

Dear Church Family, for the week of February 17th

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday morning worship is at 10:00 a.m.

Pastoral Concerns: Pastor Jeff Long-Middleton 978-273-6399

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Emergency Assistance: Care Coordinator Carole Taylor 802-222-4590

Pastor Jeff says: Okay. You know the drill. The first thing to do is read Jeremiah 17:5-10. Done? Read on: I found the reading overly optimistic. Jeremiah appears to be painting a very rosy picture of how God's relationship with humanity rewards goodness and has adverse consequences for misconduct. Is this how the world I live in works?

I suppose at some level the picture painted by Jeremiah is spot on. I know people are best served when devotion to God is the measure of all that follows. Too often we seek instant gratification instead of a life lived in gratitude. The result is often a life skewed by misdirection – by making God an afterthought rather than a forethought. Gandhi warns us of Seven Deadly Social Sins:

Politics without principle

Wealth without work

Commerce without morality

Pleasure without conscience

Education without character

Science without humanity

Worship without sacrifice.

Gandhi and Jeremiah would have been kindred spirits.

So, what does all this get us? How are we to find a pathway to understanding the optimism of Jeremiah with our lived reality? That will be our task this Sunday.

Organist John Atwood : The prelude by Johan Ludwig Krebs features a "praeambulum" i.e. a precursor to the German hymn, "Jesus my Joy" followed by a choral prelude on that hymn. Krebs was considered as Bach's most accomplished student; even by J. S. Bach. Bach once said of Krebs, "die Bestem Krebs im Bach" (quoted from memory). There is a pun on family names here. "Krebs" is German for crab while "Bach" is German for brook. So Johan Krebs was "the best crab in the brook". We usually think of crabs associated with the sea, but at least in the tropics there are, indeed, crabs inhabiting fresh water brooks! But are there fresh water crabs in Europe?

Lectionary readings for this coming week: (Year C) February 17-23

Jeremiah 17:5-10 (trust in the Lord, not earthly institutions)

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 (Christ HAS been raised from the dead)

Luke 6:17-26 (blessings ... and woes)

Psalm 1

theme hymn: *O for a World*

Pastor Jeff's office hours

Sunday afternoons and all day Mondays

978-273-6399 is his recommended number to use at any time;

calls to 802-222-4610 are only answered when he is in the parsonage, but you may leave a message

Volunteers are needed to host the Fellowship Time following the worship service. The sign-up sheet is displayed in the vestry. Please find the Sunday(s) you will help!