

St James's Church, Biddenham

## Virtual Church News

4 April 2021

### Easter

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](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com) or call Jacqui on 356993.

## Take Part in the St James's Church Easter Egg Hunt

We have lots of addresses in Biddenham taking part in the Easter Egg Hunt.

Walk/cycle/scoot around the village hunting for the eggs and collecting the letters.

When you have collected all the letters, rearrange them to give a message associated with Easter.

Get your copy of the list of addresses from our social media pages, or alternatively pick one up from the Church Porch.

**We hope you have fun – please do tag us in any photos that you post on Social Media!**



### Volunteer Vacancy

We are looking for a new Barn Bookings Officer to look after the bookings for the Church Barn at St James's when it re-opens.

This is an unpaid, part time, voluntary role. It can be carried out from your home and at times to suit you.

If you would be interested in finding out more, please contact Jacqui on 0778 6886 710.

All Saints Church, Kempston

happy  
Easter

### Church Opening

Our Churches will be open over the Easter weekend as follows:

- Good Friday and Easter Day for private prayer (see right).
- Easter Day - short service
  - 8.00am at All Saints
  - 8.45am at St James's

We will recommence our 9.30am services in Church (or the Churchyard) from Sunday 18th April at St James's and Sunday 25th April at All Saints.

## Easter with All Saints & St James's Churches



### Thursday 1 April

7pm Maundy Thursday service

### Friday 2 April (Good Friday)

12noon Stations of the Cross  
10am – 3pm Church open

### Sunday 4 April (Easter Day)

8.00am Christ Light carried into All Saints Church\*  
8.45am Christ Light carried into St James's Church\*  
9am – 12noon Church open  
11am Easter Day Celebration

Please use our outdoor cross at St James's Church for prayer and reflection.

On Easter Day we will be decorating the cross with flowers.

Please feel free to visit the cross during the day, bring some flowers to place on it, and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

*All services except those marked \* will be held on Zoom. Use Login ID 998 074 6039. Church open for private prayer only.*

**Alleluia!  
He is Risen!**

## A Reading for the Week

### John 20:11-18

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

### Message from Rev Eric Lomax

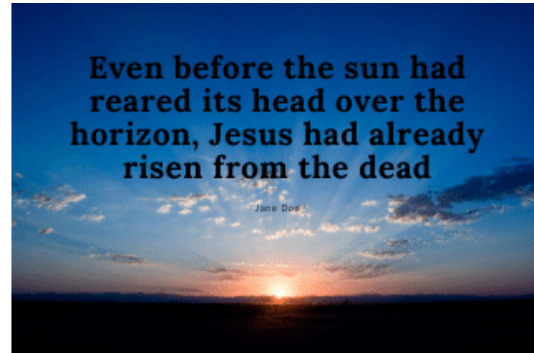
We could only imagine the hopelessness felt by the disciples when they had witnessed the crucifixion. Out of fear, the Disciples were literally in Lock-down. They had placed themselves behind locked doors out of fear that they would experience the same fate as Jesus. I do not imagine that their company would have been much pleasure really, but I suppose that it could have been worse. It is, in fact, much easier to lock ourselves away than to confront death face to face. Even at the point of Jesus's death, most of them had run away. In fact, apart from the disciple whom Jesus loved, the only ones that stayed with him at the foot of the cross were the women, and it was a woman who on the third day, braved the outside world and made her way to the tomb to anoint his body. The locked room where the disciples hid could, quite frankly, only have been a place of hopeless despair.

Christianity is a strange faith. On Good Friday we spend our time hanging round a man on a cross and on Easter Sunday, around a tomb. It sounds depressing and miserable. Surely, over the last twelve months, we have had enough to deal with during our own lock-down, without making such a big deal of this very strange festival of Easter. We must remember, however, that the festival of the cross and the tomb is, for us, a tremendous festival of hope.

The living God had become flesh so that on Good Friday, he could encounter the abysmal violence of human activity and the depths of human suffering. In this he did not comply with the human assumptions of what God would be. There were no wrathful lightning strikes, or demonstrations of sacred fury. Rather, Jesus, in the name of God, spoke words of forgiveness, hope, and of mending

the broken; 'Father forgive them,' he said about the people who had crucified him, 'Beyond this there is heaven,' he implied to those who were crucified next to him, and finally, like the mechanic who can do marvellous things with broken cars, he said; 'It is finished, it is complete, it is mended.'

The disciples, locked in their room did not understand this because like many of us they preferred to sit under a cloud. Although they had heard everything he had said to them for three years, they had not actually heard a single word he had said to them.



In terms of the tomb, Christians hang around there on Easter Sunday because it has a special meaning to them. The woman, who unlike Jesus' male disciples had the courage to step out of lock-down and visit the tomb of Christ, had gone there because anointing a body for burial was an important ritual. She could not have done it on the Saturday because anything like that was forbidden on the Sabbath, so she needed to go early on Sunday morning instead. She took the choice to confront her fears but, instead of finding death, she found an empty tomb with the stone rolled away. It was filled with life and the tomb had, instead, become the womb of new life. Even before the sun had reared its head over the horizon, Jesus had already risen from the dead.

When this woman went back to her brothers she carried with her the message of hope that death would not have the last word and that a genuinely new start was possible because Jesus had defeated death and risen from the grave.

Easter this year will have new meaning to us because for twelve months our Church doors have been locked because of a pandemic. As I write this, the sun is shining brightly outside and we all have a sense that this time of exile is coming to an end. On Easter Sunday morning we will still not be conducting physical public worship but rather, at 11.00am, we will be worshipping on Zoom. Early in the morning I will be carrying the Christ-light into our Church buildings. As light explodes into our places of worship, it is my hope that we will allow the light of the risen Christ into our hearts to transform our lives and our communities.

God bless you and have a lovely Easter.

Eric

*Join us on Easter Sunday for our online Zoom service at 11am. Bring something to eat & drink. Zoom meeting ID 998 074 6039*

## Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

Sunday 4 April

- 6.35am Sunrise Service. A sunrise service for Eastert Day.
- 8.00am Three Counties Radio - weekly service.
- 8.10am BBC Radio 4 - Sunday Worship. A celebration of the Eucharist with the Archbishop of Canterbury's Easter Message.
- 9.00am BBC 1 - Fern Britton's Holy Land Journey. Fern Britton travels to Jerusalem in search of the real story of Jesus' final days.
- 10.00am BBC 1 - Sunday Worship, Easter Day Eucharist. The Most Rev Justin Welby shares his Easter message from Canterbury Cathedral.
- 11.00am Urbi et Orbi. Pope Francis' Easter message and blessing from St Peter's Square in Rome.
- 1.15pm BBC 1 - Songs of Praise. Easter Sunday. Katherine Jenkins celebrates Easter Sunday from Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff.
- 3.00pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong. Live from Manchester Cathedral.

Wednesday 7 April

- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong. Live from St Matthew's Church, Westminster, London.

## Virtch (Online Church)

Zoom services are held at 11am on Sunday and 6pm on Wednesday. Simply go to Zoom and enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.



## A Prayer of Commitment

If you have never prayed a prayer of commitment asking Jesus to be your Saviour, here is a simple prayer you can say today.

*Dear Jesus, thank you that you came to earth and died on a cross to take the punishment that should have been mine. I am sorry for all the mistakes I have made and the times that I have lived selfishly. Today I accept your free gift of forgiveness and friendship and the promise of eternal life. I choose to live my life for you.*

*Amen*

If you have prayed this prayer, we would love to pray for, and with, you to help you on your Christian journey. If you would like us to do this, please contact Rev Eric (details on page 4).

## For the Children (& young at heart!)

Did you know?

- \* **All about Easter Eggs:** There are lots of eggs at Easter! We can search for hidden eggs, decorate eggs or eat delicious eggs made from chocolate. Christians believe that eggs can help us understand the story of Jesus dying and coming back to life!
- \* **New Life:** Eggs are a symbol of birth and new life! Christians believe that Jesus was born as a baby on the earth, God in human form. Jesus was sent to be an example for us and to help us to be friends with God.
- \* **What's Inside?** Traditional easter eggs are hollow inside. Christians use this as a reminder of the tomb where Jesus was placed after he died. A large stone was placed in front of the tomb. When his friends visited the tomb, the stone had been rolled away and Jesus was gone. Christians believe that Jesus had come back to life. Jesus' friends saw him walking and talking three days after his death, then he went to heaven.
- \* **A Gift for Everyone:** Christians believe that because Jesus died and came back to life there is hope for everyone. We are all invited to be a friend of God and to one day be with Him in heaven.

### John 3:16

*God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.*

### Activities

Have an Easter Egg Hunt in your house or garden. You can either use chocolate eggs or draw and decorate some! Think about what Christians believe while you are doing the hunt.

Can you find the Easter Chick that we have hidden somewhere in this issue of Virtual Church News?

### Song

Christ Arose

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOgpwSM4D7M>

### Prayer

Dear God, thank you for showing Your love for us by dying on the cross and rising again. Thank you that we can celebrate this in lots of different ways at Easter. Help us to remember what you did for us while we celebrate with our families and carers this Easter. Amen!

*Resources from Together at Home.*

*For more free resources visit [tath.co.uk](http://tath.co.uk).*



## Prayer Group

Join our prayer group at 8pm on the 1st/3rd Thursdays of the month via Zoom. Everyone welcome.

Contact us for login details or if you have any prayer requests.



## Bible Study Groups

If you are interested in joining a bible study group please contact John Lambert by email at [john.c.lambert@gmail.com](mailto:john.c.lambert@gmail.com)

## 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



## Let us pray...

Lord of life

who went to hell and back  
so that we might live in hope;  
Full of grace, hope, and love,  
so that we may spread the life of hope  
that you have graciously given.

We worship your holy name and give thanks.

Amen



## Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

Tel: 01234 328452

Mob: 07805 879537

Email: [Rev.ejlomax@gmail.com](mailto:Rev.ejlomax@gmail.com)

## Suggested Music for this week

Thine be the Glory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPH7-dNrwb8>

In Christ Alone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16KYvflc2bE>

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRgEOtNSG20>

God So Loved the World (Stainer)

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

Easter Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0GEZXlgBCc>

Come and See (We Worship at Your Feet)

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

An Easter Hallelujah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-j3NZEedHQal>

**QUIZ**

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The Friends of St James, Biddenham

Our second online Zoom quiz with a Spring flavour! Suitable for all the family.

Free entry – but donations welcome to The Friends of St James at GoFundMe: [www.gofundme.com/stjamespringquiz](http://www.gofundme.com/stjamespringquiz)

To register and for participation details, email John Barkas at: [stjamesquiz@mail.com](mailto:stjamesquiz@mail.com) (alternatively phone Peter Leverkus on 01234 353662)

The FOSJ is a registered charity raising funds for the fabric of St James' Church and barn

## 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](mailto:help@biddenham.org.uk) with your name/phone number/address.

If you can volunteer, please email [help@biddenham.org.uk](mailto: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