

Shellrock Benefice Service Sheet for Trinity 4, July 5th 2020

Collect

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Readings

Genesis 24, 34-38, 42-49, 58-end; Psalm 45, 11-18; Romans 7, 15-25a; Matt 11, 16-19, 25-end

A Reflection

As I said in my reflection last week, we were celebrating on June 24th the birthday of John the Baptist. In the reading from Matthew's gospel this morning, John the Baptist comes into the picture again. Jesus refers to his cousin and begins to draw a contrast between people's response to him, and to Jesus himself. They could scarcely be more different, these two men. John, the rather wild wilderness prophet, and Jesus who is known to enjoy a good meal with all kinds of company. John wears scratchy garments (sackcloth and ashes) on purpose, and Jesus invokes the power of YHWH to keep the wine flowing at a wedding reception. Jesus tells a parable about the difference between himself and John and the rejection they both had in common. He compares the people to fickle children who keep changing the rules of the game. John came neither eating nor drinking (v18). But the people didn't care for this style at all. He was too strict and demanding, so to persuade him to lighten up a bit, they played the flute. Then along comes Jesus and he was ready to dance. Every meal seemed to be a party, and absolutely everyone was invited. But then the people wailed about the company Jesus kept and labelled him as glutton and drunkard (v19).

How today do we see and respond to Jesus? There is plenty in this short passage of scripture to reflect on. It ends with those familiar and comforting words "come to me all you that are weary". At this time of worry and stress, we will surely find in Jesus rest for our souls.

Suggestions for prayer:

For the bereaved family of Jenny Taylor who has recently died

For thanks that at long last we can re-enter our churches for prayer.

For all people known to us who are ill at this time, especially those in the benefice

For guidance from the Holy Spirit as the churches consider re-opening for worship

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever Amen

Blessing

The good and gracious God grant us refreshment, renewal, restoration, that in his power we may work to his praise and glory. And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen