

Connecting faith and daily life

# You're fired

Julian Smith *reflects on* Luke 16:1-13

**T**owards the end of each episode of the BBC television series, *The Apprentice*, Alan Sugar points his finger at one of the candidates and tells him or her in no uncertain terms: "You're fired!" Crestfallen, the losing candidate must wheel his or her suitcase out to a waiting taxi and leave the process they've worked so hard to be part of.

The manager in today's Gospel reading is also told in no uncertain terms that he's fired. But in contrast to the hopeful apprentices from the TV series, he is clearly a crook who's been found out. Perhaps his punishment isn't severe enough, because it allows him to attempt to secure his future by further fleecing his master. When his dismissal is made public he'll be able to remind the debtors what he did for them, and they will be in his debt.

Contrary to what we might expect, however, when the master discovers what he's done he commends the manager for his worldly wisdom. And there's the problem. To our ears, Jesus is commending wrongdoing, although perhaps that's not how his first hearers heard things.

Like the parables of the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8) and the neighbour looking for bread (Luke 11:5-13), this parable contrasts earthly reality with heavenly possibility. If this is how the earthly master treats the crooked manager, how much more understanding will our heavenly Father be of us, when we turn to him in faith and trust? 🙏

Lord Jesus, you challenge our comfortable certainties and illusions with the stories you tell. Help me to live in the upside down world of your kingdom, come on earth as in heaven, and so deepen my faith and trust. Amen.

## How to keep faith in a wobbling world

### Part 3 – embrace community

by Caroline Hodgson

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews (10:24-25) encourages their readers to: "consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together". The early Church is an extraordinary example of how a community of people can pull together to strengthen and encourage one another, even in the most adverse circumstances. Of course there was in-fighting – you can hear Paul's desperation when he's trying to convince warring factions to put their

differences behind them. But his overarching message is a clarion call for peace, unity and love, prioritising fellowship over personal or cultural divisions.

So we can give thanks that we are not persecuted for our faith, or forced to worship in secret, as the members of the early Church often were. Then maybe, in our own, imperfect communities, we can take comfort and even inspiration from the fact that things don't always go smoothly. And perhaps we can also forgive ourselves a little for our divisions, and commit to moving forwards together in faith. 🙏

## Walking with Rosie

### Where the heart is

by Gillian Cooper

Rosie and I take a trip back to my roots in Lincolnshire, the place of wide skies and sandy beaches. Rosie chases her ball on the firm sand and bravely skips in and out of the water. And I find myself talking to people I don't know, more often and more freely than I do at "home" in the West Country. I hear the accent in my voice becoming more obvious.

This is where I was born, and my heart is here.

What signs are there that I am also a child of heaven? When I speak to people, is there something of God in what I say? Is my heart in heaven as it is in Lincolnshire? Getting to Lincolnshire involves the effort of a five-hour drive. Living as a child of God in my eternal home requires an even greater effort, one I need continually to make. 🙏

“Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.”

1 Samuel 25:6

## **Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September**

Good morning and welcome to our Morning Worship which is being led by Miss Liz Ward. The stewards today are John Cornish and Jean Peck. After the service, please join us in the hall for refreshments.

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### **Dates for your diary:**

Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> September	10.45 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Reverend Dr Mark Kimber
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	10.45 am	<b>Harvest Festival Service</b> led by Reverend Keith Beckingham, followed by lunch in the hall
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> October	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Reverend Peter McNeill
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Barrie Knight
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October	10.45 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Reverend Dr Mark Kimber
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mrs Diana Middleditch
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> November	10.45 am	Remembrance Sunday: Morning Worship led by Mrs Joyce Wild
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Mark Priestley
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Mr Brian Skelley
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> November	10.45 am	First Advent: Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Dr Mark Kimber

**Colehill Methodist: Every Monday**, 11.00 am to 12.00 noon(ish), Bible Study, coffee, prayers and plenty of chat. All welcome.

