West Sussex Area Ministry, United Reformed Church (Billingshurst, Petworth and Pulborough)

Bulletin for Sunday

28th June 2020

Dear Friends

Good Morning! This Sunday Pulborough URC should have been celebrating their 175th Church Anniversary with (I had intended) a special service, followed by a lunch at The Crown Inn in Cootham. I trust that this is all simply postponed, but for now I can only hope that you will all have especially tasty lunches today, and wish Pulborough friends a very Happy Church Anniversary!

<u>Hymn</u>: Morning has broken (Rejoice & Sing 45)

<u>Prayer:</u> Generous God, we thank you for this and every morning!

For the sound of birdsong as we wake,

for the fresh morning light, and colours of summer flowers, for the smell of rain on warm gardens, and honeysuckle.

For the newness and the abundance of each dawn

we thank you.

We sense your generosity, your welcome and your love.

In response, we bring what we can - money, talents and time -

and ask you to bless them, and use them.

In Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Jeremiah 28: 5-9 and Matthew 10: 40-42

Reflection:

Prophets are supposed to be a connection between us and God - to bring us God's word, to remind us of God's priorities. Jeremiah was trying to do that, but suffering a backlash and persecution because his message was unpalatable. His rival, Hananiah, spoke much more attractive prophecies, which were welcomed for their positive outlook. Jeremiah could only warn that unless Hananiah's prophecies were true - truly of God - then they were worthless. The connection to God just wasn't there.

Jesus also taught about connections - about how the folk the disciples talked to were connected to them, the disciples; and through them to him, Jesus; and through Jesus to his Father. By welcoming and listening to the disciples, these people were welcoming and connecting to God.

It's interesting that we spend a lot of time in the churches thinking about how to welcome people to come and worship with us; and yet in this reading Jesus isn't talking about us welcoming them, but about them - those outside the church - welcoming us. Welcoming us because in us and through us - in the things we say and do - they perceive something of God and the message of God's love, which we in turn have heard through Christ. We form links in the chain, by passing on the true message of the gospel.

May God help us to do so. Amen.

<u>Hymn</u>: Brother, sister, let me serve you (R&S 474)

<u>Prayer:</u> God of compassion

We hold before you our brothers and sisters -

those we grew up with;

those we share a church family with;

and those of your children we have never met. Bless those we have seen on the news this week

and all those whose need has moved us to real concern. Show us what we can do to help. In Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn: Christ is the world's light (R&S 600)

May we love with the love of Jesus, and may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us and with all those we love this week and every week. Amen

If I were leading worship at Pulborough, where the projector and screen make it easy to do, I would probably have included in this service the hymn, 'Let us build a house where love can dwell'.

Remember there will be an evening service on Zoom at six o'clock tonight; information from Karen or me.

Please let me know of any news or prayer requests to be shared. Every blessing for the week ahead.

Anne Lewitt