

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

## Virtual Church News

16 May 2021

7th Sunday of 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.

### This Week's Services

- Sunday 9.30am: Service at St James's Biddenham
- Sunday 11.00am: Virtch (Zoom)
- Monday 9.00am: Morning Prayers (Zoom)
- Wednesday 6.00pm: Virtch (Zoom)

### Services in Church

This Sunday we warmly welcome you back to All St James's Church with a service at 9.30am. There is no need to book. Please remember your face covering (unless you are exempt from wearing one). You will be asked to follow a one-way system in place in both the church and churchyard. Unless it is raining we will be in the churchyard so wear something warm!

***We look forward to seeing you in person!***

### A Reading for the Week

#### Luke 24:44-53

He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

### Peter Culverwell

We are very sad to inform you of the death of Peter Culverwell on 11 May. Peter had been a regular member of the St James's congregation for many years. Please include Peter and his family in your prayers.

### Message from Revd Eric Lomax

'I am a rock, I am an Island, and a rock feels no pain, and an Island never cries.' When Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel released this song in 1965, it was described by some critics as the most depressing song they had ever sung. It is about an individual who believes himself to need nobody else at all. The irony of the song is that the voice of the song feels pitiful. As much as some people may claim to need nobody, the reality is that we are social animals, and as human beings we are dependent on one another. We are not alone in this. For example, our Labrador, Meg, is really close to Rachael, one of our children, and when Rachael leaves after spending time with us, Meg growls because she cannot cope with her going.

The Gospel reading for Ascension Day tells us the story of Jesus rising into heaven. Jesus has gone and it appeared to those early disciples that they had been left behind. The fellowship they shared on earth with the Son of the highest had passed and they were left alone.

In the first century, long before internet booking, a rich man who was going on a journey, would send a servant before him to find an inn where the rich man could stay, so that when the rich man arrived, a place was paid for and prepared. In John 14, Jesus describes himself in just this way; 'In my Father's house there are many rooms, and I am going now to prepare a place for you.' Jesus has turned the tables on this practice by becoming the servant who goes to prepare a place for us, yet Continued on next page...

### Virtch (Online Church)

Zoom services are held at 11am on Sunday, 9am on Monday and 6pm on Wednesday. Simply go to Zoom and enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.



## Message from Revd Eric Lomax continued

although he appears to leave, the whole of the New Testament reminds us that we are not alone. The physical Jesus is, in one sense, no longer with us but in our journey of faith he accompanies us.

Our Gospel reading a few weeks ago, gave us the story of two travellers encountering the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus. The story ends with these travellers finding comfort in breaking bread and in community and fellowship together. At the end of the story, Jesus disappears from sight and they are left pondering his supernatural presence, which is a presence infinitely more potent.

Before his crucifixion Jesus talks about this future supernatural presence to his disciples; 'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever' (John 14:16). The writer of the fourth Gospel talks about this living presence time and time again. He tells the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, that she will receive a living water welling up inside her to eternal life. Although we are alone, we are sent a comforter, a Spirit to be present in us and around us.

Just nine days after Ascension Day we reach a festival known as the birthday of the Church. Traditionally it is called Whit Sunday, and this is simply because Baptisms were encouraged on that day, and at Baptisms, people would wear white. The proper name for the second Sunday after Ascension is Pentecost, traditionally the Jewish Harvest. On the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-13, we are told a story about the church being together in one place, and they are filled with the power of God's Spirit with the drama of wind and flames. In complete reversal of the divisions of language at Babel (Genesis chapter 10), all the different nationalities there are united in a single language. This is not, as some would suggest, a story about the gift of tongues, but rather about the Spirit of God uniting his church in a common language and way of thinking. Time and time again in the New Testament we are reminded that there is not only the ritual Baptism of water that gives us our identity as the church, but the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, being filled with this life giving, sustaining presence of God.

So what has this got to do with the story of the Ascension? Paul puts it quite simply, saying this Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ that lives in you (Romans 8:9-11). You are not alone, because the Spirit of Christ lives in you, transforming you in a way far deeper than you could ever know.

God Bless  
Eric

## Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

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## St James and Charitable Giving in 2020/2021

As with many organisations the finances of our church have suffered during the pandemic and the lockdowns. We have a clear idea of what our priorities are as a church in our relations with our communities. As part of our demonstration of God's love we aim to be a support of people, families and groups who are in difficulties, poverty, or who are suffering. However as good citizens we have to prioritise paying the necessary bills. Examples of organisations we have supported as a church over recent years are:

- 1) CMS (Church Mission Society)
- 2) Open Doors UK
- 3) Bedford Food Bank
- 4) Hebron Soup Run (Bedford)
- 5) Langley House Trust

So that we can continue during this difficult period (2020/2021) to support the great work these organisations carry out we have decided to ask people to give to a separate fund for Charitable Giving and Mission work. A special fund has been set up to carry out this aim and a generous member of our congregation has offered to match any giving pound for pound up to £1,800.00, making a total therefore of £3,600 for the two years ending 31 December 2021.

We would be very grateful for any donations to this fund which should either be handed to the Vicar or one of the Churchwardens **or** paid by transfer into the church bank account, using the details:

Bank: Nat West  
Account: Biddenham PCC  
Sort code: 60-02-13  
Account number: 51317710

### Very important

On the transfer details line please put "M & G" so the money goes to the correct fund.

Very many thanks for helping us to continue helping those in need.

Edwin Martin, Deputy Churchwarden

## Let us pray...

Lord Christ,  
who never leaves nor abandons us,  
teach us the importance of time with others,  
help us to recognise the need for fellowship and time together,  
and fill us with your Spirit of life and love  
so that on our journey of faith,  
you will always be there to guide us and give us strength.  
Amen



## Electoral Rolls & Annual Meetings

### St James

The Annual Meetings for St James's will be held on Wednesday 19 May at 7.30pm via Zoom (usual meeting ID).

The Electoral Roll has now been revised and is published. If you would like to see a copy of the Electoral Roll please contact Jacqui at stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com or on 0778 6886 710.

### All Saints

The Annual Meetings for All Saints will be held on Wednesday 26 May at 7.30pm via Zoom (usual meeting ID).

The Electoral Roll has now been revised and is published. If you would like to see a copy of the Electoral Roll please contact Shirley on 07469 205938 or at shirleybrown2227@yahoo.com

## All Age Reading

### John 17: 6-19

"You gave me some men from the world. I have shown them what you are like. Those men belonged to you, and you gave them to me. They have obeyed your teaching. Now they know that everything you gave me comes from you. I gave these men the teachings that you gave me. They accepted those teachings. They know that I truly came from you. I pray for them now. I am not praying for the people in the world. But I am praying for those men you gave me, because they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And my glory is shown through these men. Now I am coming to you. I will not stay in the world now. But these men are still in the world. Holy Father, keep them safe. Keep them safe by the power of your name (the name you gave me), so that they will be one, the same as you and I are one. While I was with them, I kept them safe. I kept them safe by the power of your name—the name you gave me. I protected them. And only one of them, the one who is going to hell, was lost. He was lost so that what was said in the Scripture would happen.

"I am coming to you now. But I pray these things while I am still in the world. I say these things so that these men can have my joy. I want them to have all of my joy. I have given them your teaching. And the world has hated them. The world hated these men, because they don't belong to the world, the same as I don't belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world. But I am asking that you keep them safe from the Evil One. They don't belong to the world, the same as I don't belong to the world. Make them ready for your service through your truth. Your teaching is truth. I have sent them into the world, the same as you sent me into the world. I am making myself ready to serve. I do this for them so that they can truly be ready for your service.

## The All Age Bit!

This week we will be exploring Jesus' prayer for us. You can find it in your Bible at John 17 verses 6-19. Jesus knew he would be returning to heaven and commissioning his followers to continue the work he had begun on earth. Jesus knew that his death on the cross had made a way for everybody in the world to come into relationship with God. The task ahead was to share that Good News with everybody in the world - Jesus' prayer was for all those who would carry the news to others. Jesus knew it would be difficult for his followers, that they would be rejected and even attacked by some people. In verse 20 Jesus also prays for those who will hear and respond to the message in the future - that includes us thousands of years after Jesus was on the earth! Can you think of a time when you have shared your faith with somebody else? How did they respond?

### Activities

*What doesn't belong here:* Jesus knew that his disciples were in the world but not 'of' the world - they were children of God called to live differently and promised eternity with Him. Pick a room in the house. Everyone closes their eyes while one person goes and collects an object from another room and brings it in. Once the object is hidden in plain sight, everybody should open their eyes. Who can be the first person to spot the item that doesn't belong in the room!

