

In & around the Benefice....

19th July | Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Our Acting Rector is The Reverend Janet Tebby

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www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk

Please visit our website for information on worship during the lockdown

<http://www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk/worship/worship-during-the-lockdown>



****** This week's Benefice Morning Praise service is live online at 10am on Sunday 19th July******

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81334201675>

Meeting ID: 813 3420 1675

Worship in our churches

19th July, 10am at St Margaret's, Denton - Patronal Festival (no communion)

26th July, 10am at St Mary Magdalene, Castle Ashby - Patronal Festival (no communion)

****Please note that numbers are restricted so seats will be reserved for members of these parishes only****

If you would like to attend a service, please check with the relevant churchwardens that there will be space for you.

Reflection – Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds.

Jesus was often asked by curious people to explain what heaven was like. What or where is heaven? Who is in heaven? I often think about this myself. These are some pretty big questions and have been long debated and discussed over thousands of years.

In today's gospel reading Jesus uses a story, or parable, to explain how we might begin to discover some of the answers. He tells the story of a sower who sows good seed, and behind his back someone else sows some weeds. Jesus explains how both plants have to live alongside each other for the sake of the good seed, but that in time, when it comes to the harvest, the weeds shall be gathered and destroyed and the wheat shall be gathered and safely stored.

In our world today there will always be those who are 'good seed' and those who are perhaps not so. Those who do the right thing and those who perhaps do not. Those who adhere to government and church guidelines and those who, for whatever reasons, prefer to adjust, or bend them.

This is called human nature and the desire for us to 'do things our own way' has been apparent for all time.

However, as Christians we have a great commandment to live by. Jesus commands us to 'love our neighbour as ourselves – there is no commandment greater than this (Mark 12 :31)

Our churches are slowly beginning to open following the pandemic, and in this attitude of loving our neighbour, we will have to observe the guidelines and rules set out by the Government and the Church of England. We will follow them strictly but with love. This is what it means to be 'good seed' and more importantly, to 'love our neighbour as ourselves'. As we look to put the health and wellbeing of our neighbours above our own desires to do things our own way. The next few weeks are going to be difficult for all of us, and I hope we can face these difficulties together with patience, kindness, and good humour.

With my continued prayers and blessings, Rev. Amanda

Please hold in your prayers this week:

- ◇ All those missing loved ones who live far away
- ◇ All involved in the process of finding our new Rector
- ◇ Those suffering from, affected by or working to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, including the NHS, council workers, teachers
- ◇ NHS staff caring for Covid-19 patients, that they may have strength and resilience for their task, and be kept safe
- ◇ Persecuted Christians across the world, especially in North Korea
- ◇ Those in residential care and the housebound, among them: Audrey Desborough, Ruth Williams, Gwen York, Ann and Colin Dix
- ◇ Those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, among them: Chris Sayles, Tom Stock, Nicholas Vaughan, Freddie Hogan, Mandy Bates, Mairi Boyd, Anne Blackmore, Fabienne Godfrey
- ◇ The recently departed, amongst them Evelyn Williams, and all who grieve at this time, amongst them Peter and family

Please note: Evelyn Williams' funeral is at St Mary's Grendon on Monday 20th July at 1pm. Unless you have been invited, please don't go to the church, as numbers are very limited. You are asked to pay your respects by coming out to stand on the pavement (safely distanced). It may be possible to hear the service from a safe distance outside.

The Collect

Creator God, you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

First Reading

Genesis 28: 10-19

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, 'I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!' And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 8: 12-25

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to

decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord**

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."'

Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.'

He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Prayer

God of our pilgrimage, you have led us to the living water: refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen