



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

21<sup>st</sup> February 2021 – Lent 1  
(Altar Colour Purple)

**Readings:** Gen. 9: 8-17, Psalm 25: 1-9, 1 Peter 3: 18-end, Mark 1: 9-15

**Collect:** Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; 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

### **Genesis 9:8-17 (ESV)**

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

### **1 Peter 3:18-22 (ESV) - *Suffering for Righteousness’ Sake***

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

**COMMENT:** This is a most unusual passage, not just because of the comparison drawn between baptism and the story of Noah (v20). We also have to struggle with the incomprehensible reference to “made a proclamation to the spirits in prison” (v19). The core of the passage, deals with the effects of baptism. An act of repentance that makes us right with God, as it appropriates God’s mercy and restoration to us. Scholars increasingly believe that the letter was pseudonymous and probably written from Rome after Peter’s death as a means of making his teaching known to a wider audience. This brief reading is an excerpt from a longer section of the letter (v3:13– v4:11) which dealt with the issue of believers suffering for their faith. If both Peter and Paul had died during the Neronian persecution, the subject of suffering for one’s faith had great relevance. Pictographs have been found in the Roman catacombs which indicate that the early church did use Noah’s ark as a symbol of faith in Christ’s saving grace. The water of baptism also had a cleansing effect on the conscience as v21 states. The significance of baptism is moral and spiritual which that has to be received in faith and expressed in subsequent behaviour. The reference to “proclaimed to the spirits in prison” (v 19) may refer to the belief that between his death and resurrection Jesus descended into Hades or Sheol and preached to those who had lived before the time of Christ and had not heard the Gospel. The text referred in particular to the rebellious generation who died in the Flood. The best analysis of the text draws on Acts 2:27 which was a quotation from Psalm 16:10. It also may have referred to Jesus’ declaration of his mission in Luke 4:17-18 and its antecedent in Isaiah 61:1. That this belief was part of the ancient church cannot be doubted and echoes are found in Romans 10:7-8 and Ephesians 4:8-10 (the latter reference being dependent upon the Roman’s passage). It also found expression in the words of the Apostles’ Creed: “He descended into Hell.” Perhaps it is sufficient to say that wherever we are, in life and beyond, God is with us and Christ has power to save.

### **Mark 1:9-15 (ESV) - The Baptism of Jesus**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

### ***The Temptation of Jesus***

The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

### ***Jesus Begins His Ministry***

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

**COMMENT:** Mark’s brief account of Jesus’ (compared to Matthew) baptism and temptation is typical of his abbreviated introduction to the main story he wants to tell – the story of who Jesus is, a narrative not merely of his life, but of his death and resurrection. The 40 days before Easter were originally celebrated as the final preparation of newly converted candidates for baptism. It tested whether or not they could live in a disciplined, Christ like way. For us, as for Jesus during his testing in the wilderness, Lent can be a time for checking the real priorities of our lives, and by reflection prepare ourselves for the challenges ahead, renewed in vigour by the news of our Lord Resurrection on Easter Morn.

**Short Preface:** And now we give you thanks because you give us the spirit of discipline that we may triumph over evil and grow in grace, as we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed.

**Post Communion:** Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Blessing:** Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; 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.**

Please pray for those who are suffering, from illness, recovering from surgery or hospital treatment, all affected of Coronavirus including, poor health & long Covid, financial pressures, employment uncertainties, loneliness and family difficulties, anxiety and depression, and a longing for some form of normality.

Please pray for those who have asked our prayer including: Richard Mitchell, Bin Roy, Frances Mallett, Ann Lambert, Gill Howell, Geoff Harris, Reg Hanbury, Hannah Parsons, June Kellaway, Robin Saunders, Anna Thomas, William, Bernard & David.

For all those in care homes, and the staff, including: Roger Gray (Dorchester) and June Smith (Warminster).



### ***Requiescat in pace***

Pat Hansford (formerly Piddlehinton)  
Irene Butcher (Reading)

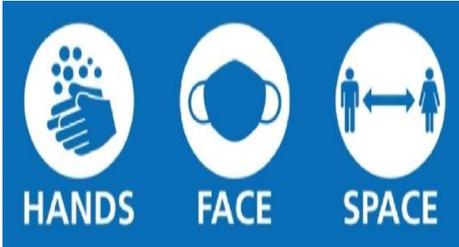


## Benefice Notices

THE  
**WEEK**  
AHEAD

**Foodbank:** A tin/packet a week, dropped into church while out on your exercise helps supply the Dorchester Foodbank with supplies to feed those in need in the Dorchester and surrounding areas.

*When attending a service please arrive in good time to ensure you can follow the Covid safety protocols set out in church.*



- *Wear a face-covering*
- *Sanitise Hands*
- *Sign in*
- *Find a seat allowing for 2m personal distancing from other households.*
- *Avoid mingling*

### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Lent 2 (Altar Colour – purple)**

**Readings: Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16, Psalm 22: 23-end, Rom. 4:13-end, Mark 8: 31-end**

9.30am Communion Service at Cheselbourne

11.00am Communion Service at Alton Pancras

6.00pm Evening Prayer at Hilton

### **Live Streaming**

*The daily offices will continue to be streamed daily via Facebook*



Monday @ 8am Morning Prayer

Tuesday @ 8am Morning Prayer & 8pm Compline

Wednesday @ 8am Morning Prayer & 6pm Evening Prayer

Thursday @ 9am Communion & 8pm Compline

Friday @ 6.00pm Compline

Saturday @ 6.00pm Devotions / Evening Prayer

Rector - Fr. Roger J. Butcher SSC KSJ

The Vicarage, Church Lane, Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY. Tel. 01300 348211 / 07502 118210

Email. [rector.piddlevelleybenefice@gmail.com](mailto:rector.piddlevelleybenefice@gmail.com)



Facebook: @piddlevelley



Website: <https://piddlevelleybenefice.com>