*Prayer for the world:* Jesus gave his followers a mission to carry the gospel message to all the countries of the world. Set a timer for two minutes and see how many different countries you can think of in that time. Write them all down on a piece of paper. Then say a prayer for each of those countries.

### Song

He's got the whole world in his hands

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPIfoAfjY5k>

This version has recently been created to pray for our world at the current time. Isn't it great to see singers from all different countries and to hear it sung in lots of different languages!

### Prayer

Dear God, thank you that you love and care for each of us. That everybody in the world is invited to receive forgiveness and to be your friend. Thank you that we are invited to be part of sharing your love with others. That we can invite others to come to know you too. Help us to live our lives in a way that shares your love with others - to be brave and bold in telling others the Good News about your love for them. Amen.

Resources from Together at Home. [www.tath.co.uk](http://www.tath.co.uk).

## Suggested Music for this week

All hail the power of Jesu's name  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9voJsbicG9M>

My Jesus, my saviour  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dr78ff70XKQ>

Come, Holy Ghost (Attwood)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtzcAkEGE-w>

The Lord's Prayer  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUjLd6k6uXk>

## 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.



## Bedford Foodbank

**St James's Church collection point now open!**



Items currently needed: Cup-a-Soup, UHT Milk, Pot Noodles, Jumbo Hotdogs, Tinned Tuna, Tea-Bags (160 size), Shampoo, Washing-Up Liquid, Anti-Bac Spray, Shower Gel.

## Marmalade/Chutney Sale!

Sue Squire will be selling home-made marmalade and chutney after the 9.30am alternate Sunday services at St James's in aid of the St James's flower fund. If you would like some, make sure you remember to bring some cash!



## A Message from Tearfund

In 2021, the UK is hosting two critical summits - the G7 in June and COP26 in November. Decisions made at these gatherings will affect us all - especially those in the poorest communities across the world. It's time for the Prime Minister and the world's governments to address the biggest crises of our time and work together for a recovery that tackles poverty and injustice, helps end the climate and nature crises, and provides vaccines and healthcare for all.

To find out more click [here](#) or contact [john.c.lambert@gmail.com](mailto:john.c.lambert@gmail.com)

## Volunteer Vacancies at St James's

St James's Church is seeking to fill two volunteer roles - Website Manager and Barn Bookings Manager. Both roles can mostly be carried out from home and in your own time. They can be as big or as small as you make them!

If you are interested in either role then please contact Jacqui on 0778 6886 710 or at [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com)

## Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

- Sunday 16 May
- 8.00am Three Counties Radio - weekly service.
  - 8.10am BBC Radio 4 - Sunday Worship.
  - 1.15pm BBC 1 - Songs of Praise.
  - 3.00pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.
- Wednesday 19 May
- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

## Thy Kingdom Come

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. Join in until 23 May to deepen your own relationship with Jesus Christ, pray for five friends or family to come to faith in Jesus and to pray for the empowerment of the Spirit to be effective in your witness. For more details and to order a free prayer journal and other resources go to [thykingdomcome.global](http://thykingdomcome.global)

## Time to Pray

Time to Pray App and Podcast presents everything you need for prayer. Available as an app (with integrated audio) or as a podcast. Listen and subscribe at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer/time-pray-app-and-podcast> or download the app from your usual app store.

## Prayer/Bible Study Groups

Join our prayer group at 8pm on the 1st/3rd Thursdays of the month via Zoom. Everyone welcome. We also have Bible study groups which are open to everyone.

Contact John Lambert for further details, or with any prayer requests. [John.c.lambert@gmail.com](mailto:John.c.lambert@gmail.com)



## Diocesan Job Vacancies

Current vacancies include Diocesan Secretary, Estates Admin Assistant, Pastoral & Advisory Officer and Admissions Officer. More details at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies/>

## Covid-19 Support Networks

If you need support with shopping, loneliness or anything else at this time please do get in touch!

**Biddenham:** Ring 01234 815393 (daytime only) or email [help@biddenham.org.uk](mailto:help@biddenham.org.uk) with your name/phone number/address.

**Kempston:** Contact Rev Eric Lomax (328452), Alison/Brenda Walker (851597) or Alan/Anita Lowe (857212).