

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

Virtual Church News

27th March 2022

**Mothering Sunday
(4th 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 email stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Our Sunday Services from 1 April

From 1 April our normal Sunday services will be changing as set out below. Of course Easter falls in April this year so services over Easter weekend will be a little different to this - check out our Easter Service details on page 4.

1st Sunday of the month

10.00am All Age Worship at All Saints
10.00am All Age Worship at St James's
11.15am Holy Communion at All Saints

2nd Sunday of the month

9.00am Said Holy Communion at All Saints
10.00am Holy Communion at St James's
6.00pm Evening Prayer at St James's

3rd Sunday of the month

10.00am Holy Communion at All Saints
10.00am Morning Worship at St James's
7.00pm Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship

4th Sunday of the month

9.00am Said Holy Communion at All Saints
10.00am Holy Communion at St James's
(Explorers in the Church Barn)

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

10.00am Service Wholeness & Healing at St James's
6.00pm Choral Evensong at St James's

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.



Annual Meetings and Electoral Rolls

The Electoral rolls (membership lists) for both churches will shortly be revised prior to the Annual Meetings. Full details can be found on page 5.

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Message from Sue Richards (Reader) Is it all about the party?

The story (on the next page) in Luke's Gospel is well known – the prodigal son. But Jesus actually told three stories in this chapter, one after the other: the story of the shepherd seeking out the one lost sheep out of 100 (commonly, we talk about the black sheep of the family) and also the one about the woman who lost one of her 10 coins. These stories describe the massive effort that is made to find something that is lost, followed by the amazing joy of finding it; so much joy that there is a big party for friends and neighbours. Jesus then tells us that it is just like this when someone repents and admits to God that they have got things wrong and want to live differently; apparently there's a big party in heaven! I've always loved that idea.

Continued on next page...

Her
children
arise and
call her
blessed

27th
March

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Join us to celebrate
Mothering Sunday

Posies of flowers will be
given out during the
service

Everyone
Welcome!

St James's Church
Biddenham
9.30am

Reading for the Week

Luke 15: 1-3; 11-end

¹⁵ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable:

The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' ³¹ Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

Message continued...

So why did Jesus tell these stories? Well, look at the introduction to the passage. The pharisees and those who were experts in the law (the religious people of the day) were not impressed with Jesus talking to and eating with those 'awful sinners' and the despised tax collectors who were collecting money for Herod and/or the Romans. "What's the matter with him", they grumbled? "Why is he giving them his time? Surely, he should be spending it with 'good' people?.. like us". Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking. They did not want others to be blessed, especially when, in their opinion, those people clearly did not deserve it. So, he told them three stories, explaining how his focus is on seeking out the lost.

I wonder what we think when we read the prodigal son story. We might not identify so much with someone who has got things so spectacularly wrong, maybe we can, but my focus has usually been on the amazing forgiveness of the father. More so that in the culture at that time, this son would have brought great shame on the family even before he went on his way, spending his inheritance in a reckless way. And then his father's response... utter abandonment in his delight... running to meet him and embrace him when he comes home in desperation. Distinguished older men never lowered themselves to run in that culture, so this running would have astonished people of his day. Maybe you, like me, focus on the forgiving nature of this father who runs to meet his wayward child, forgiving and embracing him. I know that God has been that wonderfully forgiving Father to me.

Eugene Peterson was a minister, scholar, theologian, author, and poet. At his funeral, his son said that his father had "fooled" everyone that he had something new to say every Sunday, or in every book. He said it was always the same message and that his father had said it to him every night: **God loves you. He's on your side. He's coming after you. He's relentless.....**a love just like the prodigal's father.

Let's turn our attention to the grumbling brother, who refuses to come to the party despite his father's rationale and pleading. He's had his nose put out of joint and he certainly does not want to celebrate. He's a bit like the Pharisees. How could his father spend time with his brother and bless him in such an amazing way? His brother certainly did not deserve it and it was he himself who was the faithful one, the one who deserved to have a party thrown in his honour.

Then we need to ask ourselves a tricky question: who might we consider unworthy of Jesus' attention? Where would Jesus hang out if he were living in our village or town? In the churches? Let's imagine for a minute; imagine Jesus with those we really don't like for whatever reason and then imagine Jesus blessing them with success, popularity and wealth.

