

From the Chaplain...

Whatever our personal feelings about the outcome, we may be grateful that the recent General Election proceeded as intended, with an orderly transfer of power from one government to another. In a time of increasing polarization, it appears that such a transition can no longer be taken for granted. Across the West, there is both widespread disillusionment with political leaders, as well as signs of growing extremism. As Christians, we are duty-bound to encourage a just and healthy social order, but it is not always obvious how, as individuals, we can hope to make a real difference. In our Old Testament reading this Sunday (Amos 7. 7-15), we are reminded that even the most modest and unassuming among us have something important to contribute. Amos, who describes himself as 'a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees', feels compelled to challenge the greed, corruption, and false piety pervasive among the elites of Israel. His critique causes unease among the royal officials, and one of them, Amaziah, demands that he prophesy elsewhere. Amos, however, rejects the label of 'prophet', which in this context implies that he is a professional holy man of sorts, rather than simply a poor person with a zeal for righteousness. He is not playing a political game; he is reminding the powerful that God is watching them. As the Church, we could do worse than to remind our leaders that there is still a 'plumb line' of what is right (and wrong) in the world, and no amount of manipulation changes this fact. To be complacent about the dangers becomes a kind of endorsement. But we must also accept that like Amos, we may pay a price for speaking out.

This Sunday, we will be joined by the Hi-Lo Singers as our guest choir at the I I am Choral Eucharist. Please do all you can to make them welcome at the Chapel. The Assistant Chaplain, Faith Wakeling, will preach at the service.

Yours faithfully,
Robert

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