

***Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity
Sunday, 10th October 2021***



Dear Friends in Christ,

‘Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him.’ (Mark 10: 21)

This week’s newsletter gives readers a taste of Charlotte Nash’s Morning Prayer Zoom service – with a thoughtful Autumnal Reflection from Colin Sheath and meditative Intercessions from Pat Lloyd, both members of the congregation at St Mary the Less, Chilbolton. This comes with my gratitude to both Pat and Colin for sharing their spiritual thoughts with us.

Everyone is welcome to join Charlotte’s Zoom gathering which takes place on Tuesday mornings at 9.30am. Wherever and whoever you are, you will be assured of a warm welcome and the opportunity to worship, using the simple yet uplifting Celtic liturgy of the Northumbria Community. If you are interested, please call Caroline McAulay in the Benefice Office.



‘Lovers’ by Monserrat Gudiol

Both Colin's reflection and Pat's prayers gently pick up on the themes of our Gospel reading for this Sunday, in which we are encouraged to respect the world and love its people; choosing to relinquish excess personal wealth in order to ensure the world's great resources are equally distributed. Moving towards the closing chapters of Jesus' earthly ministry, Mark emphasises Jesus' compassion for those around Him, who, like the Rich Man in the story, struggle to share their wealth and possessions with those who are in need. We hear how Christ loves this man despite his fallibility – and we are pricked with an understanding of our Saviour's *'genuine love'* for all humankind, such that He is prepared to die to save us from our sins, whether we agree to follow Him or not.



'Icon of Jesus and the Rich Young Man' by Katherine Sanders

The Rich Man's struggles are our own, of course. And Jesus is speaking directly to us. His words penetrate every selfish thought and expectation we have. We perceive the poverty of the rich man, caught in the existential grief of his inability to relinquish the riches of his material life. Would that he could! His honest introspection reveals the depths of conflict coursing through his soul. Give up my earthly lifestyle to receive treasure in heaven? Trust the word of God made flesh in Jesus beyond the staged piety of societal approval? The Rich Man has found a sense of significance in the comfort of his material wealth and status, and admits he cannot break free from their clutches. He, Like Scrooge being shown the errors of his past life, perceives the fallacious nature of his judgement under Jesus' penetrating love-filled gaze, yet finds himself incapable of change.

On this Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity, having used Ordinary Time in the Church Calendar to reflect on the riches of God's grace as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which way will we turn in the inner searches of our hearts – to the hell of earthly darkness or the joy of eternal light?

Yours, in the unconditional love of Christ,

Jax

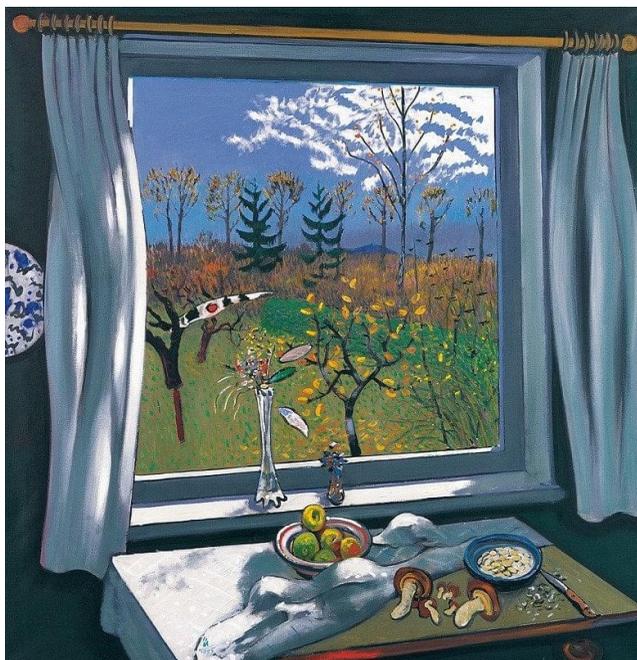
Rector, The Downs Benefice

Summer Fades, Autumn Beckons, Hope Embraced

Reflection by Colin Sheath

As we move from summer into autumn, many of us will be mourning the loss of those longer days and endless hours outside. We may be looking forward to the colours of autumn, yet wishing for the warmth and freedom of summer, when we feel the sun on our backs and sunset comes much later in the day.

