

**All Saints Church, Kempston
St James's Church, Biddenham**

Virtual Church News

30th January 2022

**4th Sunday of Epiphany
Presentation of Christ in the Temple
Candlemas
(5th Sunday)**



Welcome to Virtual Church News. Hard copies will be circulated to those without access to email/social media. If you know of anyone without email who you think would benefit from a hard copy, please call Jacqui on 0778 6886 710 or email her at stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Our Normal Sunday Services

1st Sunday of the month

- 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at All Saints
9.30am Joint All Age Service (followed by said Holy Communion) at St James's

2nd Sunday of the month

- 9.30am Morning Worship at St James's
10.00am Holy Communion Service at All Saints
6.00pm Service of Evening Prayer at St James's

3rd Sunday of the month

- 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at All Saints*
9.30am Holy Communion Service at St James's
7.00pm Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship

4th Sunday of the month

- 9.30am Morning Worship at St James's
10.00am Holy Communion Service at All Saints

5th Sunday of the month (when there is one)

- 9.30am Service at St James's
6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James's

We also hold online services during the week via Zoom at 9.00am on Monday and 6.00pm on Wednesday. To join these Zoom services, simply go to Zoom and enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.

We hope you will join us at our services as we explore a mixture of both traditional and new ways of worship.

Revive - 3rd Sundays

A short act of worship over a coffee, then unfolding the scriptures together. 7.00pm in St James's Church Barn. Everyone invited.



St James's
Church
Biddenham

30th
January
6pm

CHORAL EVENSONG

Everyone
Welcome!

No booking required

Join us for our quarterly Choral Evensong service with choir.

Following the Book of Common Prayer, this service, often only held in larger churches and cathedrals, has something for everyone!

Covid Restrictions - Face Coverings

As Covid restrictions have changed again this week, it is no longer mandatory for face coverings to be worn in our churches. It is therefore your personal decision whether or not to wear a face covering.



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Message from Rev Eric Lomax

A young woman and an elderly man. Two separate stories in Luke's Gospel. One in the 2nd chapter of the Gospel, and the other in the 10th, both hint at the same thing; the importance of waiting and trusting. God has a plan for you, he has spoken that plan out loud, and his word will not return to him unfulfilled.

In Luke chapter 10, Jesus is at the house of Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus (John 11). They await a heavenly banquet promised by God, and that is illustrated simply, in the burden of domestic chores. Martha buzzes round getting things ready, mumbling under her breath that Mary is doing nothing, but rather sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to his word. Mary always subtly symbolises the relationship between Jesus and the Church, painted as a husband and his bride. Mary's relationship is often portrayed almost with that level of intimacy (see how she mops and anoints his feet with her hair in John 1 v2). In the end, Martha explodes and complains at how useless Mary is being. Jesus answers by affirming Mary's willingness to listen and wait.

First century Israelites, and equally many of the early Christians, would force God's hand with action points and plans, but Jesus calls for quiet faith in the face of adversity (see the story of the calming of the storm, when the disciples in the boat were more in danger of compounding the crisis than solving it).

There is a well know prayer it serves us well to recall; 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the Wisdom to know the difference.'

In Luke 2, we encounter a community that is waiting for liberation. They have the story of a God who sets them free written into their National epic, the Exodus, and they believed that God would set them free again through a new King, the Messiah (Greek, Christ), which means 'The anointed one.'

It is hard to trust when so many times you feel abandoned or let down. Equally it is easy to forget what freedom means if it is something you have never tasted or experienced. There was an old man, who when he was still young had heard the promise of God.

Let us pray...

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day
presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen



Reading for the Week

Luke 2.22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,

according to your word;

for my eyes have seen your salvation,

which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

Equally, he had seen suffering, and experienced tyranny. The thing about this old man, Simeon, was that he still trusted and hoped. The scent of God's promise had stayed fixed to the ground on which he had walked, like Mary's perfume later clung to the feet of Jesus.

One day two careworn parents arrived at the Temple in Jerusalem, and with them they brought a child. Simeon held the child and could smell again the perfume of God's word, the covenant that had rested on the heads of God's people. Simeon held the child in his old age, and he just knew; 'Now I can go in peace,' the old man said, 'your word has been fulfilled.'

Those of you who are alone, those who are fearful, those of you who feel lost and abandoned, those of you who are unhappy, and those who feel that all is lost; whoever you are, whatever your background, and whatever you have done, come and taste what the Lord has done for you. You are not abandoned, you are not forgotten, God has promised you, whether you were listening or not, and he is faithful to those promises.

God bless,

Eric

All Age Reading

1 Corinthians 13

I may speak in different languages of men or even angels. But if I do not have love, then I am only a noisy bell or a ringing cymbal. ²I may have the gift of prophecy; I may understand all the secret things of God and all knowledge; and I may have faith so great that I can move mountains. But even with all these things, if I do not have love, then I am nothing. ³I may give everything I have to feed the poor. And I may even give my body as an offering to be burned. But I gain nothing by doing these things if I do not have love.

