



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

Sunday 1st September 2019
11th Sunday after Trinity (Proper 17)

Altar Colour – Green

[Please take this pew sheet home.](#)

Readings: Eccus. 10: 12-18, Psalm 112, Heb. 13: 1-8, 15-16, Luke 14: 1, 7-14

Collect: O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 (ESV) *Sacrifices Pleasing to God*

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honour among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

COMMENT: As in so many other New Testament letters, this concluding chapter of this letter contains a number of admonitions to the assembly to whom it was written. These words of advice set before this congregation the high moral standards expected of them in their particular setting. The most singular preaching text of the passage is surely v. 8. However, can it be interpreted in today's environment as it was intended at that time? The dietary rules of vs. 9-14 make obvious reference to the strict Levitical code ostensibly given by the LORD to Moses in the tent of meeting during the Israelites' forty years in the

wilderness. The community to which the letter was written may well have been predominantly Jewish struggling with the freedom of their new faith in Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah. Certainly an extended struggle between the Jerusalem apostolate led by James, the brother of Jesus, and the Pauline Gentile apostolate occurred within many nascent Christian communities of the 1st Century AD. It is clear that for Christians then and now ethical behaviour is rooted in faith. Our relationship with Christ helps us to behave as we should toward one another. The moral counsel of vs. 1-5 springs from the faith summed up in vs. 6-8. Because we believe in the unchangeable Christ, we behave in certain disciplined ways that others may not share. We do so confidently with the help of God and following the example of those who shared this faith with us. Such a life may involve sacrifice, but we may think of such sacrifice as an act of worship offered to God. As is so often the case in Hebrews, the whole passage expressed the prophetic spirit that continually recalled Israel to its covenantal relationship as the true form of liturgy. Yet it does justice also to the liturgical traditions which shaped the Jewish identity and culture in the post-exilic period when the reconstructed Second Temple became the focal point of national life and historical events. The Letter to the Hebrews tried to identify for Hebrew Christians the moral and spiritual reality they had both continuity and discontinuity with their ancient traditions.

Luke 14:1, 7-14 (ESV) - The Parable of the Wedding Feast

One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honour, saying to them, “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honour, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The Parable of the Great Banquet

He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

COMMENT: Despite the conflict portrayed between Jesus and the Pharisees in some of the Gospel passages, Jesus was considered as a fellow teacher and even admired by many Pharisees – we only have to think of Nicodemus in John chapter 3. The theme of weddings and guests is easily found in the Gospels (Matthew 9:15, 22:1-14, 25:1-13, Mark 2:19, Luke

5:24, 14:7-11, John 2:1-10), and which becomes the basis for our Lord's teaching. In this passage, unique to Luke, Jesus had been invited to the home of a leading Pharisee for the Sabbath meal. In the verses missing from the passage above (2-6), he caused controversy by healing a man afflicted with dropsy (œdema or excessive retention of fluids) on the Sabbath. To add to that offence, as he noticed how guests placed themselves in the pecking order, he proceeds to offer them advice on how to conduct themselves, challenging the pretentious behaviour. The shame will have been driven home by the fact our Lord was alluding to the Proverbs (25:6-7). We ought to question how pretentious behaviour is part of the Church, which it can be. If those two lessons were not enough, we move on to a further lecture about who ought to be invited to dinner. Whilst social injustice does not exist in the sharp way as it once did in the UK due to the welfare state, we need to question to whom we extend invites to our social events, and as Christians reach out to those with whom we do not normally socialise. Perhaps in our giving to target those most in need.

Post Communion: Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace: by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Blessing: The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Benefice Prayer Requests:

- Please continue to pray for those who are ill, recovering from illness or surgery: June Kellaway, Ann Lambert, Faye Lord, Terry Jeanes, Katie, Roger Gray, and Marion Traynor...
- Please pray for those who grieve and miss the earthly presence of a loved one.
- We pray for our couples preparing for Holy Matrimony during September: Sam & Becky (MH), Sam & Rebecca (Hilton). October: Adam & Valerie (PH)



What's going on around the Benefice!

Food Bank: As a benefice we will continue to collect a packet/tin a week to support those in the wider Dorchester community who are in need.



Saturday 31st August: Internment of Ashes Paul Miller at Cole Hill Cemetery, Wimborne.

Tuesday 3rd September: Stepping Stones Home Group Meet twice a month on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm, at Orchard Cottage, Melcombe Bingham. (Richard and Julie Saunders on 01258 880585.) *All Welcome*

Thursday 5th September: 9am Morning Prayer, Coffee and a Chat with the Rector at Alton Pancras

Thursday 5th September: 9.30am Morning Prayer at Piddlehinton, with Alan Neades

Thursday 5th September: Funeral of William Derek Jeans (formerly of Alton Pancras) at 1pm Weymouth Crematorium

<u>8th September 2019</u>	<u>12th Sunday after Trinity</u>	
Altar Colour – Green	8.30am Holy Communion	Hilton
Deut. 30: 15-end	9.30am Family Service	Alton Pancras
Psalms 1	11.00am Parish Communion	Melcombe Horsey
Philemon 1-21	6.00pm Evening Prayer	Piddlehinton
Luke 14: 25-33		

Dates for your diary

Stepping Stones Home Group, 17th September

10th September 10am Tiddlers at Piddle Valley School

29th September 10.30am Combined Benefice Communion Service at Milton Abbey

Rector: Fr. Roger Butcher, The Vicarage, Church Lane, Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY. **Tel:** 01300 348211 / Mob. 07502 118210

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