

CLERGY CONTACT

With the rectory now empty during the interregnum, anyone wishing to leave a message for the clergy may do so by calling 01273 937678.



Messages will be passed swiftly to either Canon Judith or Fr. Herbert. Additionally, Fr. Herbert may be contacted by email: associatevicar@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk Contacts for Br. George remain as before.

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!



Cliffe High Street, LEWES BN7 2AH
Email: warden@st-thomas-lewes.org.uk

TRANSFIGURATION

Thursday (6 August) is The Transfiguration of our Lord. There will be Holy Communion, led by Br. George, at 7am and 10am, as well as Evening Prayer at 6pm

A reminder that Br. George leads all our weekday services and we give thanks and thanks for his daily ministry which is so important in the life of St Thomas'



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. Each Sunday, Fr. Herbert will then pray for them all himself, until we can have paper and pen available for requests to be written.



ABSENT FRIENDS

We remember in our prayers all those who cannot be with us in person at this time, and especially for dear Kenneth who gave so much to the life of St Thomas' over so many years and is now in a residential home in Eastbourne; and Joan Bishop (widow of our former organist Donald) who has moved out of her flat in the Cliffe into residential care.

CLIFFE HALL

From next Sunday the Hall toilet should be usable (the duty Sidesman will have a key), even if we still cannot meet for tea and coffee.

A reminder that the hall seeks a part-time cleaner, ideally for two hours one morning a week for a deep clean. Contact Trevor for details: hall@cliffehall.uk

NEWSLETTER

We hope to publish our usual newsletter again soon, so please send in your items in the usual way. Until then we will continue with this weekly update which will be left on pews on Sunday mornings.

Tel: 01273 937678
www.st-thomas-lewes.org.uk



The Parish Church of
St Thomas à Becket
Cliffe High Street, Lewes



PLEASE TAKE THIS SHEET AWAY WITH YOU



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 foot of the chancel steps. Until Cliffe Hall re-opens, we are unable to meet for coffee or use the facilities – but see story on back page.

THE COLLECT

O GOD, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE EPISTLE - Romans 8.12-17

BRETHHEREN, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

THE GOSPEL - St. Matthew 7.15-21

BEWARE of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Sunday 2nd August 2020
T R I N I T Y V I I I

SERMON

Our gospel reading today from chapter 7 of St Matthew clearly presents contrasting images to ponder both for Jesus' hearers and for ourselves. The theme which seems to be present in our reading is also present in the previous chapter concerning the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount. That is there are two ways of living. Two gates by which to enter into living life.

The people who live by these two ways are either sheep or wolves as our opening verse says – 'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves'. The contrast between 'the good' and 'the bad' is further contrasted in the following verses which speak of the good and bad fruit and the good and bad tree. The impact seems to direct our attention to being aware of the 'bad gate' or way through which living life leads to destruction.

The theme of these two ways runs through the Bible. J.C. Fenton, in his commentary, points out that in Deuteronomy God speaks to Moses saying 'See, I have set before thee this day, life and good, death and evil'. Likewise, God says to Jeremiah 'And unto this people thou shalt say: 'thus saith the Lord: behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death.'

People, therefore, have the choice to live by whichever of

these two ways they choose. The verse just preceding our reading speaks of Jesus saying 'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow the way which leadeth unto life.'

It is hard to live life by the narrow gate, not least, because that requires of us to live by placing God first in our lives and not we ourselves. To seek and follow God and not to serve our own desires. However, may we take comfort that although our human nature is weak and frail, with God nothing is impossible as we look to love and serve Him in our lives by faith.

Just as there are two ways of living life so there are also two types of teacher in those ways. Saint Matthew, in our reading, speaks of Jesus saying 'Beware of false prophets'. Once again the contrast between the good prophet and the false prophet is made in Deuteronomy chapter 13 and also referred to in Acts where Saint Luke writes of Saint Paul saying to the elders of the church 'For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you...to draw away disciples after them.'

The question may well then be asked 'How can we know which is the false prophet and which is the true and good prophet?'. The

question arose in the early church and saint John in his first letter speaks of knowing the true prophet or teacher by 'He that loveth his brother abideth in the light and there is none occasion of stumbling in him'. The test is love. That is the very essence of God's nature and is how we should be guided in living our lives in service and in love of Him.

This love is lived out in our deeds and actions. As Jesus says in the last verse of our reading today 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven'. The test of the good prophet or indeed of all Christians is not just what is said but what is done and how we live our life doing the will of God.

The good tree will bear good fruit in due season, fruit that will last, and God shall see and judge with mercy and love. As our Collect today says 'We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us'. May that be our prayer.

May we all seek to follow Christ and ask Him to help us to live our lives through the narrow gate that leads to life, life here and now, and life with Him in all eternity. May God bless you in the week ahead as you walk with Him. Amen.

Fr. Herbert.

NEWS

SERVICE SHEETS

This pew sheet will now contain the weekly collect, epistle and Gospel reading.

The service sheet becomes generic and, when we have run out we will start to use our white service booklets again, storing them safely between Sundays.

You may like to take the service sheet away with you today, write your name on it and bring it with you to church each Sunday.



SUMMER FAIR – SADLY CANCELLED

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

Without a guarantee of fine weather, it would be impossible to hold the entire event in the Hall and maintain social distancing.

Any donation, in lieu of the amount you would have spent at the Fair, would be gratefully received; either in the Plate, or to Imogen or Sue Hammond.

FACE MASKS

The CofE had strongly advised that face coverings should be worn by all attending a place of worship, including ministers. They should be removed only when receiving Communion. They become mandatory from 8th Aug.



More news overleaf →

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