

St James's Church, Biddenham

All Saints Church, Kempston

Virtual Church News

Sunday 9 August

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

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 356993 or email stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

A Reading for the Week

Matthew 14.22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'



Kempston Woods - Photo by Alison Walker
If you have any photos of Kempston or Biddenham, send them to stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Service at St James on Sunday 9th

Services in our churches (or the churchyards if good weather) during August will be as follows:

Sundays 9th & 23rd August - 9.30am St James
Sundays 16th & 30th August - 9.30am All Saints

Please read the following important notes on what to expect when attending Church

Face coverings must be worn by all those who attend (this is now a legal requirement) (if you are exempt please bring some evidence with you). We will have a few disposable face masks for use by anyone who has been unable to obtain one.

Please wash your hands before leaving home. You will be asked to sanitise your hands on entering and leaving the church.

A one-way system will operate in both the Church and the Churchyard. Please enter the churchyard via the entrance opposite the Church Barn. Entry to the church (if the service is inside) is by the main door. Please note the signs in place and follow the one way system once inside. You will be asked to exit via the Chancel door and the main Churchyard gates. Please adhere to social distancing requirements at all times when in the Church and Churchyard.

We are required to keep a register of attendees' names and contact numbers which can be used for the Track and Trace system if required. These details will be stored securely and disposed of after 21 days.

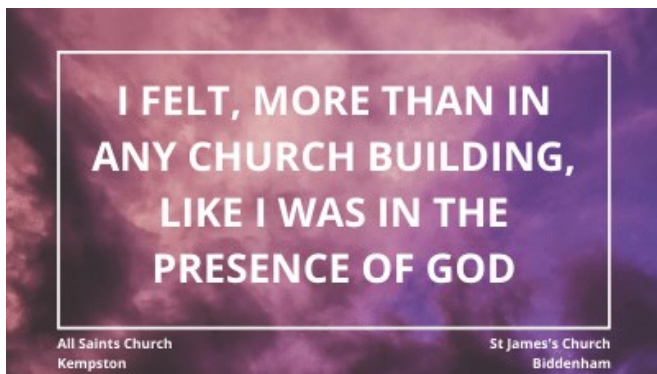
If you are in a vulnerable category we advise you not to attend these physical services, but this is ultimately your decision to make.

Please do not attend if you feel unwell.

Message from Rev Eric Lomax

This week I am away in North Wales, spending time on my own before our Churches begin to open. Snowdonia is one of my favourite locations in the UK. Here, amongst the mountains and the hills, I gain a sense of awe at the power of the landscape and how vulnerable we are to the weather and the elements.

Of course, these are early days after lockdown in Wales and now the border is again open many of the key locations are filled with tourists crowding into coffee shops, gift shops and pubs, desperate to have a break from the tied-up existence that they have experienced over the last six months. Flying to the beaches of the Mediterranean is simply not an option, so tourist locations in the UK are swamped. This is how we all feel.



As a child, North Wales was just a short drive away, so I know the landscape and I know the places of stillness and power which are off the beaten path. Today I took the road to Conwy and turned up an obscure road from the Hamlet of Trefriw. It is an awkward road that curls from left to right and two cars going in opposite directions would not be able to pass one another. The obstacles that I encountered were mountain sheep and a single cow that refused to move out of my way. I came to the end of the road and a path that was restricted to work vehicles. I walked the rest of the way and came to a dam. On the other side of the dam was Lyn Cowlyd reservoir. Not a soul around, surrounded by tall peaks and a pipeline that carries millions of tons of water to the people and industries of North Wales. Such a sense of stillness, yet at the same time, power. I felt, more than in any Church building, like I was in the presence of God.

I think we have to understand these encounters with the power of the natural world to understand the story of Peter walking on water. It is not a twee little story about Jesus tiptoeing on the pond. This was a storm and the fisherman, Peter, was clinging to the security of his old, familiar boat because that was the job he had done since he was an apprentice. He was like a child clinging to the edge of a swimming pool for safety. Jesus walking on the stormy waves was the Messiah, the son of God, who was confronting danger for our sake. 'I can do it,' Peter said, 'I can serve you in this dangerous world. Call me out. I can do it.'

Peter stepped out from the security of his old ways as a fisherman and it was only when he took his eyes off Jesus that he began to sink.

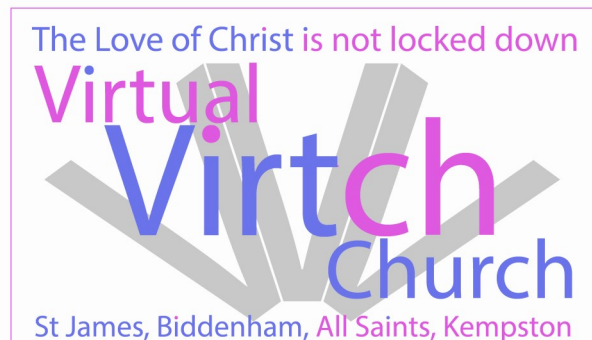
As our churches begin to open we are facing a world, a ministry, a call, into a world which will have changed beyond recognition. It is a dangerous and fearful world for us to serve the living Christ. Jesus wants us to be courageous and fearless, but more than that, he wants us to keep our eyes on him. He is our friend, our brother and our God. He calls, he saves, he guides, and it is him who calms the storm.

