

The Smestow Vale Team Ministry

St Benedict's and the Venerable Bede

Keeping in Touch with our Church Family

Sunday 22nd August 2021

Trinity 12

God of constant mercy
who sent your Son to save us:
remind us of your goodness
increase your grace within us,
that our thankfulness may grow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Paul encourages his readers when confronted by problems

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak

Ephesians 6:10-20

Some of Jesus followers have difficulty understanding his teaching, but Peter stands firm.

Jesus said to the crowd: 'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just

as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.' Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

John 6:56-69

A Reflection by Revd Sue Watson.

While the first verse of the first letter of James identifies a 'James' as its author, we do not know anything more about who he was. His audience is the "assembly," or, in the Greek, "synagogue" of Jesus followers dispersed around the Mediterranean basin in the 1st. century AD. James reads like a collection of sayings and

teachings for a developing community of Christ-followers hoping to distinguish themselves from the world by how they live together. And he doesn't hold back in identifying those ways of the world which are destructive. He speaks of being 'doers' of the word, not merely 'hearers'.

Famously, Martin Luther- who led the move towards Reformation in the 16th. century – deemed this letter an 'epistle of straw' because of its emphasis on works rather than reliance upon faith in God for salvation. But there can be a gap between knowledge (knowing in my mind ideas about God) and behaviour (living and acting in the way we believe God wants). It was a critical gap in James' religious community nearly two thousand years ago. And it is a critical gap now in many of our religious communities...and it's called 'hypocrisy'- 'Do as I say, not as I do'. Many a sermon is preached on being quick to listen and slow to speak, on being slow to anger. Many a sermon is preached on being doers, not just hearers, of the word. And one more verse that inspires many a sermon is this: caution of the unbridled tongue.

The important lesson James wants us to share, I believe is this: "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 (verse 27)." We listen, we hold our tongue, we temper our anger so that we can do what God wants us to do rather than walk in the ways of the world unthinkingly.

Revd Sue, with grateful acknowledgement to CT Sigmon

Prayer During the Week.

Sunday

Pray that we may live our lives in Jesus Christ.
(John 6: 56)

Monday

Pray for a safe exodus for those at risk in Afghanistan.

Tuesday Bartholomew

Pray that we may always seek the way of servanthood. (Luke 22: 26)

Wednesday

Pray for the people of Haiti, impoverished and devastated by the earthquake.

Thursday

Pray for this world as we face the consequences of global warming.

Friday

Pray for people fighting wildfires in so many countries.

Saturday

Pray for victims of Covid 19 across the world

Please remember those who have asked for our prayers

Lisa, Joy Waistell, Sarah Aldridge, Heather Gent, Joan, Geoff Truby, Delma Scriven, Maureen Boyce, Olly Cadman, Miriam Hackett and Barrie Taylor

Those who have died

Joan Hawthorn, William Churm, Dorothy Brewerton and Reginald Williams

Please send requests for prayers to the Parish Office.

This weeks Services

At St Benedict's

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

3.00pm Holy Baptism

4.00pm Holy Baptism

Tuesday 9.30am Holy Communion

At the Ven Bede

9.00am Parish Communion

Tuesday 10.30am Little Fish

Thursday 11.00am Holy Communion.

Don't forget to book your place with Hilary for the Sunday Services by 12noon on Saturday either by email hilmoore@gmail.com or telephone 892856.

Sunday Club

Sunday Club re-starts on the 5th September.

Pastoral Visitors

Richard and William will lead a course on an Introduction to Pastoral Visiting in September open to members of all our Team Churches. More details will be available soon. Please remember this initiative in your prayers.

First Aid Course

We are planning to hold a First Aid course one Saturday in September or October at the Guide Hut. Can you please let the Parish Office know if you would be interested in attending.