⁴Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. ⁵Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not become angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. ⁶Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices over the truth. ⁷Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always continues strong.

⁸Love never ends. There are gifts of prophecy, but they will be ended. There are gifts of speaking in different languages, but those gifts will end. There is the gift of knowledge, but it will be ended. ⁹These things will end, because this knowledge and these prophecies we have are not complete. ¹⁰But when perfection comes, the things that are not complete will end. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child; I made plans like a child. When I became a man, I stopped those childish ways. ¹²It is the same with us. Now we see as if we are looking into a dark mirror. But at that time, in the future, we shall see clearly. Now I know only a part. But at that time I will know fully, as God has known me. ¹³So these three things continue forever: faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love.

Reading taken from International Children's Bible courtesy of Bible Gateway

All Saints' Table Top Sale

The next All Saints Church 'Missions Table Top Sale' will be on Sunday 13 February. All donations of home grown and home made produce would be welcome. The cash proceeds from the sale of the produce will go to the PCC's chosen charities.



Prayer Group

Our joint online prayer group will now be meeting at 8pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month (note change of day). If you would like to join us in praying for our churches, communities and beyond, you will be made very welcome. For further details, or to request prayers, email stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com



The All Age Bit

This week we continue to look at 1 Corinthians. You may even know this passage, or you may remember having heard it before, as it is a very well known bit of the Bible.

The passage is all about 'love'. But, what do you think love is? Love is not just something romantic, it is about caring for others and looking after them. We can show love in many different ways through our words, actions and service. We very often love different people in different ways. Some people are easy to love and others not so easy. Who do you find it easiest to love? Now read the passage and think about how God loves us.

Activities

Pass the love: play a game of pass the parcel with a soft ball or cuddly toy. However, in this game we are trying to pass on the love so if you are left with the ball/toy when the music stops you are out of the game - it is important for us to pass on God's love and not keep it to ourselves!

Love languages: There are many different ways to show and share love with one another. Why not try out each of these love sharing activities and see which you prefer to give and which you like to receive:

- Quality time - spend some quality time together as a family, go for a walk, watch a movie, or play a board game.
- Encouraging words - write a letter or make a card with an encouraging message for each other or for somebody you want to send some love to.
- Physical touch - play a game of musical hugs! Put on some music and dance around. When the music stops everybody must give another player a hug.
- Acts of service - think of an act of kindness and service you can perform as a family for a neighbour, friend or one another. Perhaps, helping to load the dishwasher, offering to help with the shopping, or cooking a meal.
- Gifts - make a gift to share with somebody else, perhaps you could bake some biscuits or a cake to share or look through old clothes, books and toys to see if there is something you could pass on to somebody else as a gift, or to a charity shop.

Song

God loves me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajMfS9PNXoc>

Prayer

Father God, send us out this week to practise what we have learned about your love, to grow in our love for you, to know how much you love us, and to share your love with those around us. Amen

Resources from Roots and Journey Together (www.tath.co.uk)

Suggested Music

Song of Simeon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31eqMSvhAFk>

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpkEeXWtWg0>

Purify my heart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKfuZVWr-8I>

Simeon's Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHP-mMZVwUo>

Worship Wednesdays with Lou Fellingham
Approx 40 minutes of worship music live every
Wednesday on Youtube!

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9CxmtiIb7a5gaqNO)

[list=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9CxmtiIb7a5gaqNO](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9CxmtiIb7a5gaqNO)



Each month Bedford Quakers support a chosen charity.

For February 2022 we are helping students of Mchinji Children's Home, also known as "Home of Hope" - a large residential school, home to over 600 of Malawi's most vulnerable children and young people.

By contributing financially, we will help "unlock university" for students who have the grades but not the means to attend.



All proceeds will be presented to and administered by Bedford-based charity Malawi Orphan Fund.

Registered UK Charity 1110640.

lquakers.org.uk/bedford
malawiorphanfund.uk
ccbedford.org

Front page header photo by [Rod Long](#) on [Unsplash](#)

In association with Bedford Quakers & Malawi Orphan Fund

"Unlock Uni"

Alex Mnatzaganian & friends present

A concert in aid of disadvantaged young people in Malawi



3 - 4.30pm, Sunday 27th Feb 2022

Christ Church, 140 Dudley St
Bedford MK40 3SX
Donations welcome



Imagine this...

You've got the grades, you've got the tuition loan,
but you don't have a family.

You can't afford a laptop, books, food.

So, no uni for you?

Learn more and donate at unlockuni.org

Bedford Foodbank

Please continue to support this valuable charity and help them prevent hunger in our community.

Food urgently needed includes: Milk (Longlife), Fruit Juice (Longlife), Cup-a-Soup, Tinned Potatoes (large), Coffee (100g), Teabags (40/80), Hotdogs (Jumbo), Tinned meat in sauce (e.g. curry, chilli), Shower gel, Sponge Puddings.

www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk

