



WEEKLY LETTER FROM THE CHAPLAINCY

Sunday September 20th 2020 – 15th Sunday after Trinity

WELCOME to the latest weekly letter on this Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, as the Church continues its journey through 'Ordinary Time'.



In our Gospel Reading for this Sunday, we hear Jesus' Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, where everyone gets paid the same wages, whether

they have worked all day or just for an hour. Is that a fair state of affairs? And if it is supposed to teach us about God, does that make God 'unfair' too? Fortunately you will not be relying on me this week to make sense of it all, as we are delighted to welcome our Bishop to our Zoom service as our preacher this Sunday at 11.00 a.m. Bishop Philip was hoping to be paying us a pastoral visit over the coming weekend before Covid-19



intervened, and although we are really sorry not to be able to meet him in person, we are really privileged to welcome him virtually. Do let everyone know about our special Zoom service this coming Sunday. And don't forget as ever that I am here for you if there is any way in which I can help you – chaplain@scilly.church / 423911.

SUNDAY WORSHIP



Our Parish Morning Service via Zoom on Sunday at 11.00 a.m. As for every Sunday, the code is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/477892334?pwd=aWVpWXVidksralpVZm1yUjN6VDg0dz09>. You will be able to join from 10.30 a.m. and

chat to others before we start properly at 11.00 a.m. **It is also possible to join our Zoom service by telephone**, and there are also instructions on how to use the telephone access attached to the email message sent with this weekly letter. If you know of anyone who might like to join in this way, please pass on the relevant information or ask them to contact me.

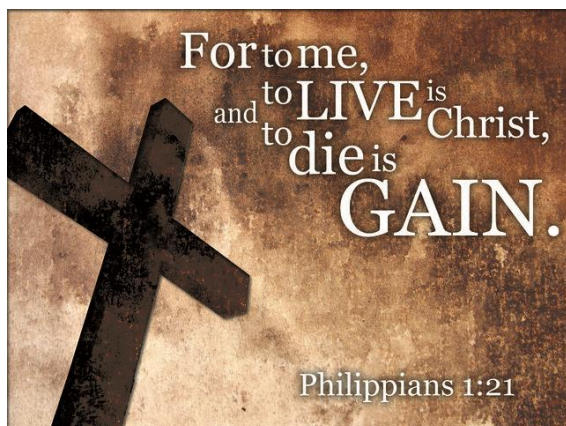
Please note that shortly after 11.00 a.m. I will be 'locking' the service, which means that latecomers will be unable to join our worship. Apologies in advance if you try to join late or if you lose your coverage and try to rejoin – I'll happily share what you have missed at a later date, but you will find yourselves locked out of the live broadcast. Sorry!!

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

You can find the Sunday readings and prayers on one of the other attachments or enclosures that I have sent to you. In our Zoom service and Epilogue we will be thinking about Jesus's Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard from **Matthew 20.1-16**. For the Old Testament reading we turn to the story of Jonah. The passage given - **Jonah 3.10 - 4.11** - takes us right to the end of the story, but it is such a short story that you might like to read it all the way through in your Bibles. Many scholars believe



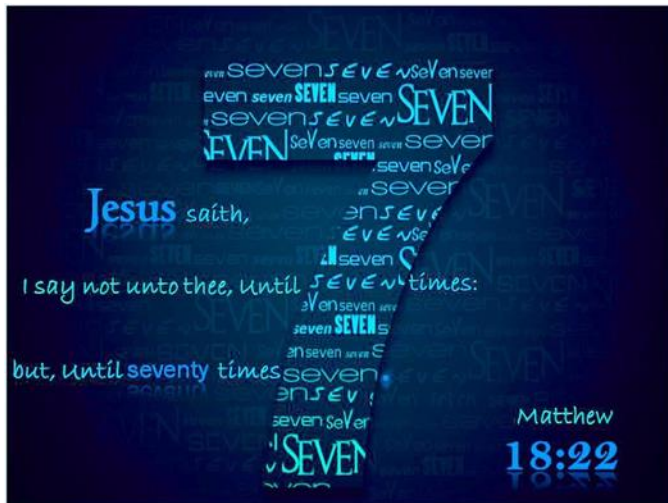
that it was written after the time of Exile in Babylon, when the Jews were returning to their homeland and establishing a new identity as God's 'special people.' What that meant varied from person to person. At its best it meant that they understood that God had a special plan for them to change the world and so benefit everyone: at its worst (and we can see some of this in Ezra and Nehemiah) it took the form of an exclusive nationalism that emphasised racial purity as a part of God's purposes, encouraging true Israelites to divorce their foreign wives so that they would not be tempted to worship their foreign gods. It is possible that the Book of Ruth - starring the non-Jewish woman who shows herself to be a loyal daughter-in-law (as well as the great grandmother of King David!) - and the Book of Jonah - featuring the godfearing Ninevites whom Jonah wants to condemn but whom God wants to save - are two books written to offer a more inclusive 'international' view of God's purposes and God's love. In our reading from Philippians, **Philippians 1.21-30**, we read one of Paul's most famous summaries of what it means to be 'in Christ'. In the traditional form, 'for me to live is Christ and to die is gain.' In other words, for the believer who is one with his Lord, death should not be something to be feared but the



gateway into a new and better life with God: the only advantage of remaining alive in our current state is to be able to help others on their journey into God. It is certainly a very strong and inspiring statement, but it needs to be read alongside other strands of the

Biblical witness that do speak of the importance of life now, and how our Christian faith compels us to take the agenda and the realities of this world seriously. As ever, we need to be careful of focusing too narrowly on a particular text rather than seeing it within the context of the Bible as a whole.

THINKING IT THROUGH



I'm attaching/including my sermon from last Sunday for those who may want to read it. It is based upon Jesus' teaching about forgiveness in response to Peter's question about how often he should offer forgiveness to someone who has wronged him. How

good are you at forgiving? And at receiving forgiveness?

FUTURE EVENTS

Please note that our **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**, has been arranged for Tuesday 29th September at 9.30 a.m. It will take place by Zoom and in a few days' time we will be sending the joining code and papers to everyone in the parish who receives this weekly letter.

This coming Tuesday from 12 noon to 2.00 p.m. the Church Hall will be open to receive any donations for the **Charity Shop**. We are yet to make a final decision about the shop's reopening, but it may be as early as Saturday October 3rd, depending on national and local developments.

So far as our **worship plans** are concerned, just to remind you that we intend to continue with Zoom worship on Sunday at 11.00 in the morning and the Epilogue in the Parish Church at 8.15 in the evening up to and including the first Sunday of October. There will be transitional arrangements for October 11th and 18th and we are aiming to return to Church on Sunday mornings from October 25th.

