



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

Sunday 22nd September 2019
14th Sunday after Trinity (Proper 20)

Altar Colour – Green

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

Readings: Amos 8: 4-7, Psalm 113, 1 Tim 2: 1-7, Luke 16: 1-13

Collect: Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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**

Amos 8:4-7 (ESV) - The Coming Day of Bitter Judgement

Hear this, you who trample on the needy and bring the poor of the land to an end, saying, “When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, that we may offer wheat for sale, that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great and deal deceitfully with false balances, that we may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals and sell the chaff of the wheat?” The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: “Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

COMMENT: Of all the Old Testament prophets, none is more passionate about social justice than Amos. This outburst of prophetic wrath promised nothing but destruction for Israel caused by the grave injustices of the times. It would appear that normal business operations were postponed during the festival celebrating the beginning of a new month (“the new moon” in verse 5) and also for the weekly Sabbaths. That prevented the merchants from making as much profit as they would have liked. The return for scarce produce of the poor was being manipulated by false balances, inaccurate measures and low prices (verses 5b-6).

Luke 16:1-13 (ESV) - The Parable of the Dishonest Steward.

Jesus also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a steward, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ And the steward said to

himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that people may receive me into their houses when I am put out of the stewardship.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' The master commended the dishonest steward for his shrewdness; for the sons of this world are shrewder in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal habitations. "He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he who is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

COMMENT: An incompetent steward is told to hand in his accounts. When he had successfully collected part of what was owed his master, he placed these same debtors in obligation to him, the master commends him for his shrewdness. But is that the point of the parable? Is there anything edifying about this steward's seeming dishonesty? In telling this story, Luke is not encouraging the abuse of financial obligations as verse 9 seems to suggest. Rather it means make friends by use of worldly money – use for money for others. The Steward thought of himself only, not his Master or the Tenants. Now at least he was looking after the Tenants. Jesus goes on in vs.10-12 to contrast the morality of the old age with that of the new age he had initiated. One of the criticisms of Jesus by the Pharisees had been that his proclamation of a new order had made sin easy by lowering the requirements for God's reign in contrast to John the Baptist's rigorous morality. "Cheap grace," modern theologians call it. The Letter of James appears to follow a similarly rigid approach to the Law. As Luke makes clear in his comments, Jesus raised the bar even higher. A little dishonesty or a little white lie always pays the wrong kind of dividends. On the other hand, faithfulness in small issues will result in more responsibility in greater ones. How we handle money can be a genuine test case. The use of money is important because it is a training ground for all of life and expressive of the true character of the user.

Post Communion: Lord God, the source of truth and love, keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, united in prayer and the breaking of bread, and one in joy and simplicity of heart, in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Blessing: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; 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, Lisa Bailey, Roger Gray, and Marion Traynor...
- Please pray for all the Ironman competitors in Weymouth and Dorchester this weekend,
- Please pray for those who grieve,
- Please pray for our benefice schools of Piddle Valley and Cheselbourne as the teachers, staff and pupils settle into the autumn routines of learning and play.



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.

Wednesday 25th September: Combined Benefice Choir rehearsal 7.30pm, Winterbourne Stickland Church with Angela D'Silva

Thursday 26th September: 9.30am Morning Prayer at Piddlehinton, with Alan Neades

Saturday 28th September: 1pm Internment of Ashes of the late Derek Jeanes at Alton Pancras.

29th September 2019 Michael and All Angels <i>Altar Colour – White</i> Gen. 28: 10-17, Psalm 103: 19-end, Rev. 12: 7-12, John 1: 47-end	<u>15th Sunday after Trinity</u> 8.30am Communion 10.30am Combined Benefice Eucharist Service	Piddlehinton Milton Abbey
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Dates for your diary

Stepping Stones next meet in October, dates to follow and all are welcome.

1st October, Tiddlers at Piddle Valley School 10-11.30am

16th October WEDNESDAY 6.30pm Benefice Meeting. Cheselbourne Village Hall

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