

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 51

Sunday 30th August 2020

‘Virtually Church but with some way to go...’

Welcome

Welcome to this Sunday’s edition of Cutting Edge Camelot. You will find details included of the September services.

Please note that as I will be away for some time over the next couple of weeks Cutting Edge Camelot will be taking a short break. The next edition will be on Wednesday 16th September when we will start a new midweek series based on the letter of James in the New Testament.

Tristram

Scripture Passages

Romans 12: 9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for

evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads."

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Matthew 16: 21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you."

But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?"

"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Reflection

The coronavirus emergency has had many different phases. Perhaps it has all dragged on much longer than anyone expected. Indeed at the moment there is no clear end in sight when restrictions will end and life 'goes back to normal.'

At the beginning of the crisis there was a wonderful outpouring of community spirit and the desire to help others. But as time has gone on we find the extent and depth of our generosity and love for one another being tested.

As life opens up again and schools prepare to come back fully next month we find different attitudes emerging. Some just want to get on with life again and struggle to see the purpose of all these restrictions. While others rather than wanting to speed up the pace of return to everyday life fear that maybe we are all becoming too casual and carefree.

We can find it difficult to respond to someone with very different views. It is a challenge to our capacity to love. And love is what we need. Often someone's point of view reflects their own circumstances, the degree to which they or those whom they love may be vulnerable to the virus.

In the light of this, what wisdom can we find in our bible passages?

In the gospel Peter wants to protect his friend Jesus from the pain and suffering that He was about to face. No doubt Peter was sincere in his concern. Naturally we do not wish to see a friend, someone we love, suffer.

And so when Jesus predicts His suffering and death Peter tries to reassure Him that this will never take place. 'This must never happen to you' Peter says.

We can probably identify with Peter's concern for Jesus. And we may also be taken aback by the strength of Jesus's response to Peter even finding the words 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me' harsh.

However, Jesus is highlighting two different perspectives on life, one divine and the other purely human. He tells Peter 'you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things'.

The divine perspective is one shaped by the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This way is ultimately one of supreme and enduring love even though it does involve great hardship and suffering. And Jesus will not allow Peter to deter Him from following this way.

The way of the Cross means that when there is a clash between God's way and our own desires we will choose God's way. Jesus puts it like this 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'

Many of Jesus' earliest followers found this call to take up their cross worked out literally as they faced persecution and even death for the sake of their faith. But under less extreme circumstances what might this call mean in practical terms? Our other reading from Paul's letter to the Romans gives us some timely and relevant guidance.

How, for instance, do we express disagreement? At times we need to do this rather than smoothing things over and pretending that differences do not exist.

But the language we use matters. Harsh and rigid language hurts other people. We need to remember Paul's encouragement to bless rather than to curse. Our language needs to affirm the other person even when we disagree with what he or she is saying.

Paul speaks about blessing and cursing in the context of loving our enemies. Those with whom we disagree may not be our enemies although if disagreement becomes entrenched then we may start seeing them this way. For our enemies are those who oppose and frustrate our plans.

And our natural response to frustration and opposition is to defend ourselves and even to attack the other person. However, when we follow Christ's way of love we will respond differently. Nor will we seek revenge when we are hurt. Rather we will actively meet the needs of our enemies and leave the question of vengeance up to God, giving our thirsty enemy something to drink.

To do this we need to stand in the shoes of other people and to see life from their perspective. We rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

All of this requires a love for other people that goes beyond our own natural resources and draws on God's limitless reserves of love.

So yes perhaps those natural resources of love and community so evident in the early part of this emergency are in danger of running out. And yet God's reserves of love do not run out. If we call on God's reserves it will mean sometimes saying 'No' to the natural way of responding to someone we disagree with or who frustrates us. But, as Paul reminds us, following God's way of love will enable us to play our part in living peacefully with everyone. And surely that is a goal worth aiming at in these challenging times.

Tristram

Hymn Suggestion

The hymn 'There is a wideness in God's mercy' reminds us of the breadth of God's mercy and love, able to encompass different perspectives.

