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

## Bulletin for Sunday 22nd November 2020

Good morning, and I hope this finds you all well. Can I draw your attention to a few notices at the end of this Bulletin, please, and also ask that as we worship this morning we hold each other in prayer, and especially pray for Revd Linda Huggett and her family.

<u>Hymn</u>: O worship the King, all-glorious above (R&S 47)

Prayer: God our creator, you fill us with awe:

when we think of you... when we consider your creation...

when we remember what you have given us.....

And when we understand how you have loved and cared for us

we want that love to overflow in our care for others...

We ask your blessing on everything we do,

and everything we bring to you or give in your service,

today and every day. In Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Psalm 95: 1-7a and Matthew chapter 25: verses 31-46

Reflection: We so often divide people into different groups: by age or gender; by nationality or by politics; by faith or lack of it...

But Jesus put the dividing line between those who noticed need and responded with compassion and generosity, and the rest who were oblivious, or even uncaring.

On Friday the URC's Mission Council passed (unanimously) an emergency resolution, expressing concern that the government is considering abandoning Britain's long-standing commitment to spend 0.7% of GDP on international development. We believe that a commitment to the poorest in the world is not an optional extra for the good times, but at the heart of our responsibilities, especially in the context of a global pandemic and a climate emergency. It is already a percentage of what our economy produces, so in difficult times the total given will go down. To deliberately reduce it further would be a failure in our connection to, and compassion for, the most vulnerable and needy, and we are all urged to communicate this to our MPs.

There are, sadly, hungry people in great need both close to home and far away. Jesus did not limit his compassion and care - where would we be if he had? Rather he enjoined us to care for even 'the least of these who are members of my family'.

May we see the world as Christ sees it, and act as he would do... Amen

Hymn: Brother, sister, let me serve you (R&S 474)

Prayer: God of compassion and of loving action,

we hold before you the many of your children who are: hungry... thirsty... lonely... needy... sick... or imprisoned, either by bars or by circumstances... And we pray for the ability, the energy, and the will to help wherever and whenever we can, as Jesus taught. We pray for our communities, our families and our friends; and for all seeking to do your will in the world today. In Jesus' name we ask all our prayers, Amen

Hymn: The kingdom of God (R&S 200)

Blessing: May God's kingdom come on earth,

bringing both justice and joy to all; and may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

be with us and with all those we love

today and always. Amen

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There will be an evening service - Sunday at Six - on Zoom at 6pm this and every Sunday. All welcome, online or using a landline phone, contact me for 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.

For Pulborough members - the Annual Church Meeting will be held on Zoom this Sunday, 22nd November, at 12 noon - after we have had time for a quick coffee and chat! Reports and papers have all been sent out - if you haven't received them please contact Gerald.

The discussion group which meets at Pulborough on Monday evenings - and welcomes friends from other churches very warmly - is intending to get together on Zoom for the four Monday evenings during Advent. First meeting on Monday 30th November, starting at 7pm (and finishing by 8.30). We'll be using a new York Course entitled 'Living in hope', and would love you to join us. Contact Gerald or Anne for the link you need to join.

Anne Lewitt