

Dear friends,

As part of the series of Friday lunchtime concerts, the ensemble “pieces of eight”, organised by our very own Mark Perry, performed in St. Peter’s to over 50 people last Friday and we had a marvellous time. While Louise admired pieces like “Locus Iste”, the more low-brow of us (like me) enjoyed The Teddy Bears picnic – but it was all superb!



Pieces of eight entertaining our Friday lunchtime audience.

IMPORTANT: In case you were not aware the opening ceremony/celebration of our car park at St. Peter’s scheduled for next Sunday is **CANCELLED** for the obvious reason that it is not finished yet – Thank you for your understanding.

Monday morning Louise and I were both at a large get-together in the public hall called the “Big tent” which gathered various clubs, churches, the council, the school, Seachange, health services, care organisations together to spark a major conversation on how to alleviate loneliness, one of the scourges of society. I represented the Raleigh Mission community and Louise was there representing the Shandford Trust. Many useful conversations followed and one of the conclusions was that we just had to be more co-ordinated and work together to be able to disseminate information about what each of us does more efficiently and widely. Let’s hope that some of the good stuff that was raised goes somewhere!

Sunday 23rd October – Last after Trinity – Proper 25

I will preside at both services at St. Peter’s and Rev. Colin Randall will preside at All Saints and St. Michael’s at 9.30am and 11am respectively.

Ecclesiasticus 35: 12-17. Also known as the “wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach”, this is one of those books that the Protestants leave out of the Bible, the Orthodox and Catholic churches include, and the C of E includes in most Bibles but files it separately under “Apocrypha”. The succinct message here is that God shows no partiality to anyone, but unlike human society doesn’t exclude the poor, the wronged and the marginalised. The author encourages us to a state of generosity, not as a bribe to ensure better treatment but as a response to the generosity of God in bestowing everything we have on us including our very lives.

2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18. “Paul” is alone and near his eventual demise. He has been deserted and so is in a similar position to Jesus at his end. This literary device is intentional of course and Paul then uses the symbolism of the Roman games (The Lion’s mouth) and appeals to his Emperor (Christ) who he knows will award him the victor’s crown.

Luke 18: 9-14. Pride and moral vanity are as prevalent now as they ever were. Pride serves to shield you from the truth of your own faults while the tax collector was all too aware of his actual position in God’s eyes and is truly sorry for all his shortcomings. Knowing and recognising our flaws is only half the story of course. What Jesus calls us to do is repent of those

sins/shortcomings/flaws and turn away from them and determine to lead a new life.

Thought for the day

Seldom have I received more plaudits for a sermon than I did last Sunday at both East Budleigh and Otterton. I spoke about the origins of the Bible, the horse trading and arguments about what should be in the New Testament – how the New Testament came to be at all and how it became attached (as though it had been for ever) to the Old Testament. A thumbnail romp through centuries of history but one that people were very thankful to be told about because it never seems to be explained or even raised as a subject to be covered. The denouement of my talk was to make the point that Jesus Christ, the man we were about to commune with never wrote a single word in his life as far as we know. Jesus is the Word made Flesh, the human being about whom all those thousands of words bear testimony. The Christian church coalesced around the memory and spirit of a man who lived in conscious unbroken communion with the God He called Father (This is what we refer to as being sinless!). The idea of an incarnate God transcends the person of Jesus himself and posits the notion that all flesh – indeed all creation is shot through with the divine presence and has only been fully realised in the person of Jesus himself. From this central idea flows everything that the church (people of God) believes in, and this central idea is consciously fulfilled in every sacrament of the church – that fusion of divinity (God/Christ) and matter (Bread/wine/water/oil). I had been very nervous delivering this sermon because I was afraid it may undermine some people's understanding of what the Bible really is, so I was very pleasantly surprised. Just goes to show that you should never be afraid of telling the truth.

The Prayer for Today was written by Teresa of Avila

Let nothing disturb you, Let nothing frighten you, All things are passing away: God never changes. Patience obtains all things Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices. Amen.

Love and peace,

Martin