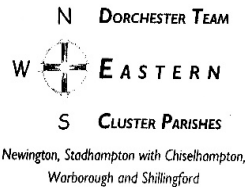


PEWS NEWS

St Laurence Church, Warborough

SUNDAY 14TH JUNE

2ND AFTER TRINITY



THE COLLECTS

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Faithful Creator, whose mercy never fails: deepen our faithfulness to you and to your living Word, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

BIBLE READINGS

Genesis 18.1–15 [21.1–7]

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ²He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them and bowed down to the ground. ³He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' ⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' ⁷Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. ⁹They said to him, 'Where is your wife, Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' ¹⁰Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. ¹²So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?' ¹³The Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, and say, "Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?" ¹⁴Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.' ¹⁵But Sarah denied, saying, 'I did not laugh'; for she was afraid. He said, 'Oh yes, you did laugh.' [²¹The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. ³Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. ⁴And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God

had commanded him. ⁵Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶Now Sarah said, 'God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.' ⁷And she said, 'Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.']

Romans 5.1–8

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. ⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Matthew 9.35 – 10.8 [9–23]

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.' ¹⁰Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him. ⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near."⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. [⁹Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for labourers deserve their food. ¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgement than for that town. ¹⁶See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them

and the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²²and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.']

Post Communion

Loving Father, we thank you for feeding us at the supper of your Son: sustain us with your Spirit, that we may serve you here on earth until our joy is complete in heaven, and we share in the eternal banquet with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

Let us pray to God, whose promises are faithful and whose love never fails.

Heavenly Father, we pray for your Church throughout the world. Strengthen all who seek to follow Christ and proclaim the Gospel. Give courage to those who face opposition, doubt or discouragement, and help us to trust in your purposes even when the way ahead is unclear.

We pray for our communities, our nation and our world. Where there is conflict, division or fear, bring wisdom, compassion and peace. Guide those in positions of authority and influence, that they may seek justice and work for the common good.

We pray especially today for the Eastern Cluster, giving thanks for the licensing of our new vicar Rev'd Lisa and ask your blessing upon her. Grant her wisdom, patience and joy in her ministry. Help us all to work together faithfully, trusting in your guidance and seeking your will for our parishes.

We pray for all who are living with uncertainty, disappointment or anxiety. For those facing change, awaiting news, treatment or decisions; for those who struggle to see hope in difficult circumstances. Like Sarah, when we find it hard to believe in new possibilities, remind us that nothing is impossible for you.

We pray for those who are sick in body, mind or spirit, and for all who care for them. Surround them with your love, strengthen them with your presence, and grant them comfort and peace.

We remember before you those who have died and those who mourn their loss. Give them rest in your eternal kingdom and bring comfort to all who grieve. May the hope of Christ's resurrection sustain them in the days ahead.

Faithful God, when we cannot see the way forward, help us to trust in your promises; when hope feels fragile, strengthen us by your Spirit; and when we are called into new beginnings, give us courage to follow where you lead.

Amen

Views from the Pews: Jen's Lens

When I sit down to write these reflections, I usually start with the Gospel for my inspiration, but I just love the reading from Genesis this week. That laugh from Sarah: you can see the eye roll jump right off the page with an "Oh, sure" or "I can see the pigs flying" level of sarcasm going through her mind which is so wonderfully relatable. And then she's busted laughing at the Lord's promise and instantly denies doing it – also perhaps something we have all done at least once in our lives.

She's laughing, of course, because she doesn't see the hope in what's being promised. She feels that she knows it cannot happen and she doesn't want to let herself dare to dream. Her attitude of self-preservation is a fairly practical response; it shields her from the despair of having long-held hopes dashed. It is often difficult to imagine the best and trust in the plan when the current situation is suggesting otherwise. But that is what this week's readings are all about: trusting in God's plan.

However, knowing that in theory and living it in practice are often very different things.

This week has been one of those weeks for our family. Halfway through a perfectly normal week, we received some difficult news which immediately changed the landscape. The details are not important here, but the experience of suddenly finding yourself facing an unexpected (and slightly uncertain) future is one that many people will recognise. When something unexpected happens, Ralph and I tend to become extremely practical and do all we can to regain a sense of control. However, sometimes hope can feel a little fragile, and trusting in God's plan can seem much harder than it did only a few days before.

At the same time, the Eastern Cluster stands on the threshold of a new chapter as our new vicar is licensed this evening. That is a very different kind of uncertainty - one filled with excitement and expectation. Since Rev'd Mel left, many of us have carried hopes for what this next chapter might bring to our parishes and, like all beginnings, it requires a step of faith.

Perhaps that is why these readings speak so powerfully together. Sarah is asked to trust God's promise when all the evidence seems to point in another direction. Paul reminds us that faith is not the absence of difficulty but the conviction that God remains present within it. Hope, in Paul's understanding, is not wishful thinking; it is confidence rooted in the faithfulness of God. And then Jesus sends his disciples out into the world knowing

that the road ahead will be challenging. Their task is not to control the outcome but to remain faithful to the calling they have been given.

Whether we find ourselves facing unwelcome news, beginning a new ministry, or simply navigating the ordinary uncertainties of life, these readings offer the same invitation: not to pretend everything is fine, nor to ignore the difficulties before us, but to trust that God is already at work within them. Sarah's laughter is transformed into joy, the disciples' fears become courage, and Paul's suffering becomes hope. God's faithfulness is not dependent on our ability to see the way forward.

Therefore, as we pray for our new vicar and for all those carrying worries and burdens this week, may we be given the grace to trust God's promises even when they seem impossible, to persevere when the path is difficult, and to hold fast to the hope that comes from knowing that God walks beside us.

I wish you all a wonderful week ahead.

Jen

UPCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY 14TH JUNE

2ND AFTER TRINITY

STADHAMPTON – 9:30AM PARISH EUCHARIST

WARBOROUGH – 11:00AM PARISH EUCHARIST

SUNDAY 21ST JUNE

3RD AFTER TRINITY

STADHAMPTON – 9:30AM FAMILY EUCHARIST

WARBOROUGH – 11:00AM MORNING WORSHIP

WARBOROUGH – 6:00PM HOLY COMMUNION BCP

SUNDAY 28TH JUNE

4TH AFTER TRINITY

WARBOROUGH – 8:00AM HOLY COMMUNION BCP

DORCHESTER ABBEY – 10:30AM TEAM SERVICE: ORDINATION OF PRIESTS

WARBOROUGH – 4:30PM CLUSTER EVENSONG

SUNDAY 5TH JULY

5TH AFTER TRINITY

STADHAMPTON – 9:30AM FAMILY SERVICE

WARBOROUGH – 11:00AM PARISH EUCHARIST

SUNDAY 12TH JULY

6TH AFTER TRINITY

STADHAMPTON – 9:30AM PARISH EUCHARIST

WARBOROUGH – 11:00AM MORNING WORSHIP

WARBOROUGH – 6:00PM HOLY COMMUNION BCP

WARBOROUGH NEWS:

We extend a warm welcome to Rev'd Lisa today!

Admitting Children to Communion

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.' And he laid his hands on them and went on his way. (Matthew 19:14-15)

The Gospels show us again and again that Jesus warmly welcomed children and valued them deeply. Over the coming months, I will be running preparation sessions for the Admission of Children to Communion. Rebecca Nye, a child psychologist, writes that children have 'the spiritual advantage of an acutely sensitive capacity for non-verbal communication and insight'. If this is something you would like to consider for your child or children, please do have a chat with me, or get in touch by email or phone: revenmafirth@gmail.com, 07498 762485.