

**Bulletin for Sunday**

**18th October 2020**

Good Morning! Whether you are able to be in church on Sunday morning, or not; whether you are able to attend the evening online Zoom worship, or not; ALL are welcome to share in this short act of worship, and to pray with and for each other.

Hymn: Give to our God immortal praise (R&S 94)

Prayer: Loving God, as we pause to worship you,  
we thank you for all that you have given us,  
and for your reassuring presence with us.  
We hold before you our communities and congregations,  
asking for your blessing on them this week.  
Help us to hear your call to us, as individuals and as churches,  
as we learn again how to be your people in this place and time.  
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

Reading: Matthew chapter 22: verses 15-22

Reflection: They talked of sincerity and truth, but this wasn't an honest question. They wanted to trap Jesus - to get him into serious trouble: either with the Romans, if he said that people shouldn't pay taxes; or with the people if he said that they should! There were political and religious issues at stake here - it was all very clever...

But taxes, whether paid or not, weren't Jesus' priority. So he didn't need to fall into their trap, or indeed to come up with a direct answer to the question. Instead he addressed his own priority, which was God's Kingdom, God's rule - the vital importance of giving priority to God, serving God, and above all seeking to do God's will.

It's not that there is necessarily anything wrong with politics or religion. Or, indeed, with clever philosophical questions. But there is something wrong with trying to catch people out, with the intention of doing them harm; something very wrong with aiming to destroy rather than to build up; and something dangerously wrong with ploughing ahead with our own agendas without asking which things are the emperor's and which are God's. Because the things of God - love of God and of our neighbour - matter very much indeed.

Hymn: Be thou my vision (R&S 489)

Prayer: Compassionate God, we pray for the world:  
for those in need of justice...  
for those in need of peace and security...  
for those in need of healing; and care; and hope...  
We pray that the day may soon come  
when nobody will be homeless, or go hungry,  
and nobody will live in loneliness or fear;  
when every person, every creature, every part of your creation  
will be able to live fully as you intended.  
May your kingdom come. In Jesus' name, Amen

Hymn: Jesus shall reign where'er the sun (R&S 269)

May the values of God's kingdom be our values;  
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

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I now have further details of Michael Davies' funeral on October 19th - please contact me if you would like them; but be aware that we are asked not to try to watch live, so that the family can freely access the live feed. It will be possible for others to watch later.

Please remember the importance of wearing masks, using hand sanitiser, and remaining socially distanced, especially before and after worship. Let's keep each other safe.

Pulborough Elders Meeting decided not to re-commence services of Holy Communion for now, while it is not possible for everyone to be present or to share in Communion as we normally do. Please speak to me or any of the Elders if you are concerned about this.

There will be an evening service - Sunday at Six - on Zoom at 6pm on Sunday. This week, Moses asks to actually see God... All welcome, online or using a landline phone, contact me if you need details.

Anne Lewitt