God Bless

Eric

Virtch will be Continuing!

Zoom services will continue to be held at 11am on a Sunday and 6pm on a Wednesday. Login details are sent out in the covering email to members of our church community. If anyone else would like these, please do get in touch. Everyone is welcome!



The Love of Christ is not locked down
Virtual
Virtch
Church
St James, Biddenham, All Saints, Kempston

Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

If you don't have access to the internet, try tuning in to the following on Sunday:

- 8.10am on BBC Radio 4 - Sunday Worship. The Cross and Liberation.
- 1.15pm on BBC 1 - Songs of Praise. National Trust.
- 3.00pm on BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong from St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Wednesday 12 August:

- 3.30pm on BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong from St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Alpha Online

Starting in September

Do you want to find out more about the Christian faith? Do you want to be able to ask questions in a safe environment where all views are listened to and nobody is judged?

Then join our new Alpha Online Course which will be starting in September. For further details contact Jacqui on 356993 or at stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com



Mental Health Webinars

The Diocese of St Albans are running webinars aimed at making our churches places of welcome and inclusion for people living with mental ill-health. Everyone is welcome - no need to book in advance. One webinar a month on a range of topics. For further details go to <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/mental-health-and-wellness/>

Hymns and Devotional Music

Tim Grant-Jones, organist at All Saints, and his wife Irene are live streaming hymns and other devotional music at 10am each Sunday (before the Zoom service). Find this and other music on Facebook by searching for Grant-Jones Musical Services or entering #gjmusicalservices. You can also request hymns in advance!

Discovery Group

Meets via Zoom on Thursday evenings 8pm. Contact john.c.lambert@gmail.com for details.

Highly Recommended by Members of our Congregation

Daily Hope

The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a free national phone line as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus. Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.



The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

For the Children (& young at heart!)

We are looking at the story on the front page of this newsletter today - the story of Peter learning to trust Jesus when he steps out of the boat. If you were Peter, do you think you would have stepped out of the boat? Peter was scared and asked Jesus for help. By getting out of the boat, he shows that he is willing to leave behind his old 'safe' life to follow Jesus. Who do you ask for help when you are scared?

Activities:

Draw round your foot on a piece of paper. Write down on the foot anything that you are scared about. Ask Jesus to help you not to be scared.

In a shallow tub of water, or next time you are in the bath, try experimenting with different objects to see which ones float and which ones sink.

Songs:

My lighthouse

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

With Jesus in the boat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpkQ-Bb78sU>

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we are sorry for the times we do not put our trust in you. We are sorry that sometimes we focus on the problems in the deep water in front of us, instead of trusting you to keep us afloat. Forgive us, Lord, and help us trust in you. Amen.

Please pray with me

God our father

So many of us, over the last months,
Have learned what it means to fear.

We recognise that our world,

Our lives, and our church,

Is now different from what it was.

In this unfamiliar place, give us courage,

And help us to keep our eyes on you.

Amen



For your prayers

Please pray for:

- Good weather on Sunday so our service at St James can be held outdoors.
- All those who will be attending the service.
- Those who, like Peter, are anxious and afraid, or who doubt their faith, particularly in the current uncertain times.

Our prayer group meets at 8pm on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month via Zoom. Get in touch if you would like the login details or have any prayer requests.

Hymns/Songs of the Week

King of Glory, King of Peace

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xw2jpBwa2lo>

Meekness and Majesty

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

Be still my soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqKVFYD8Obc>

Voice of Truth

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cKm_mYVPQE

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Bedford Foodbank



Please don't forget that we support the Bedford Foodbank, who need our donations now more than ever.

Donations of food can be placed in a box in St James's Church Porch, taken direct to the Foodbank (off Manton Lane) or put in the boxes in the supermarkets. In Biddenham, Imogen Sanctuary is collecting donations from various roads once a month. Email sarah.sanctuary@yahoo.com for further details.

Items currently needed include Cup-a-Soup, Jellies (pre-made), Tinned Rice Pudding, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Hand Soap, Anti-Bac Spray Cleaners, Washing Up Liquid, Deodorant, Shampoo and Shower Gel.

Alternatively please consider making a financial donation. More information can be found at <https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk/>

Community Support Groups

Do you need support? We can help with shopping and companionship (via regular phone calls). Can you volunteer to help? Let us know if you are DBS checked (for any organisation). It doesn't matter if you aren't, we still need your help, but safeguarding is important!

Biddenham:

If you need support, ring 01234 815393 (daytime only) or email help@biddenham.org.uk with your name/phone number/address.

If you can volunteer, please email help@biddenham.org.uk

Kempston:

If you need support or can volunteer to help, contact:

Rev Eric Lomax: 328452 or 07805 879537

Alison/Brenda Walker: 851597

Alan/Anita Lowe: 857212 or 07751 659695