

ANNUAL MEETINGS

A REMINDER that 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.

GOLDFINCH'S

We are grateful to Cliffe High Street dry cleaners Goldfinch's for supplying us with more anti-viral cleaner for our daily clean of the church so that we can remain open.

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

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.



Bp LEWES

The recently consecrated bishop of Lewes [Will Hazelwood] will be formally installed in Chichester cathedral at a special service on Sunday 13 September.

Our new area bishop will be supported by the presence of family and friends, and others (including the Diocese as a whole) will be able to follow the celebrations via a LIVE streaming on the Sunday afternoon.

We offer our prayers for Bishop Will at this time.

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.

RECTOR

The process to appoint a new Rector continues. An advertisement appeared in *Church Times* on Friday and interviews are set for 25th October. We offer this prayer that the right person be found to lead us:

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of every good gift, look graciously, we beseech thee, on thy Church, and so guide with thy heavenly wisdom the minds of those to whom is committed the choice of a Rector for this benefice, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who shall feed thy flock according to thy will, and make ready a people acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ, thine only Son our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Parish prayer requests may be left in the offertory plate.



PLEASE TAKE THIS SHEET AWAY WITH YOU

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



Sunday 30th August 2020
Trinity XII



THE COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve: Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

THE EPISTLE -- 2 Corinthians 3.4-9

Such trust have we through Christ to Godward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God: who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

THE GOSPEL -- St. Mark 7.31-end

Jesus, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

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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

OUR gospel reading today from St Mark chapter 7 places us in the region of Galilee and the area of Decapolis which was a Gentile region. This, as you may recall, was the same region where we heard a few Sundays ago from St Mark with the account of feeding the four thousand.

Scholars think that the original record of this story about the healing of the deaf and mute man concluded at verse 36 and with verse 37 then added by St Mark to reinforce the acclamation that Jesus generally received from the people when he performed his miracles of healing 'and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well'.

This story has a touching personal ring to it for we read how Jesus in the midst of the crowd of people received the deaf and mute man who was brought to Him. Here we see yet again the wonderful way how Jesus cares for the individual, as He does for each one of us and of all God's creation.

We read that Jesus took the man aside from the multitude. We can imagine what this must have meant to the man, from our own experiences of knowing the noise and chaos of life. Then we read Jesus performed certain actions which result in the divine miracle of healing for the man.

Jesus' touch healed the man of his ailments. That same touch of Jesus is evident in so many ways to us when prayers are answered, not perhaps always as we had asked, but answered they always are in various ways under the canopy of God's love.

It is interesting to note in the next chapter 8 St Mark records the account of Jesus healing the blind man at Bethsaida which also is touching with its personal encounter. Scholars think that in these two stories, with their similar account details, St Mark was wishing to draw attention to Jesus being the Messiah, the anointed one who will heal, the much and long awaited Messianic saviour foretold in the Old Testament.

It is on this point and with the account of the man's healing that 'straightway his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed' that draws us to the Old Testament. Such words echo those familiar words in Isaiah from chapter 35 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped'.

St Mark seems to parallel these two healing accounts in his gospel to reflect and highlight that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised one and the fulfilment of the Old Testament scriptures.

As some of you already know I am a lover of

singing and those words from Isaiah ring out those familiar words in the aria from Handel's 'Messiah', that great musical proclamation of Christ's Messiahship. How wonderful it will be when we can hear performed such inspiring music again to enjoy.

So, in conclusion, whilst we live in a world of some discord and suffering, it is a world redeemed by Christ, God's love is revealed in Jesus Christ who came to heal and save us and so we can join that prayer of St Julian of Norwich that all will be well, all manner of things shall be well in heaven. As the crowds proclaimed the Messiahship of Jesus in St Mark's concluding verse of today's reading, for we are told 'so much the more a great deal they published it', so shall we along with all the company of heaven proclaim God's glory in Jesus Christ.

That triumphant conclusion of Handel's Messiah, the Hallelujah Chorus, is a very fitting praise to God indeed, ringing out to all creation. Amen.
Fr Herbert

We pray for those who cannot be with us this morning, including Pam Swabey, Joan Bishop and Ken Allborn.