

BENEFICE OF ARICONIUM

03rd May
5th Sunday of Easter

Collect

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Readings

Old Testament	Acts 7. 55-end.
New Testament	1 Peter 2. 2-10.
Gospel	John 14. 1-14.

Last week's gospel reading brought to us the narrative of the sheepfold and the shepherd – of Christ as the gate, as the one through whom we enter into God's kingdom. This week, we hear Jesus' claim to exclusivity repeated once again – "I am the way, and the truth, and the life", he tells the disciple Thomas.

As is always the case, it is no coincidence that these readings follow from one week to the next in the church's lectionary. The liturgical season of Easter, which we are fast drawing to the close of, is marked, of course, by the resurrection of Our Lord. It is this resurrection which demarcates Christ – in other words, it is that claim that not only did God become man, but that He died; not only that He died, but that He rose again. It is in the message of the resurrection preached that we find the exclusive and central claim of the Christian faith. Christ is not simply one holy man amongst many – Christianity is not just one of a number of paths up the mountain to God. We are currently preparing for a number of weddings across the Benefice in the coming weeks and months – one of the joys that this brings is being able to walk couples through the promises that they make to one another in the service. In the Declarations, the bride and groom promise one another that they will, "forsaking all others, be faithful." This is the same promise of exclusivity which Christ asks all of us to make to Him. He is the way, truth, and life; no one else. Similarly, He is the way, truth, and life; there is no other gate, path, or means of relationship with God.

So, as we begin to draw near to the end of the Easter season, I encourage you to reflect again on the way in which you have "forsaken all others" as you seek ever-closer union with Christ, and be thankful that He is always, unceasingly, waiting for us to draw nearer.
Ewan

Services next Sunday 10th May – 6th Sunday of Easter

Weston-under-Penyard	Communion Service	11.00 a.m.
The Lea	Holy Communion	9.30 a.m.
Hope Mansell		
Aston Ingham	Parish Communion	10.30 a.m.
Linton	Bible Book Club	10.30 a.m.
Upton Bishop	Parish Communion	11.00 a.m.

Forthcoming Services & Events

WESTON: BISHOP'S VISIT BENEFICE SERVICE AND BUFFET LUNCH 3rd May, Any help with food donations for Buffet Lunch appreciated. Email Debs or Ewan.

LINTON. Bible Book Club Bible Book club is an informal monthly book club reading through the Bible one book at a time. Each session is stand alone and starts with refreshments at 10.30am, everyone welcome. Info Contact Charlotte

WESTON: Bible Studies continue at Penyard Rise on 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. Tony & Mary Pitt 07534 510614.

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,

Please pray for all who have died, Tony Butcher (AI)

Rev David Howell: **07903 790049** email: revdavidhowell@icloud.com

Rev Ewan Gillings: **07568 515628** email: revgillings@gmail.com

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

debsparishsecretary@outlook.com

[Website: www.ariconium.church](http://www.ariconium.church)