

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

Virtual Church News

**6th February 2022
4th Sunday before Lent
(1st 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
6.00pm 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.

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Reading for the Week

Luke 5.1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

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.



Message from Rev Eric Lomax

Simon knew everything. As an Israelite he believed that his direct ancestor had eaten from the tree of knowledge in Eden. Not only this, but he was a son of the commandments (Bah Mitzvah). This means that he knew the law, and it was his obligation to follow every aspect of the commandments including being circumcised and not eating unclean Nimas such as pig. This also meant that unlike the rest of the world, he was one of a group of people who, living on that side of the lake, were chosen to be God's special people.

One thing that Simon had never understood was the extent of God's love. Equally, he had never heard God's promise to his founding father, Abraham, which said that God wanted to bless all (not just some) of humanity, and that the Jewish people would be an instrument of this love and grace. God wanted to bless everybody, not just the people of Israel. If Simon had read this properly he would have gone some way to understand the full height, depth, width and length of God's love.

Simon had much to learn, and this simple three part narrative shows us what that means. Of course Simon, the fisherman, knew everything about fishing too. Firstly, Jesus was preaching by the side of the river, to the local Jewish community. Things were fine. Secondly, Jesus climbed into Simon's boat and preached close to the shore to the same people. To Simon this was a novel idea, and Simon was fine about this. Thirdly, and finally, Jesus asked Peter to go out into the deepest, scariest part of the lake and let down his nets there. Simon did not want to do that because his experience told him that this would be a waste of time. Simon, the expert, know-it-all, fisherman took this opportunity to protest. They would achieve nothing in the centre of the lake. Simon had been fishing there all night, and it had achieved nothing.

It is important to say that water had deep significance in the Jewish, landlocked consciousness. The sea was a place of chaos and disorder to the landlocked Hebrews. It was also deeply connected to the Hebrew understanding of being outside the sphere of God's order. Just like the story in which Jesus calmed the storm, a demonstration of power and authority in the deep waters of chaos was not only God-like but far deeper than even that.

Let us pray...

Lord of the hosts of heaven,
our salvation and our strength,
without you we are lost:
guard us from all that harms or hurts
and raise us when we fall;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



A simple miracle, beyond Simon's experience, the nets were filled with fish, but wow, here was the power of God's creation and a new understanding of redemption beyond the walls and limits of traditional Hebrew understanding. No chaos, no disorder, no human being, no domain, and no darkness was beyond God's love in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:38-39). In Jesus, this Jewish fisherman had encountered the power of his God in Jesus, in a way that he had never expected.

Simon, the fisherman who knew everything, suddenly knew that he was absolutely overshadowed by the power and love of God. He did something that you will seldom find a good post-modern, know-it-all Christian do. He fell to his knees, and said; 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!'

The thing he did not expect was that Jesus' love and power is so great that he would never reject or give up anyone for lost, either Jew or gentile, male nor female, slave nor free (Galatians 3:28) Simon Peter, for all your imperfections, go out into the deep, dark waters of this world, and fish for the lost, rejected people. I love you. Follow me.

God bless,
Eric

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.



Roast Lunch - Sunday 5 March



Roast Lunch in St James's Church Barn at 1.00pm. Tickets £15.00 each. Bring your own drink. Raffle. Numbers are limited.

Please sign the list at the back of the church or contact Sue Squire.

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

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

Suggested Music

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzM9P_Gqw-s

Immortal, invisible

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vvAeMFLUiQ>

My God, how wonderful thou art

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUOWT1AMyM&t=15s>

Holy Overshadowing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8irziaoRPF1>

A prayer of St Richard of Chichester

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gf9m90pqk-g>

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=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9Cxmtilb7a5gaqNO)

[list=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9Cxmtilb7a5gaqNO](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnnAk0rdWoOJVA1tO9Cxmtilb7a5gaqNO)

The All Age Bit

This week we are looking at a passage from the Gospel of Luke - Chapter 5, verses 1-11. You can find this on the front page. In this reading Jesus called his disciples to follow him and to be fishers of men. You may actually remember this story as we looked at it a few months ago - but that time we were looking at the version in Mark, chapter 1. Why not have a look at that version and compare the two!

We too can follow Jesus and share the Good News of His love with others. What do you think Jesus meant by being 'fishers of men'? He was inviting his disciples to help to draw new people into relationships with Him. Who do you think God might want you to connect with this week, sharing His love and praying for them to know Him?

It can be a little bit like learning a dance routine or following an exercise routine from a video online. In the video there are people to copy - they will have started out like us, learning the moves, but because they have practiced and learned from others they have now become experts. Jesus's disciples copied him and became more like him. Then, when they were ready, he sent them out to be an example for others to follow.

Activities

Follow the leader: play a game of follow the leader. Try two versions - one where everyone stands in a straight line and you have to copy the person in front of you. Is the person at the back doing the same as the leader at the front? Then change it so that everyone can see the leader. Which version is easier/better?

Exercise routine: find a dance or exercise routine online (or you can use the song below with actions) and see if you can follow the moves/actions. How easy is it?

Song

I love you

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Is27ywd0aws>

Prayer

Father God, send us out this week to practise what we have learned, to grow in love for you, and to know how much you love us. Amen.

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

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

