

In & around the Benefice....

23rd August | Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Our Acting Rector is The Reverend Janet Tebby

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www.yardleyhastingsbenefice.co.uk



Benefice Morning Praise is live online at 10am on Sunday 23rd August

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86859294232>

Meeting ID: 868 5929 4232 Passcode: 986575

Holy Communion services in our churches:

23rd August 10am Castle Ashby

30th August 10am Whiston

6th Sept 10am Grendon

13th Sept 10am Denton

20th Sept 10am Yardley Hastings

27th Sept 10am Castle Ashby

For the time being, we request that you only attend the services in your usual church, as numbers are limited due to the social distancing rules. Online services will continue each Sunday for those not able to come to one of the "live" services.

It is mandatory that face coverings should be worn by all those attending a place of worship

Harvest Festival services

May be held outdoors, weather permitting

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| 6th Sept | 10am | Yardley Hastings |
| 13th Sept | 10am | Castle Ashby |
| 20th Sept | 10am | Grendon |
| 27th Sept | 10am | Denton |
| 27th Sept | 3pm | Whiston |



Reflection

Holidays? Maybe your plans have had to be changed, maybe you're staying in the UK, or maybe you've had a real "staycation" at home. I had a couple of weeks in my static caravan in Suffolk. Our nearest beach is down the road at a tiny village called Dunwich – the dogs can't wait to get there, to swim again and again after a toy. Heaven! Dunwich, tiny now, was a bustling port the size of London back in the day (13th century). That was before 3 storms destroyed the harbour, shipbuilding and most of the rest of Dunwich. And coastal erosion has now taken all but the ruins of a leper hospital and an abbey to leave a pebbly beach on the Suffolk coastal path (and a pub and a museum!).

Interesting, but why tell you this? Because of the Gospel reading. Jesus & his disciples are at Caesarea Philippi, once a major city. It was a place dedicated to the worship of pagan idols, then to the Greek god Pan. Its caves were thought to be the gates to Hades, the underworld. Then the Romans came and made it a centre of power, a garrison city on the trade routes. And the coins at that time had Caesar Philip's head engraved on them.

And here Jesus asks his disciples who they think he is. In a centre of pagan worship, with the might of the Roman empire on display everywhere, Jesus and his dozen followers look pretty weak. Various suggestions come from the disciples, then Peter has it! "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God".

The Christ – The Greek name for the Messiah, longed for by the Jews;
Son of the Living God – not a pagan statue, nor a Roman ruler.

"Yes Peter, the Gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church I will build on you - the rock."

Today Caesarea Philippi lies in ruins. Today there are more Christians in the world than in all of the past 2000 years put together. *I will build my church*, said Jesus to his disciples, *I will build my church* says Jesus to us today. We needn't look around at the forces and myths of our world, we the church look to God. God, who stands firm while the world turns upside down.

Revd Janet

Please hold in your prayers this week:

- ◇ The young people in our Benefice who are receiving their exam results amid the uncertainty of these challenging times
- ◇ Our new Rector designate, and our benefice
- ◇ Those suffering from, affected by or working to prevent the spread of Coronavirus
- ◇ 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, Fabienne Godfrey
- ◇ The recently departed, amongst them Jean Williams, and all who grieve at this time

The Collect

God of glory, the end of our searching,
help us to lay aside all that prevents us from
seeking your kingdom, and to give all that we
have to gain the pearl beyond all price,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen

New Testament Reading

Romans 12: 1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters,
by the mercies of God, to present your bodies
as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,
which is your spiritual worship.
Do not be conformed to this world, but be
transformed by the renewing of your minds,
so that you may discern what is the will of God—
what is good and acceptable and perfect.
For by the grace given to me I say to everyone
among you not to think of yourself more highly
than you ought to think, but to think with sober
judgement, each according to the measure of
faith that God has assigned.
For as in one body we have many members,
and not all the members have the same function,
so we, who are many, are one body in Christ,
and individually we are members one of another.
We have gifts that differ according to the grace
given to us:
prophecy, in proportion to faith;
ministry, in ministering;
the teacher, in teaching;
the exhorter, in exhortation;
the giver, in generosity;
the leader, in diligence;
the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 16: 13-20

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

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea
Philippi, he asked his disciples,
'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?'
And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but
others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the
prophets.'
He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?'
Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the
Son of the living God.'
And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon
son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed
this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you,
you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my
church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail
against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of
heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be
bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth
will be loosed in heaven.'
Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell
anyone that he was the Messiah.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all mercy,
we your faithful people have celebrated that one
true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings
pardon and peace:
by our communion keep us firm on the foundation
of the gospel and preserve us from all sin;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen