

**Christ Church News (30)**  
*by and for the Christ Church Family*  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2020



## Musings from the Manse

Dear Friends,

What are your memories of Harvest-time? As a child, my mum would provide me with a carefully prepared basket of fruit and vegetables to take to church for the Harvest Celebration service. As an adult, Harvest thanksgiving took on another significance because, on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1986, Colin and I were married in my home church, which was decorated for the following day's service of thanksgiving! Needless to say, we didn't need to provide any wedding decorations – it had been done for us!!

Sadly, this year, our Harvest cannot be celebrated in the way it's always been done, with the usual displays of fruit, vegetables, and donations of unperishable goods to local food banks and homeless charities.

So, in seeking to address this, the Elders and I discussed what we could do instead. It was agreed that we would simply invite donations, (cheque or cash), and split them between two charitable organisations. The first one is one which has been the recipient of Harvest donations in the past and will be very familiar to you all – Stonepillow – but the second is 'HEART' and may not be so well known. So here is some information for you:

*'HEART (Homeless Empowerment & Relational Transformation) is a partnership of local churches in Chichester, who want to play our part in helping some of the most vulnerable people in Chichester. We know that, together, we can be more effective than alone. Most of our volunteers are drawn from local churches. Currently there are 56 volunteers from 14 different churches serving on HEART teams .... It is about providing a safe place, where members of the homeless community can come, know that they can get a hot meal, and chat to someone with no pressure or risk of being judged – just a place where they can be loved, have their basic needs met and find a reprieve from their circumstances, even if only for a short time each day.'*

Whatever you are able to give to our Harvest Collection will be gratefully received and will enable the valuable work of both these two charities.

Yours in Christ,  
Helen  
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**Word for Today** Matthew 21: 23-32

## Reflection – Meditation of the chief priest

What a cheek! What a nerve!

To compare us with tax-collectors, prostitutes, and then to suggest that *we* come off worst – disgraceful! Doesn't he realise who we are: chief priests, elders, guardians of the law?

But he knows full well - that's the trouble - making it all the harder to swallow. He actually thinks he has the right to stand there and tell us what God thinks, as though *he's* an authority on such things, and *we're* not.

Never mind our years of study and hours of prayer,  
our knowledge of the commandments and our religious zeal –  
this nobody from Nazareth knows best, doesn't he!

I mean, come on, get real!

And as for his insinuation that we're long on words but short on action;  
that the dregs of this world understand what it means  
to respond to God in a way we've not even begun to grasp – well, honestly, what nonsense!

It's people like him who spell trouble, not just to us but to religion as a whole.

He's clever, I'll grant him that - playing the crowd like the Baptist before him,  
but he'll go the same way in time – let's face it, such would-be messiahs always do.

Let him weave his stories if he wants to – we'll have the last laugh in the end –  
for I tell you what, if he really knew the Father's will,  
he'd have to be like one of those characters in his parable: **God's son** –  
and not even he could mean that ... surely!

## Prayer

Father God,  
we like to think we've responded to you,  
that we've heard your call and committed ourselves to your service,  
but that doesn't necessarily mean anything in terms of here and now.

Help us to understand that having pledged our allegiance once more  
doesn't mean we are still faithful today,  
for even the best intentions can easily come to nothing.

Teach us to recommit our lives to you each day,  
examining our discipleship and seeking to ensure that it is as real now  
as when we first began our journey.

By your grace help us to finish what we started,  
and, if necessary, to start out again.

Amen.

*(Taken from 'A most amazing man' by Nick Fawcett)*



## Bookings for services

Booking is open for all 4 services in October – there are still places available for all of them  
email [chichristchurch@googlemail.com](mailto:chichristchurch@googlemail.com) or phone 01243 531594 and leave a message

**4 October** – please note this service now includes Communion (*see other attached file*)  
phone or email for a place **by 6 pm on Sunday, 27 September**

11 October, 18 October, 25 October – Family Worship – please book your place(s) by 6 pm the Sunday before