

St James's Church, Biddenham

All Saints Church, Kempston

Virtual Church News

Sunday 25 October

Last Sunday after Trinity

Bible 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 356993 or email stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Message from Rev Eric Lomax

I did not come from a wealthy home, and as a child, I never really had the things that my friends had. My mum worked for a catalogue company and used to drive round people's homes selling them items and clothes that they would buy, and then later she would have the job of driving round to those same homes collecting weekly payments from those same people. The fact is that the people on these estates were very poor and often they did not have the money to pay her. She would then get in trouble if the collections did not match what was expected. She was a caring person and in her job she was caught between a rock and a hard place; the expectation of her company and compassion for the customers who could not pay.

There were no benefits to her job. We could not afford a car, so the job gave her a van to take us on holiday. She was an artist and loved the hills so she would put myself, my sister and our cousins, Susan and Carole, in the back of the van and take us to North Wales or the Lake District. As a child I just remember feeling travel sick all the time, being taken on bumpy journeys in the back of this old Bedford van. The other benefit of her job was that she had 10% discounts on the items she sold and I remember wanting the new white England football strip to take to school. I asked her over and over again if she would buy me one and even with the discount she was not sure if she could afford it. I remember clearly her saying to me one day; 'It is not the clothes you wear on the outside that matter, but the clothes you wear on the inside.'

I thought it was such a stupid thing to say and carried on asking for the football strip. In the end she bought it for me. If only I had been any good at football.

It is only much later in life that you realise how important that is and how close it is to the meaning



A Reading for the Week

Colossians 3.12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. ¹³Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

of our reading this week. The religious people at the time of Jesus had been so focussed on the external gloss of religion that Jesus used to remind them that what really matters is the human heart. In Matthew 5 Jesus spoke about the qualities that his followers should have rather than the superficiality of looking good through following rules; 'Blessed are the poor in Spirit, Blessed are the Meek, Blessed are the Merciful, Blessed are the pure in heart.' These are all qualities of the heart, a spiritual rather than a physical attire. To his listeners that was so different from the religious expectations to follow the binary opposites of the commandments.

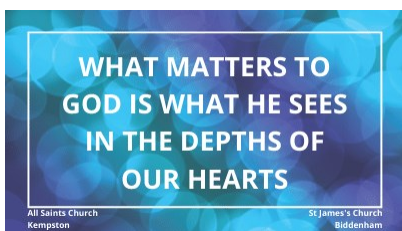
Paul, in Galatians 5.22-23, talks about these inner qualities that spring from the heart, referring to them as Fruit of the Spirit, Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, goodness, gentleness and self-control.

These are all qualities that well up within us like a spring of living water (John 4.14).

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Message from Rev Eric Lomax continued

When I was in Wilson Carlile College in the 1980s there was a very tall man training with me from Liverpool; a very committed evangelical Christian. I remember Peter being wrong about most things, but really funny at the same time. While we were there a very posh ball was held for retired Royal Navy officers and their wives. Our college was in Blackheath, close to Greenwich Naval College, and for some reason their main hall in Greenwich needed some refurbishment, so our hall was a plan B. As students we were asked to serve everybody with canapes and I remember Peter, with his ill-fitting suit, looking at them and shaking his head; 'Clothes don't make a man,' he said, 'It is not by our suits but by our fruits that we should be known.'



Our faith reverses the standards of our society that makes appearance, status and etiquette the standards by which we have meaning and purpose. John the Baptist was very clear about this when he addressed the religious people in the wilderness; 'And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.'

This is the God that undermines the value of our world and places the internal above the external. We are meant to reflect the image of God and this is when God stares deeply into our eyes and sees his own reflection staring back at him.

He calls us to his sacred ballroom and we need to be dressed properly for that occasion. So Paul calls us to wear our inner clothes of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. These are the qualities that we should clearly demonstrate in the ways we reach out to him and to others. I would echo my friend Peter in saying that it does not matter how we are physically dressed, what matters to God is what he sees in the depth of our hearts.

God bless, Eric.

Virtch

Zoom services 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!



Elections at Annual Meetings

At the St James's Annual Meetings held on Wednesday 14 October, the following were duly elected:

Church Wardens

Laurie Hurn/Lois Price

Deputy Church Wardens

Edwin Martin/John Richards

PCC Members

John Lambert/Margaret Lowe/Tom Perry

Deanery Synod Representative

Chris Haydn-Jones

At the All Saints Annual Meetings held on Tuesday 20 October, the following were duly elected:

Church Wardens

Barbara McKay/Alison Walker

Remembrance Day in Biddenham

A service will be held at the War Memorial, but due to social distancing rules, only key people will be able to attend.

Members of the public are asked not to attend.

The service will be streamed live to the usual Zoom service that day.

Services in Church

Sunday services in our churches are at 9.30am:
Sundays 25 Oct, 8, 22 Nov - All Saints

Sundays 1, 15, 29 Nov - St James

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

Please wash your hands before leaving home and sanitise your hands on entering/leaving church.

A one-way system will operate in both the Church and the Churchyard. Please note the signs in place and follow the directions of the sidesmen. 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 for the Track and Trace system. 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.

At St James's, numbers will be very limited (we can only fit approx. 20-25 in church safely).

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. Bible Sunday.
- 1.15pm on BBC 1 - Songs of Praise. Remembering Black History.
- 3.00pm on BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong. Croydon Minster.

Wednesday 28 October:

- 3.30pm on BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong. Chapel of Merton College, Oxford.

Daily Hope

Music, prayers, reflections and full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a free telephone line. **0800 804 8044** Available 24 hours a day



Discovery Group

This bible study group meets via Zoom on Thursday evenings at 8pm. For further details, contact john.c.lambert@gmail.com

For the Children (& young at heart!)

This week we continue looking at Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, with Chapter 2, verses 7b and 8.

But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

In this passage God is calling us to love selflessly and be gentle in our lives. Can you think of times when you have needed to be gentle? Perhaps with a small animal or with younger brothers or sisters? Why do you think you needed to be gentle?

Activities:

Draw a picture of yourself on a piece of paper - then draw pictures of all the people who care for you. They might include your family, carers, friends, teachers, other people at school, people at church etc.

Make a thick mixture of cornflour and water in a bowl using a wooden spoon. Tip it out onto a tray or flat bowl. Try making letters in the mixture - do you notice that when you are gentle with it you can move your fingers easily, but if you force or push hard, the mixture becomes more solid?

Song:

Jesus' hands were kind hands

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jLkJGr4kJw>

Prayer:

Caring God, we think about people who care for others in their jobs: for doctors and nurses, carers and social workers. Help them to be strong, gentle and loving. Amen.

(courtesy of Roots resources)

Hymns/Songs of the Week

Name of all Majesty

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

Teach me, O God

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

Simplicity by Rend Collective

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8p3n5wzFpM>

Create within me a clean heart


[youtube.com/watch?v=b7Hk3WFUMvo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7Hk3WFUMvo)

THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES,
BIDDENHAM
A registered charity raising funds for the fabric of St James church and barn

ZOOM QUIZ NIGHT

An online quiz to suit the whole family

All you need is a little general knowledge, some inspired guesswork, and a little bit of luck!

Saturday 24th October  *7:30 to 9 p.m.*

Free entry - but donations welcome to *The Friends of St James* by GoFundMe: www.bit.ly/StJamesQuiz
To register and for participation details, contact John Barkas at stjamesquiz@mail.com

Please pray with me

God our father,
we recognise the power of your love in the world,
and we thank you for the grace you show to us.
Help us to reflect your love to those around us
and be part of your transforming work in the world.
In the name of Jesus Christ,
Amen



ST JAMES'S CHURCH



**Biddenham Tea Towels
Mugs/Coasters
Jotters**

Contact Jane: 359014

**Village Christmas Cards
Marmalade/Jam
Jelly/Chutney**

Contact Sue: 342373

Christmas Handicrafts
Contact Trissa: 950612

**Also on Sale Outside St James's Church
after Sunday Services (approx. 10.15am)**

There will be no Christmas Bazaar this year

Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

Tel: 01234 328452

Mob: 07805 879537

Email: Rev.ejlomax@gmail.com

For your prayers

Please pray for:

- People in areas of the UK where Covid rates are high and increased restrictions are in place;
- People across the world suffering as a result of the pandemic.
- The recently deceased and their families.
- Our families, friends and communities.

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.

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.

Items currently needed include fruit juice (longlife), tinned meat (stews, curry, meat-balls), Sponge pudding (long life), coffee, anti-bac spray cleaners, washing up liquid, laundry wash tablets and cleaning cloths.

Alternatively please consider making a financial donation.

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