

**Fifth Sunday after Trinity
Sunday, 17th July 2022**



Dear Friends in Christ,

‘She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. (Luke 10: 39)

I begin this week’s newsletter with a word of caution! Europe is in the grip of a heatwave likely to beat even the hottest of summers since records began back in 1910. In the sweltering summer of 1976, I recall trying to take my ‘O’ Levels in blistering heat and marvelling at the sight of tarmacked roads melting in the midday sun. According to government ministers, this coming weekend temperatures are forecast to rise into the 30’s with some analysts predicting we might reach 40 degrees of heat by Monday and Tuesday of next week.

Please take care! Many of you adore the sun but please be careful and remember to keep hydrated, wear sunscreen and stay in the shade in the heat of the day. Sunstroke is serious and can make people very sick indeed. We are being asked to look out for our elderly neighbours. Parents of young children are also being cautioned to protect infants. And of course, animal owners must be equally careful. Don’t leave your children or pets in hot cars.



Source GREE UK.com

This week, we are blessed with the reflections from Tuesday's Morning Prayer, which Colin Sheath has brought to us. In the UK's current turbulent political position and in the ever tragic circumstances of the war in Ukraine, our scripture reading is of apposite importance. Jesus teaches us to sit at His feet and learn from Him, just as Mary does.



'Christ in the House of Martha and Mary' by Johannes Vermeer

In her busy-ness, Martha has forgotten where the focus of her life should be and has got caught up in the earthly tasks which have left her exhausted and exasperated. In the same chapter as the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus shows us how we should be living our lives and uses the difference between Mary and Martha's mindset. In the Jewish custom, people would have taken Martha's side in the spat between her and her sister. Jewish custom held that she should have been helping her sister in the kitchen rather than occupying the traditional male role – sitting and chewing the cud over gritty aspects of faith and other concerns of the day.

Jesus shows how Martha has focussed on work at the cost of learning from the word of God: focussing on immediate earthly needs rather than learning heavenly values from the loving nature of Christ. The Samaritan man is shown by Jesus to be loving his neighbour and Mary is shown loving her Lord. Many of us who have to run households feel perplexed at Martha's predicament – after all we do all have to eat!! But Luke is helping us to see, through all the teachings of Jesus in this chapter of his Gospel, that we need to get the balance right: to love God with all our heart, strength, soul and mind (Luke 10: 27) as well as loving our neighbour and ourselves. Jesus upends the conventions of His day – showing us the vilified Samaritan as a loving neighbour and depicting a woman in a man's place at the feet of a rabbi.



'Christ with Mary and Martha' by Vincent Malo

Wouldn't our world today be all the better for everyone understanding Jesus' desire for each of us to be treated equally and with unconditional love.

Yours, listening to Christ,

Jax

Revd Jax Machin, Rector, The Downs Benefice

Collect Prayer for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of the church is governed and sanctified:
hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people,
that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth to the
glory of your name;
Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
Who is alive and reigns with you,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

[New beginnings, Honesty and The Power of Prayer by Colin Sheath](#)



In Last week's letter from Jax she wrote a beautiful piece about a Robin redbreast, and if you haven't read it yet I encourage you to do so. You can find all of Jax's newsletter on The Downs Benefice website at <http://downsbefice.org/> Jax talks about a spiritual connection that she describes as a "God Moment" and that's certainly how I would describe it too.

And if you believe in such things as a spiritual connection, you probably also believe in the 'power of prayer,' and I think that is something we should all be using right now. I'm thinking today about Honesty and new beginnings:-

- A new Government
- new lives for those from Ukraine and all refugees caught up in the atrocities of war and persecution.

We seem to live in a world where Well!

A world where those in power tell untruths to justify their deeds and those untruths come back to haunt them. A world where those in power tell lies and care little about the consequences of their actions and care little about the deaths, misery and pain they cause.

Two verses from Proverbs would be good to put in front of those in power:

Proverbs 10:9:

9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,
but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.

Proverbs 11:3:

3 The integrity of the upright guides them,
but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

As Christians we can use the power of prayer, and pray that it is goodness, truth and honesty that will shine through. As Christians we can pray that wrong deeds, lies and untruths will out, and faith hope, truth and honesty will shine through.

Ultimately, that those who justify evil deeds with lies will be found out, and that those who justify their failings with half-truths, lies and a lack of integrity will also be found out.

So, whether it is world events like the War in Ukraine, or domestic politics where politicians seem to care more about themselves and their own careers than the country and the people they serve:

- As Christians we can pray for honesty.
- As Christians we can pray for those in power to have Honesty, Truth and integrity.
- As Christians we can pray for meaningful new beginnings.

My thought for today is that we should pray for Honesty, Truth and Integrity from all in power to deliver meaningful new beginnings to all God's children in our hurting world.

**Colin Sheath
Chilbolton**

Colossians 1:15-28 - The Supremacy of the Son of God

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation - if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness - the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

Luke 10: 38 - 42 - At the Home of Martha and Mary

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'

'Martha, Martha,' the Lord answered, 'you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.'

Schedule of Services

Now that all national Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted, it is no longer necessary to book seats in our parishes for services. Neither is it mandatory for you to wear masks in church. However, Coronavirus is still very much with us. There are a number of people in our villages with it at present, so we are encouraging people to observe social distancing measures.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>17th July</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	6pm – Peace & Wholeness	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)	
<i>24th July</i>			Morning Worship	Morning Worship	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)
<i>27th July</i>			Mid-week Holy Communion		
<i>31st July</i>		5 th Sunday Benefice Holy Communion			
<i>7th August</i>	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	4pm - Café Church		
<i>14th August</i>			Holy Communion		Morning Worship

<i>21st August</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	6pm – Peace & Wholeness	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)	
<i>24th August</i>			Mid-week Holy Communion		
<i>28th August</i>			Morning Worship	Morning Worship	8am – Holy Communion (BCP)