



**The Benefice of the Piddle Valley,
Hilton and Ansty, Cheselbourne and Melcombe Horsey**

Sunday 17th February 2019

3rd Sunday before Lent

Altar Colour – Green

Jer. 17: 5-10

Psalm 1

Collect: O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 (ESV) - *The Resurrection of the Dead*

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.



Comment: The Resurrection of Jesus came about due to God's action on the dead body of Jesus. The Greek verb 'geiro' (= to raise) is used in the perfect tense six times in nine verses. It is an active verb, not passive. Paul did not believe that Jesus simply "rose" from the dead, but that "God had raised him". For Paul, this was the heart of the gospel. If the resurrection did not happen, then all else fails: the apostolic preaching, Jesus' divine messiahship, the forgiveness of sin and a new life, the promise of God's final victory over human sin and death. In short, the dead are dead, Jesus Christ included - "dust to dust, ashes to ashes," with all hoping for something more, perhaps; but without any assurance whatsoever. A faction within the Corinthian Church existed which denied the resurrection (verse 12), or at least denied that there was a resurrection body. Paul had been a Pharisee prior to his conversion, and as such "General Resurrection" but not anchored in any definite way. Paul's triumphant cry in verse 20; "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" comes out of the depths of his Jewish heritage. This explains the vigour with which Paul counters the disbelief he encountered in Corinth.

This changed with the Resurrection of Jesus, the risen Lord who met him on the Damascus Road. He used the word 'apark' which technically meant the beginning of a sacrifice, referring to the ancient Festival of Weeks when the first fruits of the annual barley harvest were offered as a sacrifice. But by Paul's time and especially among the Hellenistic Jews of the Diaspora, this festival was also known by its Greek name, Pentecost. For the apostolic church, that was the occasion for the gift of the Spirit. On that day, the full meaning and power of Jesus' resurrection as an absolutely unprecedented spiritual event became clear to the gathered community of disciples and their mission to proclaim the good news of Christ's resurrection began.

Luke 6:17-26 Version (ESV) - *Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude*

And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

The Beatitudes

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!

Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

Jesus Pronounces Woes

"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. "Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. "Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. "Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Comment: Comparing Luke's version of the Beatitudes, and the Sermon on the Plain which they introduce, with those found in Matthew 5, can provide an interesting study. Luke's includes only four and adds corresponding but inverse woes. In addition to the nine Beatitudes of Matthew 5, seven woes can be found in Matthew 23. Contrary to the present day preaching within the Church about an alleged sentimentalist's 'unconditional love' of God, there are stark warnings to frame our lives in service for others. Ethical demands are part and parcel of our faith in Christ.

What's going on around the Benefice!

THE
WEEK
AHEAD

Thursday 21st February: Morning Prayer, coffee and a chat with the Rector, 9am St Andrew's Melcombe Horsey

Thursday 21st February: Morning Prayer 9.30am St Mary's Piddlehinton with Alan Neades, this is a weekly service.

Stepping Stones Home Group: meets twice a month on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm, at Orchard Cottage, Melcombe Bingham. (Richard and Julie Saunders on 01258 880585.) Next meeting 26th February, **All Welcome.**



Piddle Valley School: The School urgently require foundation governors. Fr. Roger and Ginny are both Foundation Governors, alongside a parent governor, a retired teacher (living in the valley) and two current members of school staff and of course the head teacher Mrs Jayne Brown. Some information about the role of a governor can be found on the Diocese

Website: www.salisbury.anglican.org/resources-library/schools1/governors/.

If you are interested in this role, please speak to the Rector as soon as possible – thank you

Next Sunday's Services

24th February 2019

Altar Colour - Green

Gen. 2: 4b– 9, 15-end

Psalm 65

Rev. 4: 1-end

Luke 8: 22-25

2nd Sunday before Lent

8.30am Holy Communion at Cheselbourne

9.30am Joint Family Eucharist * at Piddletrenthide
(With Alton Pancras)

6.00pm Sung Evensong (BCP) at Hilton

6.00pm Sung Evensong (BCP) at Piddlehinton

**refreshments and fellowship after the service*



**Rector – Rev'd Fr. Roger J. Butcher, The Vicarage,
Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY Tel. 01300 348211 / 07502 118210
Email: rector.piddlevalleybenefice@gmail.com.**