Points for Prayers

- For our spiritual growth and discipleship as we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ
- For further services in the Group planned today and in September
- Thanksgiving for care, skill and courage of NHS workers and those in care homes
- Those suffering from coronavirus in hospitals, care homes and at home
- Need for further largescale testing and research into and development of a vaccine as soon as this can be achieved
- For those suffering uncertainty and upheaval as a result of changes in quarantine regulations
- Tristram is taking a graveside funeral with family mourners on 2nd September, North Cadbury
- Our Bishops (please see update relating to Bishop Peter below)
- For schools as they prepare to reopen in the new school year especially for North Cadbury Church Primary School and Marchant Holliday school in our benefice remembering also Horsington school
- Prayers for those affected economically by the lockdown, for businesses and those who have become unemployed
- Prayers and thanksgiving for contributions to the foodbanks and for those helping to take these to the foodbanks.

Services of public worship today and in September

Please see the following schedule of services of public worship planned for today and for September. This does not include all of the monthly services across the Group held pre-lockdown. So if a service in the Group which you regularly attended is not included in the schedule you are of course most

welcome to attend any other service within the Group. However, because of the limitations on capacity in the various churches through the need for social distancing it would be appreciated if you could in these circumstances let the relevant churchwarden know in advance of your intention to do this.

Any further additions to this schedule will be notified as and when they arise.

Sunday 30th August

8.00 am, Communion, St Michael's Blackford

6.30 pm, Evening Service (Common Worship), Galhampton

Sunday 6th September

9.00 am, St Mary's Yarlington, Communion

11.00 am, St Michael's North Cadbury, Group Communion

Sunday 13th September

9.30 am, Galhampton, Communion

9.30 am, St John the Baptist North Cheriton, Communion

9.30 am, St Michael's Blackford, Matins

11.00 am, St Nicholas Holton, Sunday Worship

Sunday 20th September

9.30 am, St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot, Communion

11.00 am, St Michael's North Cadbury, Sunday Worship

11.00 am, St Peter and St Paul Maperton, Harvest Service

6.00 pm, St Mary's Yarlington, Harvest Service

Sunday 27th September

9.30 am, St Thomas a Becket South Cadbury, Communion

9.30 am, St Mary's Compton Pauncefoot, Harvest Matins

9.30 am, St Michael's Blackford, Harvest Service

9.30 am, St John the Baptist North Cheriton, Harvest Service

11.00 am, St Michael's North Cadbury, Communion

11.00 am, St Mary's Yarlinton, Sunday Worship

6.30 pm, Galhampton, Harvest Service

Private prayer

Private prayer will continue on Wednesday afternoons at North Cadbury from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm and Galhampton from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm followed by Celtic Worship led by Alison at 7.00 pm.

This Sunday North Cheriton is open for Private Prayer from 9.30 am to 10.30 am and Compton Pauncefoot also from 9.30 am to 10.30 am.

North Cadbury Church of England Primary School

North Cadbury Church of England Primary School is planning for all classes to return as from the start of the new term in September.

Excalibur and the Parish Office

Because of concerns relating to the hand delivery of parish magazines (see official Church of England guidance on this point) an electronic rather than a printed version of Excalibur will be continue to be produced for the time being. This will be available on the website, www.camelotparishes.co.uk, and will include Camelot People giving details of occasional offices in the benefice. The September Excalibur is now available on the website.

The Parish Office is closed although Rob does come in regularly. In his absence please contact Rob via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

Update on Bishop Peter

Bishop Peter thanks everyone for all the cards and other expressions of support which he has received. A card was sent to him on behalf of the Camelot Parishes as a whole. He says that he has been lifted on 'eagle's wings' through the love and prayers of others and he thinks that the treatment for leukaemia is going well. He now asks for our prayers that a bone marrow transplant will be possible and that a suitable donor might be identified. Please continue to pray for him and his family in this challenging time. Please pray also for Bishop Ruth and the rest of the Bishop's Staff as they take on the oversight of the diocese in his absence.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5:2)