

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

Virtual Church News

**10 October 2021
19th Sunday after Trinity
2nd 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 0778 6886 710 or email her at stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Our Sunday Services

1st Sunday of the month

- 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at All Saints
9.30am All Age Service (followed by said Holy Communion) at St James's

2nd Sunday of the month

- 9.30am Lay led Service at St James's
10.00am Holy Communion Service at All Saints
6.00pm Service of Evening Prayer at St James's

3rd Sunday of the month

- 8.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion at All Saints
9.30am Holy Communion Service at St James's
7.00pm Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship

4th Sunday of the month

- 9.30am Lay led Service at St James's
10.00am Holy Communion Service at All Saints

5th Sunday of the month (when there is one)

- 9.30am Service at St James's
6.30pm Sung Evensong at St James's

We also hold online services during the week via Zoom at 9.00am on Monday and 6.00pm on Wednesday. To join these Zoom services, simply go to Zoom and enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.

We hope you will join us at our services as we explore a mixture of both traditional and new ways of worship.

Volunteers Needed!

St James's are in need of additional volunteers to help out with the sound system during the Sunday services. If you can help (training will be given), please let us know!

A Reading for the Week

Mark 10.17-27

As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honour your father and mother." He said to him, 'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.' Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, 'Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' They were greatly astounded and said to one another, 'Then who can be saved?' Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.'

New for Sunday Evenings (3rd Sunday)

A short act of worship over a coffee, then unfolding the scriptures together. 7.00pm in St James's Church Barn. Everyone invited.



Message from Rev Eric Lomax

A good man came to Jesus and Jesus told him he was not good enough. We know he was a good man. Firstly, we know he was good because he kept all of the commandments. Secondly, we know he was good because he recognised Jesus as being the best, and thirdly, we know he was good because he was prepared to kneel in humility before Jesus. In that humility, he came to Jesus and fundamentally asked, 'what more can I do?'

How did Jesus feel about this good man? We are told in a word, 'he loved him.' Mark's Gospel does not beat around the bush but tells us everything we need to know about the way God relates to us in Jesus Christ. We are loved, just as this man was loved.

Jesus' answer to this man was unambiguous. I have heard so many ministers in the past who have tried to weave their way through this passage, but there is absolutely no way we can dodge what Jesus said to the man,

'Look mate, your biggest issue is that you are wealthy. If you really want to live up to my standards, then sell your BMW, your four bedroom house, your holiday home on the Cornish Coast, (and the one overlooking the sea in Tuscany), give all the proceeds to the poor, then, if that is not enough, follow me.'

The good man, we are told, was utterly shocked at this, climbed into his Audi A8 (his daughter had borrowed his BMW 1 series so she could drive to London for a protest on global warming), and drove away because he had great wealth.

The illustration Jesus then used was a very simple one, 'It is easier for a camel to get through the eye of a needle, than it is for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of Heaven.' It is important that we clear something up right away; there is no archaeological or documentary evidence that there was a door in the walls of Jerusalem that was called the eye of a needle. Jesus was saying quite literally that if you have wealth in an age of poverty, it will be harder for a wealthy person to get to heaven, than it would be for a camel to get through the tiny hole in a sewing needle. If it needs any further explanation, a camel is quite a large animal and a sewing needle is very small, so getting a wealthy person into heaven is very hard if not impossible.

Rich people, of course, can get into anything at all. They could get front seats at Wimbledon, tickets to a Euros final at Wembley. If you are rich and famous you are invited to all the best events and parties, and that was as true in the first century as it is in the 21st century. Jesus turns all the social protocols of his day on their head by declaring that the weakest, the poorest, the most vulnerable and the marginalised, are the ones who are invited into

heaven first.

We live in a culture that loves charitable giving. First of all, this is a good thing because so many charities depend on funding from wealthy donors, who give a little of what they have for the benefit of those who have very little in the first place. I am sure that the rich man in our story worked hard for the sake of the poor around him. I am sure that he gave a proportion of his income to those in need. Equally, however, Jesus was making the point that this alone would not make him special. Jesus did not ask him to donate a little to charity, he asked him to sell everything and give it all to the poor. The theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer began his great work 'The cost of discipleship,' with the words; 'When Christ calls a man, he bids him 'come and die.'"

My apologies for the gender specific language, perceptions were somewhat different in 1943, but the reading applies to all people who are called by Christ. Christ does not ask us to give up a little of ourselves for his Kingdom, but all that we are and all that we have, so that everything we retain will be a barrier to what he wants to do for us.

The disciples realised, of course, the enormity of what Jesus was saying. The man who approached Jesus was a good man, so surely that would be enough, but if it was not then what hope was there for everybody else?

Jesus gave, again, a very simple answer; 'For people it is impossible, but for God everything is possible.' At the heart of this is grace. Jesus knows our shortfalls, our limitations, our failures, and ultimately what we cannot do he does for us on the cross.

God Bless
Eric

Let us pray...

Dear God and Father
We give you all that we are and all that we have.
Help us to serve you with our whole heart,
in the knowledge that you have compensated
on the cross, for all our limitations.
Through Jesus Christ.
Amen.



Suggested Music for this week

All I once held dear (knowing You)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sotCi7St0fA>

Lord, enthroned in Heavenly splendour
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqW0OrT7aRI>

Take my life and let it be
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of4I5bTdZ8M>

There is a day
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQuUWJ-Ch4Q>

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The All Age Bit

This week we are using the same reading as the adults. You can find this on the front page, or you may like to read it from your Bible. In this passage God asks us to seek His Kingdom first rather than wealth or material possessions here on earth.

Have a think about how being a Christian changes the way that we live. Why do you think Jesus's words made the rich man sad? Jesus wanted the man to make following God his priority over everything - even wealth. The man wanted to hold onto the riches he had on earth. As Christians we can choose to put God first above our own desires. Why don't you ask some adults what they do to put God first in their lives?

Activities

Hunt the coin: hide some coins (chocolate coins or some made out of card/paper) around the room. Have a competition to see who can find the most coins in the room.

Simon Says: Play a game of Simon Says together and take it in turns to be the leader, giving instructions that everybody else should follow - but only if the instruction begins with "Simon says..."

Song

Hi 5

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=An_RE5uOum8

Prayer

Why not find a regular time to pray to God each day, perhaps when you are brushing your teeth, when you first wake up or just before you go to bed. Thank Him for something that you are grateful for or something nice that has happened, tell Him anything that is worrying you and ask Him to be with you throughout the day.

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

Poppies

If you are making poppies (knitted, crocheted or pompom) for Remembrance Day could you please drop them off in St James's Church Porch or at 27 St Mellion Drive by 31 October. Thank you.



Bedford Foodbank

Please continue to support this valuable charity and help them prevent hunger in our community.

Items currently needed include: UHT Milk, Cup-a-soup, fruit juice (long-life), jars of pasta sauce, tinned ham (small), tinned peas/carrots/sweetcorn, tinned tuna, tinned rice pudding, tinned fruit, jam, rice (250g/500g/1kg), coffee, biscuits, shampoo, washing-up liquid, anti-bac spray, deodorant (unisex), tin openers.



ST JAMES'S CHURCH

AUTUMN LUNCH

including raffle

31 OCTOBER
1.00PM
CHURCH BARN

Tickets: £12.50
Bring your own drinks

Sign up on the list at the back of church or contact Anne (214805) or Sue (342373)



ALL SOULS SERVICES

Sunday 31 October

4.00pm at All Saints Church, Kempston
6.00pm at St James's Church, Biddenham

All Welcome!



Remembering our loved ones
who have died