



# Connection

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021**  
**Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity**



## **Collect**

Almighty God,  
you search us and know us:  
may we rely on you in strength  
and rest on you in weakness,  
now and in all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

## **James 1: 17-end**

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

## **Mark 7: 1-8, 14,15, 21-23**

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about

you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.” Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.” For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.

### **Post Communion Prayer**

God our creator,  
you feed your children with the true manna,  
the living bread from heaven:  
let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage  
until we come to that place  
where hunger and thirst are no more;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

### **Reflection**



The sermon this week is from Paul Lawlor, Area Dean of Redditch and Bromsgrove.

You can listen to the podcast at [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-worship/sermon-podcasts](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/prayer-worship/sermon-podcasts)

I am Paul Lawlor Area Dean of Redditch and Bromsgrove based in Redditch.

Over recent months I have had the privilege of hearing from teams of people from across one half of the Deanery I work in. In this the yearning to reach younger generations has often come up, and rightly so.

But, are we ready for what this will look like for us are we prepared to cope with the changes this will necessitate? As we look at this incident from Mark’s Gospel, how does that challenge us?

Firstly, can I challenge our mental picture of the disciples? Are you picturing older men with beards? Or, are you imaging younger people! Back in 1917 scholars were writing that the disciples were more like a group of young students rather than a group of college dons.

If we picture young disciples and old Pharisees how does that colour our image of this interaction? Where do our sympathies really lie? Remember the Pharisees are people who value scripture and hold it highly (this is good). They seek to follow the laws God has laid

down for his people (this is good), they seek to follow the pattern of worship God has decreed for His people (this too is good). Where to our sympathies really lie?

What is the motivation of the disciples in not keeping to the traditions? Are they simply rebelling or revelling in the excitement of what Jesus is teaching?

At the least, we have the relationship of young and old, traditionalist and reformer, settler and explorer, all these have a tension. I believe we can see this being lived out as the wider Church explores differing strategies for Church Growth and Development!

Where do our sympathies lie?

What are the rules, conventions and traditions we seek to follow? Are they “rules taught by men”? We’ve had another 2000 years to create human interpretations of God’s law and interpret the call Jesus places upon our lives. Can we be sure that our motivations are Righteous?

How do we react to new people (of any age or group) coming to faith in Jesus, perhaps in ways we don’t understand, when they don’t simply fall into patterns that we know and love when they seek to “sing a new song”. Do we seek to be true to the tradition of faith handed down to us OR can we react in the ways the Pharisees do?

If we hold too tightly to the wrong things then Jesus is challenging! He points to the prophets, it is no good to, *“honour [God] with [our] lips but [have] hearts that are far from [Him]”*.

Jesus provides us with a simple yet challenging solution.

He points to it not being outward show that makes us “clean”. It is not following the rules, doing the right thing, or being seen to do the right things that is important. Jesus says, it is “what comes out of a man” or person that reveals what us within.

The challenge in what Jesus says is that it is what that is within us that drives what we do and say. What is in our hearts, what rules our hearts motives what we think, say and do.

We can help to shape what is our hearts, how can we become more Jesus like, by what we do? Through the repetition of the spiritual disciplines of Prayer, Reading Scripture, Worship, Fasting, Pilgrimage, Retreat and Fasting...all of these shape us. But they need to not become the thing. Hold to the practices but let Jesus shape us by the Spirit at work in us. We can become more Jesus shaped. We can seek to move as the Spirit guides.

We live in a time when there is a need to re-assess many things. We live in a time when we need to follow where God is leading and not simply re-establish the past.

Where do our sympathies lie? In holding to the ways we’ve always lived with or in seeking to follow where God is leading.



## Requests for Prayers

Gracious God, who pours out the life-giving Holy Spirit on your kingdom people,  
 Fill our hearts with love to worship you creatively,  
 Equip us to make disciples, inspire us to share hope and anoint us to transform our communities,  
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen

**We pray for all those who are sick everywhere and for those who have asked for our prayers and for their carers:** Roy and Margaret Putnam, Brian Bolam, Yvonne Seward, Laurence Alexander, Ros and Rob, Bryony Baynes, Jo Gunner, David Fenton, Michael Leven and his wife Allison and daughter Sophie.

