

Today is also the Feast of St Luke with the celebration transferred to tomorrow. There will be a Festal Eucharist at 7am and Evening Prayer at 6pm.

ALMIGHTY God, who calledst Luke the Physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, to be an Evangelist, and Physician of the soul: May it please thee that, by the wholesome medicines of the doctrine delivered by him, all the diseases of our souls may be healed; through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### LEWES CHURCHES TOGETHER

An invitation to join the Annual Gathering at 7:30 pm via Zoom on **Thursday 15th October** – Speaker: Elle Weaver: *Am I my Brother's Keeper? What is Social Responsibility? How can Together* in Sussex support you?

All members of congregations in the Lewes area are encouraged to join in this meeting. It will be accessible by computer, smart phone and landline phone. Please email [ctlasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:ctlasecretary@gmail.com) to receive joining details.

### CHRISTMAS

At its next meeting, the PCC will discuss arrangements for Christmas services. Sadly, the Christmas Fair this year has been **CANCELLED** due to Covid restrictions.

### 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.

### CLIFFE HALL

The Hall toilets are now usable. Please speak to the sidesman for access. Sadly we are still not able to meet for coffee after church.

### PRAYERS

We pray for all those who cannot be with us this morning, including: Pam Swabey, Joan Bishop, Ken Allbon, Jean Burges and Rosemary Burnett.

### PRAYER REQUESTS

Parish prayer requests may be left in the offertory plate.



### READER

Our prayers are with Peter Shears from St Anne's as he embarks on Reader Ministry in the benefice.

We rejoice at Peter's calling as he begins this new chapter in his life.

### EVENING PRAYER

A reminder that Evening Prayer will be said tonight at 6pm. All welcome.

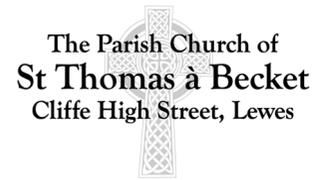
### CARING & SHARING

Don't forget our yellow Caring and Sharing collection box on a Sunday, helping street children in Olinda, Brazil through the My Father's House project there.

### NOTICES

If you have a notice for this weekly Pew Sheet, please let Trevor have it by 9am on Friday.

PLEASE  
TAKE THIS SHEET  
AWAY WITH YOU



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

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
Trinity XIX



Welcome to our service of Holy Communion. Today's Celebrant and preacher is our Associate Vicar, Fr Herbert Bennett.

A reminder that Communion is in one kind only, the host, received in silence while standing at the foot of the chancel steps.

### The Collect

O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant, that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### The Epistle – Ephesians 4.17-end

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Please turn over for The Gospel reading .....



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## THE GOSPEL – St. Matthew 9.1-8

JESUS entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. And behold, certain of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is

easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee? or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, who had given such power unto men.

## SERMON

IN THE previous chapter of Matthew's gospel the setting tells us that Jesus had been on an extensive healing ministry at this time – the healing of a leper, then of the centurion's servant, then of Peter's mother-in-law, then of the two possessed people on the other side of Lake Galilee. Now Jesus comes back by boat to his home side of Lake Galilee, we are told, to his home city of Capernaum.

Now, we hear, Jesus is presented with a group of friends bringing to Him a man who is paralysed and lying on a bed. What is significant about this act of healing is Jesus' proclamation that the man's sins are forgiven. In that proclamation 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee' Jesus reveals His authority, as the Son of Man, to forgive sins.

This had been foretold by the angel to Joseph at the time of His birth 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins'. Forgiveness is linked very closely to healing, for the Jews believed that sickness and sin were linked and that healing and forgiveness go together. So Jesus heals the man, saying his sins are forgiven, because He wishes to demonstrate to the scribes that He has that authority - 'That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins'.

St Matthew has echoed St Mark chapter 2 who records the same event, but with a little more detail as he recites that the group of friends decide to remove the roof tiles in order to lower their friends down to Jesus on his stretcher bed. We can see that the focus is removed from the faith of the hearers,

in the previous miracles, to be directed instead towards the Scribes and religious authorities who are sceptical of Jesus and His claims and secondly, to the crowds of people there and their comments and reactions.

So, let us turn to look at a few of the details. Firstly, it is interesting to note the reference to Jesus coming to His own city. We are told that this is Capernaum and in St Mark's account that Jesus is at home. The circumstances are that although Jesus was born in Bethlehem He then returned to Nazareth where He up. Then after the arrest of John the Baptist we are told in St Matthew's and St John's gospels that Jesus together with His mother, His brethren and His disciples went to Capernaum.

The next consideration is Jesus pronouncing the forgiveness of sins which is clearly in recognition of the faith of the friends who brought the paralysed man and took efforts, despite the crowd, to bring him to the forefront of Jesus' attention. Faith is the element that is present in all the healings leading up to here – the leper, Peter's mother-in-law and the Centurion's slave, the Centurion to whom Jesus says 'verily I say unto, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel'.

It is on seeing the faith of the paralysed man's friends that Jesus says to him 'Son be of good cheer' (or in other translations 'take heart'), thy sins be forgiven thee'. This 'take heart' rings of a reassuring and personal confirmation to the individual concerned.

Next we come to the focus of the matter, that of sins being forgiven. As we have already noted, the Jews considered sins and sickness as being

connected. Sin by strict definition is anything that separates us from God and this is an unhealthy state to be in. However, the good news that Jesus brings of forgiveness of sins results in suspicion and opposition by the Scribes and they murmur to themselves 'This man blasphemeth' because they object to Jesus acting in God's authority to forgive sins.

In response we read Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said 'wherefore think ye evil in your hearts'. The opposition to Jesus starts here with thoughts in their hearts but later on will become vocal when Jesus says to the Pharisees 'O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh'.

So in conclusion let us seek to draw some relevance to our lives. We live in a broken world with sin and suffering but it is a redeemed world because of Christ. So we can 'take heart' that all is well in God being with us. This reminds us of those wonderful words of St Julian of Norwich, who speaks about all healing being complete in heaven.

In the final verse of our gospel passage this morning we read that 'when the multitude saw they marvelled and glorified God, which had given such power unto men'. The theologian J.C.Fenton says of this verse that the crowds represent the disciples, having faith, and they are the foreshadowing of the church and that their reaction in glorifying God, who forgives sins, looks ahead to the time when God's authority of sins forgiven will be given to the disciples. Amen.

Fr Herbert.