We will adjust to what the seasons bring and find new things to enjoy: the crisp mornings with frost on the grass; the bracing air of a winter walk, and evenings spent cosy and warm in our homes, perhaps with friends or family.



'Autumn Window' by Wolfgang Mattheuer

Like the seasons which come and go, and the different challenges and enjoyments we encounter as time moves us into autumn, we are blessed with the opportunity to embrace the wonders of nature in all its colours and to be thankful for our world and for so much more in our lives.

The year and the seasons race on, in this time after Pentecost - and there are many prayers which could help us with, not only the changing seasons, but also the recognition that we are stewards of this fragile earth we all call home.

As we wrestle with many changes in our lives let us turn to the Holy One to help us through and ask Him to:

Hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven.

May we all be enabled to find positives in the changing seasons and in our ever-changing lives! For the darker days of winter and the changes brought on by the Pandemic can seem unbearable, yet I pray we may all be enabled to find hope and a way forward.

We have all had to cope with so much over the last 18 months, that the changing seasons seem like such a small thing in comparison. Yet what seems small for one can be huge for others, so let us all keep a watchful eye on friends and family so that we can offer support to those who may be struggling for whatever reason and show we care for each other.



May we be stewards of our fragile earth and appreciate its glories. May we care for those around us; take time to appreciate the seasons, take time to appreciate our world and all those we encounter.

May love and hope conquer all darkness and lift us up to you our Lord in faith and prayer.

*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.
(Psalm 42: 5 & 11)*

Colin Sheath
St Mary's, Chilbolton

Intercessions given by Pat Lloyd

Let us pray:

Oh! Heavenly Father, who made us in Your own image, we thank You for the fellowship of those around us and throughout the world. Help us to forget the differences in nations and cultures; irrespective of race, creed or colour. Underneath, we are of You and are blessed with Your creation of all peoples. We ask that the leaderships throughout the world consider putting aside their differences and see one another as equals. We are all of Thee and should be treated as such.

Lord in your Mercy, hear our prayer.

Dear Lord, this world is in turmoil. We have mistreated Your planet and its atmosphere, causing much damage and change which has brought about the seasons being altered to the point of being unrecognisable. We have floods, high winds, drought and other disasters to contend with, to which we have contributed in many ways. We bring before You the forthcoming International Conference on Climate Change. Already some are considering not attending because the implications of necessary changes are too vast for them to comprehend, and mean serious alterations to our ways and styles of living. We also bring before you the inhabitants of La Palma who are being driven from their homes due to the volcanic eruptions.

Lord in your Mercy, hear our prayer.

At this time of year we thank You for the harvest which will sustain us in the future. What man produces, through Your creation, has many facets and products. We ask that our leaders of these industries come together to tackle the problems put before us in reaping these crops and then distributing them fairly throughout the world. Let those managers be proactive as possible in forming solutions to problems so that the predicted shortages can be minimised. *Lord in your Mercy, hear our Prayer.*

During the Pandemic, we have seen the best in many people in tackling this awful virus: the relationships between varying professions and callings have been exemplary. Vaccines have been produced and tested in record times; people have volunteered to test these products for the benefit of all. Nurses, doctors, paramedics have worked tirelessly to keep others alive. Unfortunately this has not been carried out universally, so some nations are benefitting more than others. We should all be able to have the same opportunities in these matters. We ask that our Governments and all in power come together to make life easier for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Lord in your Mercy, hear our Prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the generosity of those in our villages who contributed to the Macmillan coffee mornings. Through their kindness, we know that others will benefit from the work of this wonderful organisation. We ask you to bless their work and dedication, which is carried out selflessly for those at the end of their lives. We also thank you for all those who are willing to help charities and partnerships who are caring for the sick and disabled. *Lord in your Mercy, hear our Prayer.*

The Maker of All, give wisdom, forbearance, health and tolerance to Revd Jax and all who assist in the running and administration of this Benefice. Their efforts and willingness are well known to us all, and we thank them for their kindness in helping in Your work. Our Father in Heaven we bring before you all those who are sick in mind or body. Relieve their pain and suffering where possible and assist them on the road to recovery. Give strength and help to those who care for their loved in these times of distress and need. At this time we commend those who have departed this earthly life to your continued care and eternal love; thanking them for the way they may have touched our lives.

