

## ANNUAL MEETINGS

Canon Judith, as Rural Dean, will join us on Friday **4th September** for our Annual Meetings in the hall from 7pm.

Everyone is invited to these important events in the life of the Parish.

The meetings will be followed by a meeting of the newly-elected PCC to deal with any urgent items.

## CLIFFE HALL

The Hall's disabled toilet is now usable. Please speak to the sidesman for access. Sadly we are still not able to meet for coffee after church on a Sunday morning due to Covid restrictions.

## COFFEE

For those who would like, several of us are meeting informally for coffee from 10.30am on Wednesday mornings outside Irma's café now that it has re-opened; weather

permitting. All welcome. The toilets are open!



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## FACE MASKS

Face coverings are now mandatory in churches and should be worn at all times except when receiving Communion, apart from those who have any of the exemptions.



## DECORATING

Weather permitting, our re-painting continues. At times when the new paint is wet, signs are in place to enter/exit the church via the south door. Mind the steps though.

We are also grateful to Dave, our handyman, for the new inner porch door closer which should stop it banging during services.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Parish prayer requests are an important part of our ministry and pastoral care.

Given the current circumstances written requests may be left in the offertory plate.



## VACANCIES

We have some vacancies in the life of the Parish if anyone feels called to help out. We are seeking an Assistant Treasurer, we still need a second Churchwarden and also someone to takeover the 20min anti-viral clean on a Thursday. If you can offer your time or expertise, please speak to Imogen, Sue Hammond or Trevor.

## SUMMER FAIR

With deep regret, the 2020 Cliffe Summer Fair has been CANCELLED.

We are not sure when we will be able to resume our programme of events given the current restrictions.

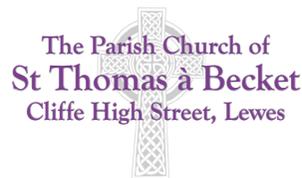
## F&W

Anyone wishing for a copy of the Prayer Book Society's excellent publications *Faith and Worship*, please speak to Trevor. We have some copies of the new, Trinity 2020 edition to spare.

It is always a fascinating read on various aspects of the BCP and related topics.

PLEASE TAKE THIS SHEET AWAY WITH YOU

Tel: 01273 937678  
[www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk](http://www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk)



Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 – Trinity XI



Tomorrow - Monday 24th August - is St Bartholomew's Day. There will be Holy Communion at 7am and Evening Prayer at 6pm.

## THE COLLECT

O GOD, who declarest thy almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity: Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of thy grace, that we, running the way of thy commandments, may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE EPISTLE - 1 Corinthians 15.1-11

BRETHREN, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas; then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep: after that, he was seen of James; then of all the Apostles: and last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

## THE GOSPEL - St. Luke 18.9-14

JESUS spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**WELCOME** to our service of Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer. It is lovely to have you with us this morning.

Unfortunately, we are still not permitted to sing, and Communion can be in one-kind only: received in silence

while standing at the chancel steps.

This pew sheet now contains the weekly Collect, Epistle and Gospel reading, as well as notices.

The A3 service sheet is generic and, when we run out we will start to use our

white service booklets again, storing them safely between Sundays.

Please do not congregate in the church after the service but make your way outside where Fr Herbert and Br George will be waiting to greet you.

## SERMON

**W**E FIND ourselves in our gospel reading this morning from St Luke with Jesus addressing his disciples about the importance of prayer and of not giving in to neglecting it. He tells the disciples two parables in chapter 18 – that of the unjust judge and that of our reading today, the Pharisee and tax collector or Publican.

It is noted that St Luke is very interested in prayer and mentions it often so it seems understandable that he should bring this theme to bear in two parables side by side. So let us look at this second parable.

The Pharisee in his prayers was more concerned about himself than God. That is very evident by the contents of his prayers, for they focus on the first person – ‘ I thank thee that I am not as other men are.’ and ‘ I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.’ The consequences of such an approach are that trusting in his own righteousness the Pharisee comes to despise others by comparison with himself, as he did the publican.

Such an attitude can lead to what we call spiritual pride. The effect of this is that it distances us from a relationship with God as it did for the Pharisee. The Pharisee saw the faults of the publican as sins but his own piety he saw as a blessing before God, however, that was his

sin but he did not see it. Sin is anything that separates us from God.

Nobody can honestly come before God and then turn to look upon themselves and their own ‘good nature’, for such piety becomes a separation between us and God. Our own choices decide for us whether we, like the publican, see ourselves, with all our sin, in God’s merciful presence or, whether, like the Pharisee, we just see ourselves and dwell on the better side we see and not upon God and his holiness.

By comparison the publican focused on God and away from himself with all his faults. However, in acknowledging his sinfulness the publican drew himself to God and centred his focus on God in a worshipful and humble attitude saying ‘ God be merciful to me a sinner.’ What a comforting joy that must have been for the publican, as it is for us when we confess our sinfulness, that he found favour in God, for we hear Jesus telling the disciples that the publican ‘went down to his house justified’.

The publican is justified because he has confronted his own sin before God and has approached God in that light. His honest and humble approach brought him into the presence of God, the blessing of such presence which the Pharisee did not enjoy. God asks of us to acknowledge our sins and come to Him

in trusting faith to know His love and receive His forgiveness. God’s gift to us in Christ Jesus makes forgiveness always possible and open to each and every one who comes to Him in confession filled faith.

In conclusion returning to the theme of prayer surrounding these two parables let us reflect on our own surroundings. This beautiful church of St Thomas a Becket is steeped in a history of prayer.

From the monks of the fraternity of St Thomas a Becket, who we believe established the church, to the generations of God’s people down through the ages, this place has been an offering to God in prayer, silence and worship. It is significant that this year, 2020, commemorates 700 years of continued clerical history from 1320, as recorded on the board of Rectors at our church entrance.

These walls echo the prayers of many, the prayers of the faithful, along with our dear Brother George, who have met with God’s presence, as we do here today . Amen.

Fr Herbert