



ST MARY'S CHURCH, BRIDGWATER SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Welcome to this weeks bulletin! St Mary's is now gathering for a service each week at 9.30am on a Sunday. Doors open at 09.15 please register as you come in (for track and trace purposes) also sanitizer is provided. If you forget your mask don't worry as we have plenty to spare!

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This weeks **GOSPEL** reading: Matthew 21: 23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I

do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. What do you think? A man had two sons; he

went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

Collect

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you have taught us through thy Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

16TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (PROPER 21)

BIBLE READINGS :

**EXODUS 17. 1-7 / PSALM 78 1- 4, 12-16/
PHILLIPIANS 2:1-13 / MATTHEW 21. 23-32**

Coming up this week:

WEDNESDAY

10.30am - Diocesan led Eucharist
[live streamed at](#)
www.bathandwellsorg.uk

THURSDAY

9.30—12noon—Church open for individual prayer

SUNDAY

8am - Morning service [Listen on BBC Somerset radio](#)

8.10am—Sunday Worship [Listen on BBC Radio 4](#)

9am—Cof E Holy Communion

[Live streamed at](#)
www.churchofengland.org

9.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's

10am— Holy Communion from St Mary Magdalene, Taunton

www.stmarymagdalenetaunton.org.uk/sermons/

1.15pm—BBC 1 Songs of Praise

BBC 1

People to hold in prayer this week:

- Bishop Peter Hancock
- Jess Grandfield—who has had a fall and is in hospital
- The family of Elizabeth Gill and Stanley Way who have passed away.
- Kim & Abbey preparing to marry on 3rd October

If you would like to have a prayer request in the bulletin then please let us know.

STOP PRESS!

The Church will now be open on Thursdays for individual prayer 9.30—12noon.

If you could offer help as a steward then please contact Suse

Suse's homily from last week (Matthew 20: 1-6)

There are so many times when Jesus begins a parable with the "The kingdom of heaven is like..." Which means these are the way things are with God – this is about God and God's will...so pay attention! The story continues that a landowner was in need of some laborers to work in his vineyard. At the beginning of the day he went to down and hired workers agreeing to pay them the usual daily wage. He then went back and got more workers at 9:00. He got more workers at noon. The work must have multiplied because he went back at 15.00 and got more workers. And as crazy as it sounds he went back and got more workers at 17:00. At 18:00 it was time to pay the laborers. The workers hired last were the ones paid first. Imagine their amazement when they got paid the usual daily wage; one hour of work for a day's pay!

You can imagine - The men at the end of the line, the ones who had been working since sun rise starting to do some calculating that went something like this.... "if they are getting paid that much for 1 hour of work, we could get 12 denari! Isn't that just how we think?_We value fairness. We believe in hard work. It just seems right that the ones that worked all day should be paid more than the ones that worked an hour. But as the workers got paid the troubling news started to become painfully apparent to the guys at the end of the line. Everyone was getting paid the exact same amount – one denari – the usual daily wage.

When the workers who were hired first got to the front of the line they were so angry. They complained to the landowner, *'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have carried the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'* Did you hear that, "you have made them equal to us." The landowner simply reminded them that they got what was agreed to. What is it to them if he wants to be generous over and above? In the kingdom of God – the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

It's teaching like this that got Jesus in trouble. He practiced this kind of grace. He did not play the games of rank and privilege. He did not follow social codes or even Jewish law when it came to acts of compassion. Jesus was not deterred by someone's reputation nor was he enamored by someone's position. Jesus was not seduced by power. It was as if he saw all of humanity as equals rather than as deserving or undeserving.

You see Jesus' grace was both amazing and offensive. It was amazing to those who were able to receive it and offensive to those who thought they deserved it. It was especially offensive to those who thought they held the keys of forgiveness and judgment in their hands. That much is still true today. Because if grace is true – it takes away the power of religious types to condemn, threaten, and scare folks into believing their brand of religion. It takes away their power and control. It's no wonder they had to shut Jesus up and kill him – grace was just too threatening.....We have a God who is kind and loving, and generous and just and merciful who wants relationship with you that brings you fullness of life. I think sometimes we have lost that a little – we can get so distracted worrying about church finance, who is going to do what etc. but we need to rediscover Gods heart and voice - God calls you just like the landowner went out to find the workers. And so just like the landowner - Let's outdo each other in our generosity of grace. Suse

Smarties for Zambia

I am hoping to send off our Lent Appeal donations by the end of September. If you are able to get to church could you please bring your donation and let me have it. If I'm not there please give it to one of the wardens. Many thanks for your continued support for our Link parish. *Richard Philpott*

Harvest Service

4th October

Our harvest service will be held on the 4th October and we would welcome donations to the food-bank of the following items. Collection box is in the church or let us know and we can collect.

Items needed include:

Tinned fruit and veg

Sugar

Sweets & Chocolates

Toiletries such as shampoo

Deodorant

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Many thanks Julian Higgs

A SERVICE FOR THOSE BEREAVED DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC— 30TH SEPTEMBER—In collaboration with Wells Cathedral there will be 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 will be 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. Those who wish the names of their loved ones to be included should email Suse on revsuse@gmail.com or [email them to the Communications team](mailto:comms@bathwells.anglican.org) on comms@bathwells.anglican.org by **Monday September 21**