

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 55

Sunday 27th September 2020

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

Welcome

Welcome to this Sunday’s edition of Cutting Edge Camelot.

The passage chosen together with the accompanying reflection by George reflects the fact that we have now entered into the Harvest season.

Also there is a notice at the end with some personal good news which Angela and I wanted to share with you.

Scripture Passage

Luke 12:16-21

Then he told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’

“Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’

“So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

Reflection

Jesus tells a parable about a rich man whose bumper harvest leaves him super-rich. He debates with himself what he should do. Finally, he decides to build extra storage and settle down to a life of leisured ease.

“And why not?” he would say. “I have worked hard, nurtured and farmed my land with skill and experience, made some good decisions. I have never cheated anyone, or failed to pay my labourers a proper wage. I now have no need to work. There is no point in my accumulating yet more wealth, just for the sake of it. Haven't I earned a bit of leisure?” This looks like one case where that irritating phrase in advertisements, “Because you deserve it”, is justified. And yet, God calls him a fool. Why?

The answer can be found in two of the psalms, 14 and 53. Both start with almost identical words: “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.” Maybe the rich man has indeed worked hard and farmed his land well. But who caused the sun to shine and the rain to fall on his crops as they grew? Who provided the land he likes to think of as his? Who gave him his strength and intelligence?

He has forgotten God and how much he owes to God. It has not occurred to him to thank God for this bumper harvest, still less to offer some of it back to God and to share some of it with those less fortunate than himself. He has been entirely selfish; and his selfishness has been folly, because it has taken him down a road with a dead end.

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service dates back to 1843, when Robert Hawker the (very eccentric, but not in this) Rector of Morwenstow in Cornwall introduced it to replace celebrations which showed too much of their pagan origins. Many in those days would have lived on what they grew for themselves or was grown locally. If their harvests failed, they would have gone hungry, might even have starved, before next year's crops could be

grown. Their Harvest Thanksgiving would have been tinged with feelings of relief, if the harvest had been good, or of anxiety if it hadn't.

Today, that is still the situation in many parts of the world. But few of us grow our own food to any great extent. We buy it in shops and supermarkets, where some of the food on sale may have been grown locally, but much of it will have come from other parts of the country and from abroad.

This gives Harvest Thanksgiving a rather different meaning from what it had years ago. We give thanks for our local harvests and for the skill and hard work of our local farmers. We also give thanks for many other harvests, in this country and overseas, and for the multitude of people whose work, in different capacities, results in those harvests reaching our shops as food that we can buy and cook and eat. We give thanks that these harvests help to feed us, and also that they feed and provide a living for all who grew them and enabled us to share in them.

Even if we do grow some of our own food, our personal harvests are now mostly financial. They consist of the money that comes to us as income from our work, from a pension or savings, or from social security: money we need to buy the food we need. Our Harvest Thanksgiving will be incomplete if we don't give thanks to God for those financial harvests too.

We may not be rich. Our financial harvests may be far from bumper. But, whatever they are, the parable encourages us to complete our Harvest Thanksgiving by giving part of those harvests back to God and sharing another part with those less fortunate than ourselves. Covid-19 is a financial crisis for the Diocese. There are many, both in this country and abroad, who are faced with hunger because their own harvests have failed.

George

Hymn Suggestion

The traditional Harvest hymn is 'We plough the fields and scatter.'

Points for Prayers

- For our spiritual growth and discipleship as we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ, for generosity which reflects God's generosity in the various forms of harvest which He gives us
- For further services in the Group this month and particularly for Harvest services
- For Anna's ordination as priest (please see below)
- 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
- Preparations to avert or minimise a second wave of coronavirus
- Our Bishops (please see notice below)
- For North Cadbury Church Primary School and Marchant Holliday school in our benefice remembering also Horsington school as they proceed with their new school year
- 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.

The rule of six

Some of us may be concerned that the new restriction on social gatherings to six people ('the rule of six') will impact on or even prevent services of public worship from taking place. Although the detailed Church of England guidance on this subject has yet to be updated it is our understanding that the new rule does not affect services of public worship. Accordingly our plans for forthcoming services remain unaltered and if they do need to change we will of course let you know as soon as possible.

Forthcoming services of public worship

Please see the following schedule of forthcoming services of public worship. 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 27th September

9.30 am, St Thomas a Becket South Cadbury, Communion

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

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

Sunday 4th October

9.00 am, St Mary's Yarlinton, Communion

10.30 am, St John the Baptist, North Cheriton, Morning Worship

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

(Anna will preside)

Reopening churches for private prayer

North Cadbury and Galhampton churches are normally open for private prayer on Wednesday afternoons. North Cadbury is open from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm and Galhampton from 4.0 pm to 5.00 pm followed by Celtic Worship led by Alison at 7.00 pm.

Online service to remember deaths during the pandemic

In collaboration with Wells Cathedral, the diocese is to offer an online service to remember all those who have died during the Covid pandemic.

Led by Bishop Ruth and the Dean of Wells, families of the bereaved are invited to send in names of those whom they mourn, and candles will be lit and their names are read out.

Bishop Ruth said: "So many people weren't able to attend funerals or grieve properly when their loved ones died in the last few months, because of restrictions imposed by the pandemic. We hope this service will offer people a chance to come together and mourn their loved ones by name, alongside others who have also been bereaved."

The service will include music from members of the Music Foundation of Wells Cathedral, and prayers will be said by some of Somerset's hospital chaplains. There will also be a reflection from someone who survived Covid following weeks in intensive care.

The service will be available to watch on the [Wells Cathedral website](#) and here on the [website](#) of the Diocese of Bath and Wells from Wednesday 30th 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 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 is grateful that potential donors for a bone marrow transplant have been identified and he is preparing for such a transplant later this year. 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.

Anna's ordination as priest

Please remember in your prayers our curate Anna's ordination as priest on Tuesday 29th September at St Cuthbert's Wells. The ordination will be taken by Bishop Ruth. The service is, owing to the current restrictions, a very small one and by invitation only.

Anna will preside at Communion for the first time at 11.00 am on Sunday 4th October at St Michael's North Cadbury. We hope that those who usually attend this service will do so. We know that there will be others of you who will wish to support Anna in her new role. So, the rota will enable Anna to preside at Communions in as many of the Camelot churches as possible in the month following her priesting.

If you do not normally attend the First Sunday Communion at North Cadbury but would like to do so please do contact our churchwarden Caroline Joneleit-Hope (carolinejoneleithope@gmail.com) so that we can check on the socially distanced capacity of the church. Otherwise, please do come to one of the other Communion services around the benefice at which Anna will be presiding subsequently. The list of services in Cutting Edge Camelot will indicate which these services are.

Some personal good news

It feels slightly strange when opportunities to meet in person are restricted to share personal good news in this way.

However, Angela and I did want to share with all of you one wonderful and joyful piece of personal news. That is that we are expecting our second child next March.

We are overjoyed by and immensely grateful for this gift from God and at the same time we would very much appreciate your holding us in your prayers over the coming months.

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)