

Ángelos



13th September 2020

14th Sunday *after* Trinity

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www.walesbychurches.org  Walesby Churches

Dear Friends - One of the things about putting plans into place is the realisation that at this current time, they may need to change without much notice. Therefore it is unfortunate that owing the new restrictions now legally in place, we have had to cancel the planned Harvest Celebration at Claxby.

Making plans is always of course about putting down a suggested time line of events leading to a specific outcome for a reason. This is what planning is. What it is not, is sticking doggedly to a plan when all about you falls apart and the reason is not clear. To stick doggedly to a specific course of action even though we realise that we can never achieve the objective is sheer folly, often dangerous and ultimately it is catastrophic.

In these time of COVID19 we have had to reinvent what we do, time and time again as the guidance and rules have changed. Not to have done so would have left us unprepared, but worse than that we would have been coming out of the restrictions having learnt nothing, having tried nothing and then trying to re-engage with a world that has moved on. I would like to suggest its like trying to change from 2nd to 5th gear in a car, you just cant do it! The car with stall or stop and something might break.

To engage with the world we have to be running along side it at its pace and gently easing ourselves in—a smooth gear change that is not even noticed.

Jesus perfected this to to an art form. He wasn't in a car of course, he did it through stories and sketches—we call them parables. Stories containing messages at different levels for different audiences using the world of his day to illustrate that message. He knew a single strategy would not and could not work, so he did not try.

At this time there is a plan developing of how and when we increase the ministry within our churches. However even looking at October its not certain that we can realise the plan. To bring a church back into use rather than wait out the pandemic, we must amongst all the COVID regulation ask ourselves three simple questions. **Can** we do it? **Who** is doing it? *and finally* **Why** are we doing it?

Only when we are happy with answers to all three should we start to plan. So I ask all of you to please bare with us as we try for the right reasons to plan reopening's of churches. Knowing of course that nothing can be set in stone.

May the peace of the Lord be with you

Chris

Old Testament Reading

Genesis Chap 50 vv 15-21

50 Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them

Gospel Reading

Matthew Chap 18 vv 21-35

18 Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with

his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

A Reflection on the Readings

by *The Revd Canon David Atkinson*

I need to start with a bit of nitpicking. The first verse in the version of our Gospel which we are offered today is wrongly translated. In the original Greek Peter did not say 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive?' He said 'If my brother sins

against me...'

I suspect the translators were doing their best to avoid exclusive sexist language.

In the early church members of the church were sometimes referred to as brothers, so they simply assumed that was a suitable equivalent. But it creates an anachronism. Peter was still a disciple - not yet part of the post-Resurrection church. It also suggests that Peter's concern was with church discipline rather than personal relationships. In a sense it trivialises something of greater importance. Having got that off my chest, let me return to our Gospel story.

When Peter suggested he should forgive his brother seven times, he thought he was being generous and forgiving. So when Jesus said not seven times but seventy seven times, he was somewhat taken aback.

It was ridiculous. You might just as well say you should go on forgiving for ever. It seemed as if Jesus didn't take sin very seriously.

So Jesus had to tell him a story.

For me, the interesting question about that story is why the first slave who had been forgiven such an enormous debt couldn't forgive his fellow slave a comparatively trivial one.

It seems to me it was because the first slave didn't know he had been forgiven. He thought he'd just got away with it. He'd asked for time to pay off his debt and had promised to pay everything.

It was an impossible promise to keep. The debt was enormous.

But it seemed as if the king was gullible enough to accept this impossible promise.

So to his relief the slave got away with

it. He didn't realise - certainly not deep in his heart - that he had been forgiven. And since he did not know the power of forgiveness in his own life, he was unable to find it in his heart to forgive his fellow slave. He wasn't going to let him get away with it.

It is as we know and experience the power of God's forgiveness in our hearts and lives that we are set free to forgive others.

It was not Jesus who didn't take sin seriously enough. It was Peter who did not take forgiveness seriously enough.

Of course Jesus took sin seriously. It was sin that brought him to the cross.

But he also took forgiveness seriously.

Because God's forgiveness is freely given to us, we may not recognise how precious a gift it is.

But forgiveness is a costly business. And on the cross, Jesus, as one of our hymns puts it, 'paid the price of sin'.

So from the cross the forgiving love of God is poured out over us and overflows to those who have sinned against us.

Amen

Our Collect Prayer



Merciful God,
your Son came to save us
and bore our sins on the cross:
may we trust in your mercy
and know your love,
rejoicing in the righteousness
that is ours through Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Amen

Notices for the Benefices of the Walesby and Barkwith Groups:

Walesby Sunflower Competition.

Please could you measure your sunflowers and let me have the results by Friday 25th Sept. The winner of the magnificent trophy will be announced on Sunday 27th Sept in our harvest celebrations. Please measure from the soil to the top of the flower seed head.

Thank you **Revd Elaine**

Claxby Harvest Festival

Unfortunately with the new COVID rules in force the Claxby Harvest Celebration has had to be cancelled.

Fr Chris

Services in Church

Sunday 13th September

10am - Brookenby (HC)

5pm - Tealby (Evening Worship)

Thursday 17th September

10am - Tealby HC (**Cancelled**)

Sunday 20th September

9am - East Barkwith (HC)

10am - Brookenby (Morning Praise)

5pm - Tealby (HC)

Thursday 24th September

10am - Tealby (HC -1662 BCP)

Sunday 27th September

10am - Brookenby (Harvest HC)

5pm - Tealby (Harvest Praise)

Online Services

Morning Prayer

Mon– Sat (normally live at 8.30am)

Next Streamed Holy Communion

Sunday 13th September at 10am

Compline (Night Prayer)

Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday

Links available on the Website.

www.walesbychurches.org

Monday Evening we meet via ZOOM for a short act of Worship.

The ZOOM room opens 6.45pm for a short time chat with the service from 7—7.15pm.

Please join us. The link goes out the night before the service.

Private Prayer

All Saints, Tealby is now open for quiet private prayer:

10.30 'till midday each **Thursday**.

St Mary's, Walesby will be open for private prayer 1-3pm on **Sunday 20th September**

NB: Unless stated, **All** other churches remain closed at this time.

Annual Meetings.

The following Annual Meetings are now arranged and will be in the village church unless otherwise stated.

Thoresway 3pm Sun 27 Sept

Tealby 6pm Sun 27 Sept

Barkwith 7pm Tues 29 Sept
(at St Mary's, East Barkwith)

Brookenby 11am Sun 4 Oct

Claxby 1.45pm Thurs 8 Oct
(venue not yet confirmed)

Walesby 6pm Tues 13 Oct

North Willingham 6pm Sun 18 Oct
(at All Saints, Tealby)

Normanby 4pm Mon 19 Oct

Kirmond, Stainton, Croxby TBD

Notices for the next pew sheet

to Fr Chris by Wed 16th Sept
(Rectors normal day off is Saturday)