**Circuit prayers:** First Saturday of every month at 8.30 am at Holtwood Methodist Church.

**Bible in a year:** 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September: Ecclesiastes 6 - Isaiah 4 and 2 Corinthians 13 – Galatians 6

**Meet Reverend Dr Mark Kimber:** Most Fridays Mark will be available in the Okeford Room from 10.00 am to 11.00 am for anyone who wishes to have a chat with him. However, on the third Friday of each month there will be a session entitled '**Meeting with Mark**' to which you are cordially invited.

**Harvest:** Our Harvest service takes place on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October and this is followed by our Harvest Lunch. The sign-up sheet for the lunch can be found in the Narthex. Please make sure you add your name to the list by Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September. There will be no charge for the meal but donations will be greatly appreciated.

Leading up to Harvest we will continue to collect items for the food bank but we will hold on to these to help decorate the church. All donations will be gratefully received. Please do check the Link for items that are needed.

In preparation for our Harvest service and meal, if you would like to help can we meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> October at 10.00 am. If you have any conkers or autumn foliage you wish to bring along that would be excellent.

*Joyce Wild*

**Church Council – Revised date:** Our Church Council meeting will now be held on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November** at 2.30 pm in the Okeford Room. All are invited to attend, although only Church Council members will be entitled to vote. For those who submit written reports, I will be asking for the reports to be with me by **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October** (sorry for the incorrect date in last week's Link).

*Margaret Cornish*

**Pastoral List:** I am about to update this year's Pastoral List. Please could you let me know if any of your details have changed, eg telephone numbers.

*Joyce Wild*

**Church Social – French Afternoon:** Yesterday, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September, saw the second in a series of events organised by our "Friends and Neighbours" group. Our first event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August was a Speed Games afternoon (a huge success), and our second event yesterday was a French themed afternoon (another huge success). For our French afternoon we utilised a boudrome (made for a similar event held before lockdown and stored ready for action in the church attic) with a knock-out game of boules, and the French afternoon was completed with delicious French food and French quizzes. A total of eighteen took part in the boules competition, which was won by Pat, one of our friends from Lunch Club.

All who took part said that they had thoroughly enjoyed the event and were looking forward to the third and final event of this year. This will be a curry lunch (see below for further details) which will be held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November at 12.30 pm. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Narthex for anyone who would like to join us but a limit will have to be set so sign up early to avoid disappointment.

**Church Social – Curry Lunch:** You are invited to come and join with us on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November for our final 2025 Church Social afternoon for a warming curry lunch. Lunch will be followed by some fun games and quizzes. We will be offering two types of curry: a milder chicken curry and a warmer beef curry. Please indicate on the form in the Narthex which curry you would prefer as this will help us with our catering. Also, please indicate any dietary requirements and specific allergies. There will be a charge of £3 towards the cost of the lunch. **As places are limited, please book your place no later than Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October.**

**Woodlands Methodist:** Harvest Supper, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30 pm, £5 each. Details on poster in hall.

**Woodlands Methodist:** Harvest Service, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 6.00 pm. Further details on poster in hall.

**Wimborne Methodist:** Concert of Musical Memories at Wimborne Methodist on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30 pm. Further details on poster in hall.

**Wimborne Methodist:** Charity concert by Bourne2Sing, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30 pm in aid of future Pillars Zambia. Further details on poster in hall.

**Blandford Foodbank is urgently** in need of (updated 6.9.25) – Cereal, Tea bags 40, Coffee, Tinned fish, Tinned fruit, Tinned meat, Tinned soup, Tinned rice pudding. Other donations of food or household goods are also welcomed. For those able to support the Foodbank with items, a box has been placed in the Narthex as a collection point.

*John Cornish*

**Prayer:** Please can we remember to uphold in prayer those members of our congregation we know are ill or suffering in some way.

If you know of anyone who would like prayer and be mentioned by name in The Link, please let me know (having obtained their permission first to mention them by name).

**Minister:** Reverend Dr Mark Kimber

Enquiries via Lead Steward, John Cornish, on 07799 516 735

**Pastoral Support:** Joyce Wild: Tel: 01258 454091