Continued on next page...

Message continued...

As Christians, we strive to be like Jesus, but we do struggle, deep within their own hearts, to be celebrating the successes of others, especially when those successes really seem to be unfairly won.

Can we join in the party when we see God at work in other people's lives in ways that we wish were true for ourselves? Come with me, let us not be like the prodigal son's brother... let's celebrate the attention and favour God pours out on us and others. Irrespective of whether we deserve it or not! Will we choose to be grumblers or party goers?

Sue Richards

Reader (Lay Minister)



ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIDDENHAM

MUSIC FOR MAY

A concert by the Ouse Valley Singers
with soloist Philippa Jones

Saturday 21st May
Biddenham Pavilion, Deep Spinney
7.30pm

Tickets £10 (light refreshments included)
For tickets, contact:
Anne 214805 or Sue 342373
All proceeds to St James's Church



Suggested Music

Angel voices ever singing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVYIIQEB2yE>

Beneath the cross of Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbaHBmxckC8>

I come with joy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRL_fi52iQU

Tell out my soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz-FkqobgXY>

ST JAMES'S CHURCH
BIDDENHAM

SPRING TEAS



Plant Sale Cream Teas Tea Towel Display

Sunday 8th May
2.30pm - 5.30pm
St James's Churchyard/Barn

PLANT CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME TO JANE (359014) OR
PAM (327035) OR DELIVER TO 49 CHURCH END

ALL PROCEEDS TO ST JAMES'S CHURCH

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell



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All Saints Church, Kempston

Dedication Service for the preservation and replacement of two ancient bells, and the refurbishment of the ring of 10 **Sunday, 3rd April at 4pm**

We'd like to thank everyone for their support for the Appeal Fund. The work was completed in December 2019, enabling us to ring for Christmas services and for the New Year.

To celebrate the completion of the project we invite you to a dedication service, followed by refreshments in the church hall.

All are welcome



Please contact Dr Nicola Darwood
(113 High Street, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7BP
or n.darwood@gmail.com)
by 26th March if you wish to attend

Holy Week and Easter Services

Our services during Holy Week and Easter will be as follows:

Palm Sunday 10 April

- 9.00am Palm Sunday said Holy Communion at All Saints
10.00am Palm Sunday said Holy Communion at St James's
6.00pm Evening Prayer at St James's

Monday 11 April

- 7.00pm Evening Prayer at All Saints

Tuesday 12 April

- 7.00pm Evening Prayer at St James's

Wednesday 13 April

- 7.00pm Evening Prayer at All Saints

Maundy Thursday 14 April

- 7.30pm Holy Communion at St James's

Good Friday 15 April

- 10.00am Children's Easter Event at St James's (Church Barn)
12.00pm Reflection at All Saints
1.00pm Reflection at St James's
2.00pm Reflection at All Saints
3.00pm Reflection at St James's
(Both churches open until 3pm)

Easter Sunday 17 April

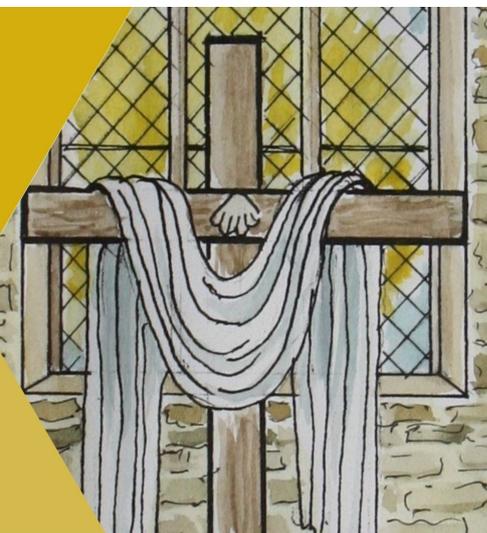
- 8.00am Service of Light at St James's
9.00am Service of Light at All Saints
10.00am Holy Communion at All Saints
10.00am Holy Communion at St James's

Bedford Foodbank

Please continue to support this valuable charity. They fed 1,478 people in January (504 of them children). This is a huge increase on previous months and the same time last year. See their website for up to date details of what they need. www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk

Alleluia
He is
Risen!

11th-17th
April



EASTER

Holy Week

- Monday:** 7pm Evening Prayer (All Saints)
Tuesday: 7pm Evening Prayer (St James)
Wednesday: 7pm Evening Prayer (All Saints)
Thursday: 7.30pm Holy Communion (St James)

Good Friday

- 10am Children's Event (St James)
12pm & 2pm Reflection (All Saints)
1pm & 3pm Reflection (St James)

Easter Sunday

- 8am Service of Light (St James)
9am Service of Light (All Saints)
10am Holy Communion (both churches)

**Everyone
Welcome!**

All Age Reading

Exodus 2 v 1-10

² There was a man from the family of Levi. He married a woman who was also from the family of Levi. ² She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw how wonderful the baby was, and she hid him for three months. ³ But after three months, she was not able to hide the baby any longer. So she got a basket made of reeds and covered it with tar so that it would float. She put the baby in the basket. Then she put the basket among the tall grass at the edge of the Nile River. ⁴ The baby's sister stood a short distance away. She wanted to see what would happen to him.

⁵ Then the daughter of the king of Egypt came to the river. She was going to take a bath. Her servant girls were walking beside the river. She saw the basket in the tall grass. So she sent her slave girl to get it. ⁶ The king's daughter opened the basket and saw the baby boy. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. She said, "This is one of the Hebrew babies."

⁷ Then the baby's sister asked the king's daughter, "Would you like me to find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸ The king's daughter said, "Yes, please." So the girl went and got the baby's own mother.

⁹ The king's daughter said to the woman, "Take this baby and nurse him for me. I will pay you." So the woman took her baby and nursed him. ¹⁰ After the child had grown older, the woman took him to the king's daughter. She adopted the baby as her own son. The king's daughter named him Moses because she had pulled him out of the water.

From International Children's Bible courtesy of Bible Gateway

The All Age Bit

God is our protector and we are His children. Just as God protected Moses and surrounded him with the right people we can trust Him to do the same for us. Let us celebrate all those who protect and care for us this Mothering Sunday.

Activities

Baby photos: Why not find some old baby photos to look at together, it is always fun to look back and explore memories.

Blessings: Choose somebody who is a blessing to your family and shows love and care for you. Find a way to bless and encourage them this week either with a gift, letter or video message or love.

Song

More than enough

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7EfJRRJueY>

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for our mothers, and for those who are like mothers to us. Thank you that they teach us; feed us; give good hugs; make us laugh; encourage us; ask us how we are and listen when we are worried or scared. Please bless them this week and help them to know your love. Amen.

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

Electoral Rolls & Annual Meetings

All Saints

Notice is given that the Church Electoral Roll of All Saints Kempston will be revised by the Parochial Church Council from Friday 1st April to Monday 4th April. After such revision, a copy of the Roll will be exhibited at the back of the Church for not less than 14 days for inspection.

Forms of application for enrolment can be obtained by calling Shirley on 07469 205 938 or emailing shirleybrown2227@yahoo.com

If you would like to join the Electoral Roll, completed forms should be returned on or before Monday 4th April.

The Electoral Roll is akin to a membership list for the church. Being on the roll enables you to take part in the proceedings of the Annual Meetings, which will be held on Tuesday 19th April at 7.30pm in the Church Hall.

Please contact the PCC Secretary on the above contact details if you have any queries.

St James's

Notice is given that the Church Electoral Roll of St James Biddenham will be revised by the Parochial Church Council from Wednesday 30th March to Tuesday 12th April. After such revision, a copy of the Roll will be exhibited at the back of the Church for not less than 14 days for inspection.

Forms of application for enrolment can be obtained by calling Jacqui on 0778 6886 710 or emailing stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com.

If you would like to join the Electoral Roll, completed forms should be returned on or before Tuesday 12th April.

The Electoral Roll is akin to a membership list for the church. Being on the roll enables you to take part in the proceedings of the Annual Meetings, which will be held on Wednesday 27th April at 7.30pm in the Church Barn.

Please contact the PCC Secretary on the above contact details if you have any queries.

Prayer Group

Our joint prayer group meets online at 8pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Join us in praying for our churches, communities and beyond. For details, or to request prayers, email stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

All Saints Missions Table Top Sale

Please note that there will not be a Missions Sale at All Saints in April, but we plan to resume in May, date yet to be confirmed. Thankyou to all who contribute and donate.