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

Bulletin for Sunday 15th November 2020

Good morning to you all. As we find ourselves restricted again for a few weeks, I hope we can think of, and pray for, those in the health service for whom this is an extremely tiring and stressful time; and those who are struggling with their own health, whether physical or mental. But also, let's not miss the beauty of the autumn colours and the joy that comes from really entering into the sights, sounds, and smells of each new season!

Hymn: For the beauty of the earth (R&S 41)

Prayer: Gracious God, you have given us so much:

in the natural world and the people around us, and also within us - our gifts, our talents, ourselves. Forgive us when we don't see your generosity because your gifts were not what we looked for; and help us to understand how rich our lives are with you, and in your world. We ask your blessing on everything we do, and everything we bring to you or give in your service, today and every day.

Bless us with your presence:

Speak... and help us to hear... In Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Reading: Matthew chapter 25: verses 14-30

<u>Reflection</u>: Each of us has been given talents - particular abilities. Some we are born with, and they shape our personalities and our lives; others seem to be given to us later, to meet the changing circumstances we find ourselves in.

What we do with them - whether, indeed, we even recognise them - is up to us. Of course we may have help from parents, teachers, or others around us, especially if our gifts are widely recognised by society, such as an aptitude for music or sport. But what about gifts like empathy, encouragement, or humour? They may not be spotted by careers advisors, yet they contribute so much to our community.

Our talents are gifts from God, and therefore hugely precious - all of them. We must encourage and enable each other to recognise and use our gifts for the good of all.

Hymn: Lord, speak to me, that I may speak (R&S 613)

Prayer: Compassionate God,

we hold before you the pain and need of so many,

remembering that as well as great beauty and much love

this world also holds hunger and thirst, sadness and grief, illness and despair......

We pray for our communities, our families and our friends; and we pray too for those unknown to us, but known to you. You have given us talents and opportunities - may we use them as you intend, in the service of all, and wherever you send us. In Jesus' name, Amen

Hymn: Will you come and follow me (R&S 558)

Blessing: God has given us so much -

Let's use our gifts so that we, and all around us,

can live life to the full;

and now may the blessing of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

be with us and with all those we love

today and always. Amen

There will be an evening service - Sunday at Six - on Zoom at 6pm every Sunday. All welcome, online or using a landline phone, contact me if you need details.

The After Church Coffee Zooms are still taking place at 11.30 every Sunday morning, it would be lovely to welcome anyone who would like to join in. More details from me if you need them. Various social events are now being held on Zoom, and there is a suggestion that we could start an online discussion or Bible Study group, similar to the regular Monday evening groups at Pulborough in the past. The nature of the group and what is discussed or studied is all up for grabs at the moment, so if you have any ideas or would be interested in joining, have a word with me!

Pulborough members - the Annual Church Meeting will be held on Zoom next Sunday, 22nd November, at 12 noon. Reports and papers have all been sent out - if you haven't received them please contact Gerald.

Anne Lewitt