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WEEKLY LETTER 11 October 2020

Isaiah 25:1-9: Psalm 23
Philippians 4.1-9: Matthew 22:1-14

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

In certain aspects this parable can be seen as a rather bizarre one, for, while the King's Servants are roasting the oxen for his guests, the King is also sending out his army to destroy his enemies, and burning their city. It has the feel of a Hieronymus Bosch painting about Hell as there is continuous death and destruction. This parable may well reflect the terrible slaughter of the people of Israel in which tens of thousands were hunted down, killed, crucified or made slaves by the Romans from AD70-74. That maybe so, but inevitably, we the reader will ask, why is the King (God) so incredibly harsh to the man who was persuaded to go to the feast and enjoy his roast beef and Yorkshire puddings?! It has the feeling of a nasty trick? After all, the King did tell his servants to bring anyone, and all this man did was accept the open invitation so, why was the punishment so severe or extreme?



Hieronymus Bosch painting about Hell and death and destruction (referred to above)

What is for sure, judgement is not a popular subject in the 21st Century Church (I certainly don't enjoy judgement) but we all know judgement is part of our everyday lives, and perhaps we also know that judgement is a necessity for 'us' humans if we really are to take God seriously, and reflect with integrity on our daily lives? One thing is for sure, Matthew knows that Christians must/need to 'pull out the stops' and live an authentic Christian life, otherwise, others will not take the Christian faith seriously. So, perhaps today, tomorrow, this parable can say to us, are you taking the invitation to God's banquet seriously enough. Bon Courage!

Stephen

Church News

Food Bank

Thank you for your response to the request to support the local Food Bank.

On Monday, 5th October, Carol was delighted to deliver donated food and £160 to Swansea Food Bank. Again, thank you for your response to this appeal.

A reminder that contributions can be left at Christ Well on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday morning during term time when Carol is in the Office.

Sunday Morning Service

Worship will be led by Rev Dr Robert Pope and will have a Harvest theme.

The Bible Readings are – Joel 2.21-28 and Luke 12.13-21

Christian Aid Harvest Appeal - a reminder that donations should be sent to Wynford Bevan by 18th October please.





Bring our global neighbours good harvests for the future with our Autumn Appeal

Angela's farming community are in crisis. Now is the time to reach out to our neighbours near and far.

Love never fails. When crisis arrived on our doorsteps this year, neighbourly love helped us through.

Across the world, this same neighbourly love is helping some of the most vulnerable communities overcome hardships.

In Nicaragua, the farming community of Santa Rosa has grown coffee for generations. Now they could be the last. This crop is struggling to grow as the climate crisis rages on.

Angela explained: 'With climate change, the coffee suffers from many diseases and pests. The sun has scorched the coffee beans, we cannot sell them and we're losing more every year because of climate change.'

Angela is worried about how she will care for her daughters, Johaira and Ariana. She said 'It will be a total disaster and failure for us because as farmers, growing crops is how we survive. Where will we get our incomes?'

But there is hope. With your support, Angela's community is coming together as a local cooperative to share resources and knowledge and urgently protect their livelihoods.

'I feel proud to be part of a cooperative and we have the opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other,' Angela said.

The cooperative is supported by Christian Aid's local partner, Soppexcca. They help Angela's community come together with lots of different initiatives and projects, from school vegetable gardens to gender workshops.

One of the main ways they are helping farmers protect their livelihoods is by shifting from coffee production to climate-resistant cocoa.

Now, Angela is looking forward to the future with hope: 'The income from the cocoa crop is very important. It means we can buy clothes, medicines and food.'

Angela's daughter Johaira added: 'All of us in the family were involved with the project. We all know it's very important for the family income. I am proud of my mum growing cocoa. She is an inspiration.'

HARVEST FESTIVAL

We thank God for His continued goodness.

Let us pray for those through whom He has worked, for those less fortunate than ourselves, and for all mankind.

We pray for farmers, farm workers, fishermen and all who have laboured to provide food from land and sea. May they feel joy in sharing in God's creation.

Father, renew the face of the earth.

We pray for scientists researching new and better ways to harvest the riches of the earth, so that the hungry may be fed.

Father, renew the face of the earth.

We pray that the dry lands of the world may receive help from other nations, so that the thirsty may be refreshed.

Father, renew the face of the earth.

We pray for the work of all agencies that promote the growth of food and its distribution throughout the world.

Father, renew the face of the earth.

We pray for those who waste the resources of the earth, who use living creatures unworthily. May they come to appreciate the oneness and dignity of God's creation.

Father, renew the face of the earth.

Let us remember the injustice of poverty in a world of plenty.

