

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

Virtual Church News

27 June 2021

4th 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 0778 6886 710 or email her at stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

This Week's Services

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

Note: There will be no midweek services from 2-12 July.

A Reading for the Week

Mark 5: 21-end

When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."



While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?"

Overhearing^[c] what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Virtch

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.



Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

Sunday 27 June

- 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 30 June

- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

Message from Revd Eric Lomax

Mark, here, sandwiches one story inside another, because the two stories are inseparable. Jesus breaks off from healing the daughter of an important Jewish official to heal a nobody, and by the time he has finished, it is too late to do anything. The truth of it is, because of the power of God's love in Jesus, there is no such thing as a nobody, and it is never too late for his love.

There is no questioning the desperation and anxiety of the girl's father. A religious man whose love for his daughter is absolutely unquestionable, but still the story is embedded with symbolism and meaning. Israel believed in its own continuity through genealogy, but Jesus transcended this by showing that his people, his family, has continuity through the power of his grace and love.

The girl is twelve years old, which for a Jewish girl marked the transition from childhood to adulthood. Around this time is the beginning of menstruation, with that, the possibility of conception, and she became eligible for marriage. The continuity of Israel is hereditary, so her Jewish father's hopes depend on her. Menstruation would be, to their family, a sign of life and the hope of the Jewish people. That hope is diminished by the girl's illness. Jesus, on the other hand, demonstrates God's love for the girl because of who she was, and not because of what she has to offer.

The woman who finds Jesus is different. She has suffered with haemorrhaging for twelve years, longer than the girl has been alive. Potentially the bleeding had haunted her most, if not all of her womanhood. Her condition certainly represented impurity in the Jewish law, but this is more about her barrenness. This woman literally had nothing to offer her community.

The way she is healed is beautiful. Jesus does not heal her consciously, but with shame, and hope she secretly reaches out and touches him. It was her faith that drew the power of his healing love from him. Jesus felt the power drain from his body and turned to see who it was. To the disciples, this woman was invisible, but Jesus perceives the beauty of her lowliness. 'Daughter,' he says, 'your faith has made you well.' She was barren and bleeding and now she has gathered the same status as the girl, she has become a 'daughter' of infinite potential and worth, part of the new Israel, where everybody is precious and of worth. The barren woman has become the daughter of a new Israel.

Jesus is not finished. The Christology presented in the Gospels has been honed and sharpened by Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul of Christ. In Romans 11 he proclaimed that it would not be enough to abandon Israel and redeem the outcasts. The promises he made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are irrevocable (Romans 11:29), so in accordance with those promises, his work is not complete until all Israel is saved.

Jesus makes his way to the house of Jairus, and finds the girl has already died. There is something about the healing power of Jesus that is not content with old wine skins. Death must come before redemption, as the cross comes before resurrection. (Romans 6:4). Jesus' promise is all about new beginnings. 'Talitha Cumi,' Jesus said. It was his own language of Aramaic, and it means; 'little girl, stand up.' A strange thing to say as this girl was far from 'little' in Jewish culture. She rises from the dead in obedience to Christ and with him, she undergoes a powerful transition by becoming a child of Jesus' new creation, his new Israel, filled with a new potential.

The bond, by blood to the old Israel was broken by death, now she could stand on her own two feet as a born again child of the new Israel. As it was for the woman whose dignity was restored through faith, this young woman found a new future, not by birth, but by grace.

These two women are like us, sons and daughter's of the Living God. We, like them are touched by Christ, and with his touch he will not leave us unchanged by his love. We find new birth, new hope and new potential in Christ.

God Bless

Eric

Let us pray...

Gracious Father
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to our wayward world:
draw us into harmony with your will,
that we may find all things restored in Him,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen



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



Bedford Foodbank

Items currently needed: UHT MILK, Cup-a-Soup, Fruit Juice (Longlife), Jumbo Hotdogs, Tinned Tuna, Tinned Fruit, Tinned Vegetables, Rice 250g/500g/1kg, Ham (Small Tins), Washing-Up Liquid, Anti-Bac Spray, Deodorant (Unisex), Tin Openers Please continue to support this valuable charity and help them prevent hunger in our community.



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All Age Reading

2 Samuel 1: 1-17

Now Saul was dead. And after David had defeated the Amalekites, he returned to Ziklag. He stayed there two days. On the third day a young man came to Ziklag. He came from Saul's camp. To show his sadness his clothes were torn, and he had dirt on his head. He came and bowed facedown on the ground before David.

David asked him, "Where did you come from?"

The man answered him, "I escaped from the Israelite camp."

David asked him, "What happened? Please tell me!"

The man answered, "The people have run away from the battle. Many of them have fallen dead. Saul and his son Jonathan are dead also."

David said to him, "How do you know Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

The young man answered, "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa. There I saw Saul leaning on his spear. The Philistine chariots and the men riding in them were coming closer to Saul. When he looked back and saw me, he called to me. I answered him, 'Here I am!'

"Then Saul asked me, 'Who are you?'

"I told him, 'I am an Amalekite.'

"Then Saul said to me, 'Please come here and kill me. I am badly hurt and am almost dead already.'

"So I went over and killed him. He had been hurt so badly I knew he couldn't live. Then I took the crown from his head and the bracelet from his arm. I have brought them here to you, my master."

Then David tore his clothes to show his sorrow. And all the men with him did also. They were very sad and cried. They did not eat until evening. They cried for Saul and his son Jonathan. And they cried for the Israelites who had been killed with swords.

David asked the young man who brought the report, "Where are you from?"

The young man answered, "I am the son of a foreigner. I am an Amalekite."

David asked him, "Why were you not afraid to kill the Lord's appointed king?"

Then David called one of his men. David told him, "Go! Kill the Amalekite!" So the Israelite killed the Amalekite. David had said to the Amalekite, "You are responsible for your own death. You have spoken against yourself! You said, 'I have killed the Lord's appointed king.'"

David sang a funeral song about Saul and his son Jonathan.

The All Age Bit!

Our story this week is from 2 Samuel 1: 1-17. In the story we see a lot of different emotions from David when he hears the news of Saul's death. He is sad and upset, tearing his clothes as a sign of mourning. He is angry at the young man who had killed Saul even though he had been following the instructions Saul had given him. Perhaps he also felt a little relief as he had been running away from Saul for a long time and now he no longer had to hide. When we hear sad news, we can feel lots of different emotions too. Just like David, we may feel upset or angry, confused or even relieved. Sometimes it can be difficult to deal with these emotions but remember that we can share them with God, good friends and family. Sometimes writing a poem about them, or just writing them down on paper, can also really help.

Activity

David knew that God cared about all his feelings and emotions. Take it in turns to say a feeling e.g. angry, sad, excited, happy. Everybody else should find items to create a face picture to show that emotion.



Song

God Loves Me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajMfs9PNXoc>

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the story of David mourning the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. David experienced many different emotions when he heard the news, thank you God that you care about all our emotions and feelings. Thank you for those friends and family around us who can support us through sad or difficult times. Help us to be good friends to others, to listen when they share their feelings and to offer support. Amen.

Above resources (and more) can be found at Together at Home. www.tath.co.uk.

Suggested Music for this week

Abide with me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiLNTWfV6j8>

Just as I am

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvPJMBzEPp8>

Amazing Grace (my chains are gone)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I>

My Jesus, my saviour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jABSW-UuT1o>

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 with your name/phone number/address.

Kempston: Contact Rev Eric Lomax (328452) or Alan/Anita Lowe (857212).