

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

Virtual Church News

27th February 2022

**Sunday next before Lent
Transfiguration Sunday
(3rd 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.

Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

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Reading for the Week

Luke 9.28-36 [37-43a]

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen. On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him.

St James's Explorers Restarts

All you children out there! You are a big part of our church family and contribute so much to our services. We know that you like to go out of the service for a bit of time because we have asked some of you. We will be re-starting an 'Explorers' club during the morning service on the 3rd Sunday of every month. All school age children are welcome. If you are more a young person than a child, well, we still want you to come and help us shape up our ideas a bit.

Roast Lunch - Sunday 6 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.

Message from Rev Eric Lomax

I cut a huge chunk out of Sunday's reading from Luke, but I didn't want to lose the last sentence. Jesus went up the mountain and the disciples are treated to a vision of Christ's full glory, but in the end, they have to come down, and Luke's Gospel tells us it is back to work. I would love to say that it was back to work as usual, you know, like that hum-drum Monday morning feeling, but actually there is nothing trivial about this work, what Christ calls us too is momentous, transformative, difficult, and costly, for when Jesus calls us to follow him, he calls to come and die.

The disciples of Christ had given up all to follow Jesus. Matthew had given up his lucrative role as a tax collector, Simon and Andrew had abandoned their successful fishing business in favour of a life on the road. It was a tough life. In some places they had witnessed successes, but equally in others, the locals had seen them off on the end of a boot. The readers of the stories, some thirty years later, would have also witnessed rejection and even death threats. They feared for their very lives. In solidarity with those early disciples, they begged for some reassurance that their time was not wasted. For us, also, the temptation is sometimes to say, 'this is too hard, surely it would be better to throw in the towel, and to give up.'

All of us are given reassurance in this story. Tired, and hopeless, and no doubt wondering why Jesus had led them on a steep walk, up a mountain in the scorching heat, Jesus gave them a vision of his true nature. Jesus shone brighter even than the midday sun. Not only this, but their saviour was flanked by Moses and Elijah. Moses, because they needed to see that Jesus was the fulfilment of the Hebrew Law, and Elijah, to show that this was the sum-total of the vision of the prophets.

Let us pray...

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness,
from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen



Plants!

The St James's Social Committee are planning a tea party in May/June (more details to follow) at which they hope to have a plant stall. If you are taking cuttings or sowing seeds, it would be great if you could do a few extra! Thankyou.



I personally have always been a little perplexed that the story does not have a cafe on top of the mountain, after all you can buy a pastie or a sausage roll on the top of Snowdon, the highest mountain in England and Wales. The point is that this mountain top in the presence of the glorious Messiah was a good place to be for these plain speaking disciples. They did not want to leave, and even suggested erecting a couple of dwellings up there, to make it permanent. If you like, this would be a bit like a new temple to Christ, just like a more glorious replacement for the one on Mount Zion (Jerusalem).

This was not to be. The disciples and the same Jesus they had gone up with, had to come down the mountain and confront the realities of human need, and alienation. The God of Jesus Christ does not lock himself in a Temple far away from fractured, broken humanity, but rather he comes down to meet us in his son Jesus Christ. His disciples, his followers, namely us, belong with him in that mission to the world.

As we move into Lent and ultimately Holy Week, we abandon the mountain of the transfiguration, and set off on a journey to another mountain, which is called Calvary. Here, we join the Lord of life as he is crucified for the sake of the world. We are called to follow him, and as we follow him, he bids us come and die.

God bless,
Eric

Imposition of Ashes

2nd
March

ASH WEDNESDAY

Join us to mark the start of Lent for a short service during which those who wish to can receive a mark of ashes on the forehead as a sign of penitence and mortality.

Everyone Welcome
No booking required

All Saints Church

Kempston
6.00pm

St James's Church

Biddenham
7.30pm



"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

Prayer Group

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



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, Curry Sauce, Sponge Puddings, Shampoo, Washing up Liquid, Anti-bac Spray.

Tea & Talk

The Tea & Talk group is once again meeting weekly on a Thursday at 10.00am to 12.00 noon in the Great Denham Community Hall to enjoy interesting conversation and tea or coffee refreshments. A warm welcome for new visitors or members is assured. Simply turn up or call Alison Stone for further information on : 07952 658468.

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.



The All Age Bit

This week's passage, which you can find on the front page, teaches us that we can know Jesus as both our friend and Saviour. In the passage, God says 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to Him'. This reminds us that God can speak to us through many different ways - words, pictures or feelings in our hearts. God is always with us and listening to our prayers. He also wants to speak to us and encourage us. Why not spend some time this week just being quiet, perhaps relaxing with your eyes shut away from any distractions, or doing some drawing or painting and ask God to speak to you. Listen to see what he says. The more we practice this, the easier it becomes to recognise His voice so don't worry if you don't hear what he is saying the first time. He might speak to you in your head using words or you may have one word that you think of really clearly. You may see a picture in your mind in the same way that you see things when you are imagining. You might experience a particular feeling. You might be reminded of a verse from the Bible. You might be able to smell or taste something that isn't there. Sometimes you might not hear God, but that does not mean that God is not with you. If you are not sure what something means, talk about it with a grown up - they may be able to explain it for you.

Activity

Transfiguration - we often call this Bible story the 'Transfiguration' which means a complete change of form or appearance. Play a game of what's changed! Everyone looks around the room carefully. Then they close their eyes while one person changes something e.g. closing the curtains, moving a photo, putting on a hat. When everyone opens their eyes again, they have to see how quickly they can spot the change.

Song

Hope

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_t5xitQjlc

Prayer

Dear God, help us to know that you are with us every day and to trust in you. Often we get so caught up in our every day lives, we forget to stop and listen to you. Help us this week to take some time to slow down, find somewhere away from distractions and just listen to what you have to say to us. Amen.

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

Suggested Music

Praise my soul the King of heaven

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60JgQoJK9J8>

Meekness & Majesty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1OZKzXNTRM>

Open the eyes of my heart Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwqpKD-qBt4>

Transfiguration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pri10SRoBPc>