillings: **07568 515628** email: [revgillings@gmail.com](mailto:revgillings@gmail.com)

*If you would like to receive this pew sheet via email, please email Debs*

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