

BENEFICE OF ARICONIUM

5th February
Septuagesima

Collect

O Lord, we beseech thee favourably to hear the prayers of thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen*

Readings

Old Testament	Isaiah 40 ²¹⁻³¹
New Testament	1 Corinthians 9 ¹⁶⁻²³
Gospel	Mark 1 ²⁹⁻³⁹

"Pay...honour to whom honour is due" (Romans 12.7)

Or perhaps this week, dishonour to whom dishonour. For I am sure you have all noted, with varying reactions, the story of the 'unknighting' of a prominent former banker. Inevitably such a story, whatever the merits of the particular case, brings out comment and opinion on the concept of honours, with at least some commentators and letter-writers in the media scorning the whole idea as anachronism and irrelevance to 'modern day Britain'. I can only confess that when occasion leads me to reflect on the honours system, I come to exactly the opposite conclusion. It is all about how we value other people, and in particular demonstrate what is inevitable in human nature, that some people for whatever reason make exceptional achievements in life, to the benefit of many others. We live in a society in which, apart from our affection for our families and friends and judgement of those we know personally, our most prominent public yardstick is plain wealth, be it shown through size of house or car, or just known salary. Recently, hearing discussion of the attempts by Lord Patten to appoint a new Director-General of the BBC at a rather lower salary than the current one, I heard the depressing opinion that other senior executives could not possibly respect as their boss a man paid less than them. Whyever not, if he (or she) is the most competent and the properly appointed person? It is interesting how this affects the Church - I once read that a hundred years ago, the public figure with the highest income from his position was the Archbishop of Canterbury - and I fear he was then held in much higher regard than his successor today, who receives the sort of stipend many MPs would consider leaving public life rather than endure.

The virtue of honours is just that - they convey honour and regard for those who, on the whole, have made great contributions to public service - they cost little, and do not enhance income, but recognise achievement. It does not surprise me that MBEs and knighthoods are often found sitting in the pews, because as Christians we accept the calling to serve others. And in our striving for a better world, let us always be ready to acclaim the good and the worthy over the merely valuable or rich

Neil

Services Next Sunday – 12th February Sexagesima

Weston-under-Penyard	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Hope Mansel	Evensong	6.30 p.m.
The Lea	Holy Communion	8.00 a.m.
Aston Ingham	Parish Communion	9.30 a.m.
Linton	Mattins	11.15 a.m.
Upton Bishop	Holy Communion (1662)	8.00 a.m.

Forthcoming Services & Events:

Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 22nd February - Benefice Communion with imposition of Ashes at Aston Ingham on at 7.30 p.m

Lent Courses – We are running two parallel Lent courses in the Benefice this Lent, on the theme of our spiritual journey, looking at different characters from the Old Testament. Davina will be leading a group starting on 20th February (i.e. before Ash Wednesday) on Monday afternoons in Aston Ingham Village Hall from 2 - 4p.m. Neil will be leading a group starting 23rd February on Thursday evenings from 7.30 – 9 p.m. at The Rectory. Both groups will cover the same material.

Aston Ingham Scout Group are running another one of their popular Quiz Nights on Monday 6th February 8pm at The Crown Inn, Lea. Admission is £2.50 per person in tables of 4. Bar, Raffle and Hot and Cold snacks available to purchase during the evening. Booking advisable, please contact Rose Savidge (01989 750334) or Anthea Hamilton (01452 830343) Proceeds to their Scout Hut Refurbishment Fund.

Barn Dance with Dick Brice. 17th February 7.30 p.m. at Lea Village Hall. Adults £8, Children (under 16) £3 including a Ploughman's Supper. Bring your own drinks. Proceeds to St Michael Church, Hope Mansel. Tickets – Sheila Heath – 750528, Lyn Dixon – 563990

COMMUNITY LARDER - There is urgent need to support the local Community Larder and Food Bank which is much in demand at the moment. This month food parcels have been sent to Families in crisis every day. Please donate items of non-perishable foods to the basket in church where you will see a list of the most urgently-needed items. Thank you.

Neil has been given a large number of demijohns by a colleague. If anyone would like one, please contact him.

Please pray for all who are sick, among them: *Daisy Bayliss(Lin), Beryl Berlin(WuP), Rodney Maynard(Lea), Joan Morgan, Philip Rushworth(Lea)*

And remember all who have died and pray for the bereaved family of: *Phyllis Marshall(HM)*

If you would like to receive this pewsheet via email please email Marilyn Brookes on marilyn@pmbrookes.freemove.co.uk

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