



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

Sunday 28th June 2020

Trinity 3 (Altar colour green)

Readings: Jer.28: 5-9, Psalm 89: 8-18, Rom 6: 12-end, Matt 10: 40-end

Collect: Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father: give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; 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**

Jeremiah 28:5-9 (ESV) - Hananiah the False Prophet

Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Hananiah the prophet in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD, and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD make the words that you have prophesied come true, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. Yet hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

COMMENT: This strange exchange between two rival prophets may seem odd to modern ears. It crystallizes the difference between true and false prophets in a time of great crisis and upheaval. Jeremiah sought to clarify the simple truth that there could be no peace for Israel despite the hopeful proclamation of Hannaniah. As one who sought to please, Hannaniah had tried to reassure the priests and the people that within two years King Jeconiah and the temple vessels would be brought back from Babylon whence they had been carried captive by King Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah hoped it would come true, but he knew that the actual situation was far from favourable for that to happen. He also believed that the LORD still had a purpose in the disastrous experience of so many of Israel's leading citizens and the royal court having been led away into exile as Babylonian captives. As one of the two great prophets of the Babylonian Exile (the other being Ezekiel), Jeremiah had a very realistic view of the events his nation experienced. It is worth reading the preceding chapter 27 to gain the correct perspective on this exchange with the ever optimistic Hannaniah. Jeremiah had proposed in the LORD's name that Judah (the only part of the nation remaining) submit to their Babylonian overlords rather than resist. He dramatized his prophesy by donning a heavy yoke. The religious and civil authorities were incensed by such objectionable behaviour despite the severity of Jeremiah's warning about the inevitability of failure should they do otherwise. Jeremiah had not always been a doom-sayer, although that is what he is popularly deemed to have been. He actually wished that Hannaniah's hopeful prophesy would come about. His deeper insight into the will of the LORD, the Sovereign of Israel's history, prevented him from sharing such optimism. Change the channel tour own time and place and what do we see? Is God not troubled by the vicious wars, foreign occupation and counter insurgencies rampant through the Middle East? Is God not angry that we do nothing when millions are driven from their homes, murdered, raped and starved by brutal forces? What is the price in human suffering and despair of our unloading unpayable debts on so many African nations? Are we not blind to the realities of our time? Who are the prophetic voices of our time?

Matthew 10:40-42 (ESV) – Rewards

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

COMMENT: The thrust of this brief reading at the end of Jesus' discourse of instructions to his disciples. Parallels are found in Luke 10:16 and Mark 9:37. It outlines how the Christian community was to continue the Lord's work. It also described how the apostles and other early Christian leaders were to be received. In some ways it also parallels Paul's "ambassadors for Christ" affirmation in 2 Corinthians 5:20. An ancient Jewish oral tradition later recorded in the rabbinical Mishnah ca. AD 150 required that a man's emissary be received with the same hospitality as would be given the man himself. It would appear that this attitude is reflected in verse 40. But it goes further to extend the authority of the apostles stated in 10:1 ("And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction") to that of emissaries of Christ and of God. Verses 41-42 identified three different groups of Christians: prophets, righteous persons and "little ones." Were these distinguishable groups of the church in Matthew's time? If so, what offices and functions did each have? It is known that the prophetic tradition held throughout the New Testament era. Jesus and John the Baptist were considered prophets by their contemporaries. Warnings about false prophets appear throughout the NT. Paul dealt actively with charismatic prophets who spoke in tongues and tried to define how their utterances should be tested before being accepted as authentic (1 Corinthians 14:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21; cf. 1 John 4:1). In Ephesians 3:5 & 4, we find the office of prophet set beside that of apostle, evangelist, pastor and teacher. The apostles no longer served as "the father of a particular local church" as Paul had done. They had become the founders of an institutional entity with a empire-wide scale, and a developing ministry of which the beginning are detected in Matthew. The question remains who were "the righteous person" and the "little ones" of verses 41-42. It has been suggested that these were euphemisms for "tested and honoured Christians" (who may have been Christians resident in local communities across the Roman empire into whose homes the travelling evangelists came) and "ordinary disciples" respectively. The cup of cold water is given as an example of any minor service rendered to one of these.

Post Communion: O God, whose beauty is beyond our imagining and whose power we cannot comprehend: show us your glory as far as we can grasp it, and shield us from knowing more than we can bear until we may look upon you without fear; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

Blessing: Christ, who has nourished us with himself the living bread, make you one in praise and love, and raise you up at the last day; 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 list

In your prayers, please pray for our Fr. Roger and Rev'd Helier and all the benefice church communities as we work through the new guidelines for worship. For the school children entering the last few weeks of the summer term, learning at home or in school.

For those who are suffering in mind, body or spirit, through illness &/or hospital treatment, for the grieving, lonely, anxious and confused: *Ken Lester, Ann Lambert, Geoff Harris, Ruth Tutt, Robin Dibble, Bernard, & David.* For those in care homes: including *June Kelloway (Blandford) and Roger Gray (Dorchester).* Any additions or amendments to the prayer list, please email the Rector.

Benefice Notices



Foodbank: Foodbank donations can now be taken into church at the appropriate opening times. Fr. Roger and I will collect from the churches when there is a bag full, store here at the Vicarage for 100hrs and then deliver to the Dorford Centre in Dorchester.

Donations can still be left at Orchard Cottage Melcombe Bingham and The Vicarage Piddletrenthide. Thank you for your continued support of this scheme. This week we have received donations from Melcombe Bingham – thank you.

Churches are open for individual private prayer for residents – no tourists, according to UK Law. Alton Pancras have amended their opening, see below.

Please use the supplied sanitiser when entering and exiting the church.

Alton Pancras	Tues, Thurs, Sat & Sun	9.00am to 2pm
Piddletrenthide	Thursday	9.30am to 11.00am
	Sunday	10.30am to 12noon
Piddlehinton	Thursday	9.00am to 1.00pm
	Sunday	1.00pm to 5.00pm
Cheselbourne	Wednesday	9.00am to 11.00am
Melcombe Horsey	Sunday	10.0am to 11.00am
Hilton	Daily	

If you are showing symptoms of Coronavirus, please do not enter the Church.

Live Streaming: Please visit our live streamed services throughout the week, order of services are available on the website home page to download for Communion and Anglican Rosary.

ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ORDINARY TIME ON THE HOME PAGE OF THE WEBSITE

Sunday Communion Service are uploaded to YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0ru_v3_1MZyzyx72ka63g4A

Facebook to access livestream:

https://www.facebook.com/piddlevalley/?eid=ARAxjQNj5mPHQUQD2hKEx_uzUyyf17basudX3D22bYJx4HsCh7ByYB8lItrMbHhsARvgwbTqvapn-Glq

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