Top Tips from Austen Hooker



Some of us will have been lucky enough to have owned an indoor orchid plant in our time. But what happens to the plants when the prolific blooms wither and die? Have you mastered the art of regenerating new growth? I have a beautiful double-stemmed orchid, given to me by one of my sons last Christmas. Its blooms have delighted us all year, but suddenly gave up the ghost at the beginning of September. All that remains are two flower-free upright stalks and leathery, tongue-like leaves. In their natural habitat, these exotic plants are parasites which spring from rocks or trees. Austen tells me they tend to thrive in our homes best when they are a little neglected – perhaps that’s how mine has bloomed for 9 months in my ‘care!’

Austen has advised me to cut off the stems completely down to the leaves at the base, in order to encourage new growth. Phalaenopsis orchids generally prefer bright light but need to be filtered from direct sunshine. Water them from above about once a week, but be careful as their roots tend to rot if they are left standing in wet soil, so drain any water that collects under the pot. Austen looked a little horrified when I admitted I usually throw orchids away once they have stopped flowering, so I am going to have a go at keeping this one with lots of TLC – it won’t know what’s hit it!!

Collect Prayer for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you;
Mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



Mark 10: 17-31 – The Rich Man

As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’

‘Why do you call me good?’ Jesus asked. ‘Only God is truly good. But to answer your question, you know the commandments: “You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.” ‘Teacher,’ the man replied, ‘I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.’ Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. ‘There is still one thing you haven’t done,’ he told him. ‘Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’

At this the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!’ This amazed them. But Jesus said again, ‘Dear children, it is very hard to enter the Kingdom of God. In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!’

The disciples were astounded. ‘Then who in the world can be saved?’ they asked. Jesus looked at them intently and said, ‘Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.’ Then Peter began to speak up. ‘We’ve given up everything to follow you,’ he said.

‘Yes,’ Jesus replied, ‘and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property - along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life. But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.

Schedule of Services

This schedule is correct at this time but may be subject to future alterations – please check on our website for the most up-to-date information.

All services start at 10am, unless marked differently on the table below

Please could you continue to book to attend services by contacting the Benefice Office on 01962 880 845 or office@downsbenefice.org.uk

Please would you also continue to wear masks until we are advised otherwise.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>10th Oct</i>			Holy Communion		Morning Prayer
<i>17th Oct</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer		8am - Holy Communion	
<i>24th Oct</i>			Morning Prayer	Harvest Festival	8am - Holy Communion
<i>27th Oct (Wed)</i>			Mid-Week Holy Communion		
<i>31st Oct</i>	<i>With Wherwell</i>	All Souls Service		6pm – All Souls Service	3pm – All Souls Service <i>PLUS</i> 6pm – Autumn Meditation Series – Thomas à Becket

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>2nd Nov (Tues)</i>			6pm – All Souls' Service		
<i>7th Nov</i>	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	4pm – Café Church (<i>in Church Room</i>)		
<i>11th Nov (Thurs)</i>			10.55am – Act of Remembrance <i>at the War Memorial</i>		
<i>14th Nov</i>	10.55am Remembrance Service	10.55am Remembrance Service <i>at the War Memorial</i>	<i>Service to be confirmed</i>	10.55am Remembrance Service	<i>With Chilbolton</i>
<i>21st Nov</i>		Morning Prayer		8am – Holy Communion	
<i>24th Nov (Wed)</i>			Mid-Week Holy Communion		
<i>28th Nov</i>			11.15am – Patronal Festival	Morning Prayer and Baptism	<i>Service to be confirmed</i>