



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

Sunday 6th October 2019
16th Sunday after trinity
Altar Colour – Green

Readings:

- **Trinity 16:** Hab. 1: 1-4, 2: 1-4, Psalm 37: 1-9, 2 Tim. 1: 1-14, Luke 17: 5-10
- **Harvest:** Deuteronomy 26.1-11, John 6.25-35

Collect: O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; 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

Habakkuk 1:1-4 (ESV) - Habakkuk's Complaint

The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw. O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted. I will take my stand at my watch post and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint.

The Righteous Shall Live by His Faith

And the LORD answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. "Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.

COMMENT: Very little is known about most of the twelve Minor Prophets, especially Habakkuk. Even the identity of the enemy threatening the violent destruction of Israel is uncertain. Probably the background of the book was certain events related to the

Babylonian invasion of 609-598 BC. Unlike most of his predecessors, Habakkuk addressed his words not to his fellow citizens of Judah, the southern Israelite kingdom, but to the LORD. Somewhat like Job, he demanded to know when the LORD would fulfil his purpose to bring in a reign of justice, righteousness and peace on the earth. When would the kingdom of the LORD come? In total, the book stands as a conversation between the prophet and the LORD with a concluding psalm confirming what the prophet had come to believe as a result of this exchange. This reading consists of two oracles. The first is Habakkuk's initial lament as he witnessed only destruction and violence. This resulted in a breakdown of law and order in which evil and injustice triumph over established social values. Habakkuk's complaint was that the LORD appeared to ignore all the misery and wrongdoing. The LORD answered the prophet in 2:1-3. As he stood in a watch-tower, he had an epiphany. The remainder of the chapter (2:4-20) elaborated the prophet's vision of the woes to come. Typically the message warned that the pending disaster was the result of national apostasy. But he proclaimed his hope just as clearly in 2:4 "The righteous man will live by his faithfulness." Centuries later, of course, this became the theme of Paul's letter to the Romans. In what sort of behaviour is faithfulness attained? To begin with, the prophet is instructed to be patient (v.3) for the LORD's purpose is accomplished according to the LORD's own timing and not by our need. That is a potent message for this very day.

Luke 17:5-10 (ESV) - Increase Our Faith

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

Unworthy Servants

"Will any one of you who has a servant ploughing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at table'? Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"

COMMENT: Faith like a mustard seed and commending servants for doing their job do not seem to fit well together in these two brief sayings of Jesus. However it appears that in this passage today from Luke's Gospel, he is giving examples of how Jesus taught his disciples. If there is a theological lesson in this brief excerpt, it is that faith and works are contrasted as clearly as in Paul's letters, and notably essential to the life of discipleship. The example of faith achieving unimaginable ends (vs. 5-6) showed how Jesus used hyperbole (an exaggeration) for memorable effect. Those who take the saying literally will find no comfort in their failure to make any tree move except with appropriate manual or mechanical equipment. A Christian American, Robert LeTourneau, developed heavy earth-moving equipment to build roads and airports during and after World War II. He adopted

as his company motto: "We have what it takes to move mountains." This particular tree called the mulberry was the sycamine, but in the Septuagint the Greek word also meant the sycamore. The two were not identical. If this tree was the latter, it had very deep roots and would have been impossible with the simple technology then available to transplant the tree anywhere, least of all into the sea. The example of the slaves who should not be invited to be seated at the master's table (verses 7-10) warned against the possibility of achieving the spiritual aims through human effort. Spirituality does not operate with a bookkeeping mentality. Merit has to be abandoned in our approach to God. Perhaps the best commentary on this teaching is the prayer of St Ignatius Loyola SJ (1491-1556); Teach us, good Lord, to serve thee as thou deservest; To give, and not to count the cost, to fight, and not to heed the wounds, to toil, and not to seek for rest, to labour, and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do thy will. The two brief sayings do point to the same conclusion: have faith above all. An increase of faith does not come from our Saviour's fiat or from our many good works. In some situations we may indeed be helpless to change the circumstances in which faith is the only possible attitude to take.

Post Communion: Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Blessing: Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; 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, Bernard , Marion Traynor...
- We pray for Elana and her family, baptised at Piddlehinton
- We pray for Adam and Valerie as they prepare for Holy Matrimony at Piddlehinton in 19th October
- Please pray for those who grieve,
- Please pray for our benefice schools of Piddle Valley and Cheselbourne for the children, teachers, staff and governors.



*If you would like to add someone to the Prayer list,
please email the Rector.*

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.



For more information about how to access the foodbank can be found on the following website <http://dorchesterbc.org.uk/food-bank>

Thursday 10th October: 9.30am Morning Prayer, with Alan Neades Piddlehinton

Fr. Roger apologies as is unable to attend Piddlehinton for Morning Prayer/Eucharist Coffee and a chat this month as he is attending the Bishops Breakfast at Kingston Mauward, and then a meeting in West Stafford with the Arch Deacon.

<u>13th October 2019</u>	<u>17th Sunday after Trinity</u>	
Altar Colour - green	8.30am Communion	Hilton
Hab. 1: 1-4, 2: 1-4	9.30am Family Eucharist	Alton Pancras
Psalms 37: 1-9	11.00am Parish Communion	Melcombe Horsey
2 Tim. 1: 1-14	5.00pm Harvest Festival	Piddletrenthide
Luke 17: 5-10	Songs of Praise	
	6.00pm Evening Prayer	Piddlehinton

Dates for your diary

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

Stepping Stones next meet on 22nd October, all are welcome For more details please contact Richard and Julie Saunders 01258 880585.

Tiddlers at Piddle Valley School Tuesday 5th November 10.00 to 11.30pm. For More details please contact Alicia

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