**We continue to pray for:** Percy and Sharon Blizzard, Jackie Pickford, Clive Hunt.

**We pray for those who are in residential care:** Barbara Milton, Rita Sheppy and David Wilkinson.

**We pray for those who have died everywhere:** Anne Wood, her daughter Joan and her family. And also for those whose anniversary of death falls at this time.

**If there is someone or something that you would like us to pray for, please email [eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com](mailto:eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com) and we will include them on the prayer list**

## Church Services

The church service this week will be at:

10.30am United Service at St Giles', Bredon – Rev Katryn Leclezio

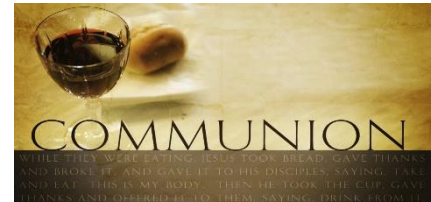


### Rota for September 2021

Date	Time	Place	Presiding
5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.30am	Little Comberton	Canon Roger Spiller
	10.30am	Eckington -Climate Sunday	Reverend Allison Davies
	11.00am	Beckford – Service for the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers	Archdeacon Robert Jones
12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.00am	Besford	Reverend Allison Davies
	9.00am	Bricklehampton	Reverend Katryn Leclezio
	10.30am	Bredon	Reverend Allison Davies
	10.30am	Elmley Castle	Reverend Katryn Leclezio
19 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.00am	Bredon's Norton	Reverend Allison Davies
	9.00am	Elmley Castle	Canon Roger Spiller
	10.30am	Eckington	Reverend Allison Davies
	10.30am	Overbury	Reverend Doug Chaplin
26 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.00am	Defford	Reverend Allison Davies
	10.30am	Alstone (Harvest Service for Alstone and Teddington)	Reverend Katryn Leclezio
	10.30am	Bredon (Harvest Service)	Reverend Allison Davies
	4.00pm	Great Comberton (Harvest Service)	Reverend Katryn Leclezio

## Midweek Communion

8<sup>th</sup> September – Overbury – Reverend Katryn Leclizio  
15<sup>th</sup> September – Lower Comberton – Reverend Allison Davies  
22<sup>nd</sup> September – Defford – Reverend Allison Davies



### Help for the Afghan Refugees

It has been agreed by the Churchwardens from all the Bredon Hill Group of Churches that we should make a combined effort to help Afghan refugees coming to the UK in a practical way. Phil Airdrie, has been in contact with the co-ordinator of Evesham Vale Welcomes Refugees. Phil has asked them what is needed and been given the following list:

#### Items suitable for donation:

**Small and medium ladies or men's OUTER clothing (good condition); NEW underwear and socks**

**Child & Baby clothes (good condition)**

**Paired shoes and boots, all sizes; gloves, hats, scarves**

**Warm bedding, including blankets**

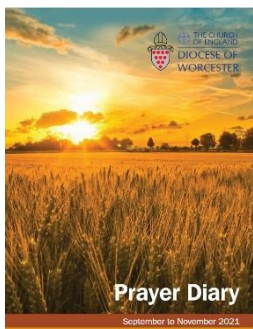
**Toiletries for all ages, including sanitary wear**

**Baby equipment, nappies, wipes**

**Children's toys/drawing equipment/books (suitable for use indoors)**

**At the moment we are not being asked to collect money. If you do want to donate it is probably better to go to one of the main Aid Agencies.**

**Please speak to your churchwarden for further information.**



### News from the Diocese

Prayers and diocesan news can be found at [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk)

Rev Allison will be on annual leave from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August to Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September. Please contact Rev Katryn Leclizio at [klbhteam@gmail.com](mailto:klbhteam@gmail.com) or Bredon Hill Co-ordinator Alison Khan at [acbhteam@gmail.com](mailto:acbhteam@gmail.com) Thank you.



**Reverend Katryn Leclézio**



**Reverend Allison Davies**