

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

## Virtual Church News

3rd April 2022  
5th Sunday of Lent  
(1st 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 email [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com)

### Our Normal Sunday Services

From 1 April our normal Sunday services will be changing as set out below. Of course Easter falls in April this year so services over Easter weekend will be a little different to this - See right for our Easter Service details.

#### 1st Sunday of the month

10.00am All Age Worship at All Saints  
10.00am All Age Worship at St James's  
11.15am Holy Communion at All Saints

#### 2nd Sunday of the month

9.00am Said Holy Communion at All Saints  
10.00am Holy Communion at St James's  
6.00pm Evening Prayer at St James's

#### 3rd Sunday of the month

10.00am Holy Communion at All Saints  
10.00am Morning Worship at St James's  
7.00pm Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship

#### 4th Sunday of the month

9.00am Said Holy Communion at All Saints  
10.00am Holy Communion at St James's  
(Explorers in the Church Barn)

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

10.00am Service Wholeness & Healing at St James's  
6.00pm Choral Evensong at St James's

### Revive - 3rd Sundays

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



### Annual Meetings and Electoral Rolls

The Electoral rolls (membership lists) for both churches are currently being revised prior to the Annual Meetings. Full details on page 4.

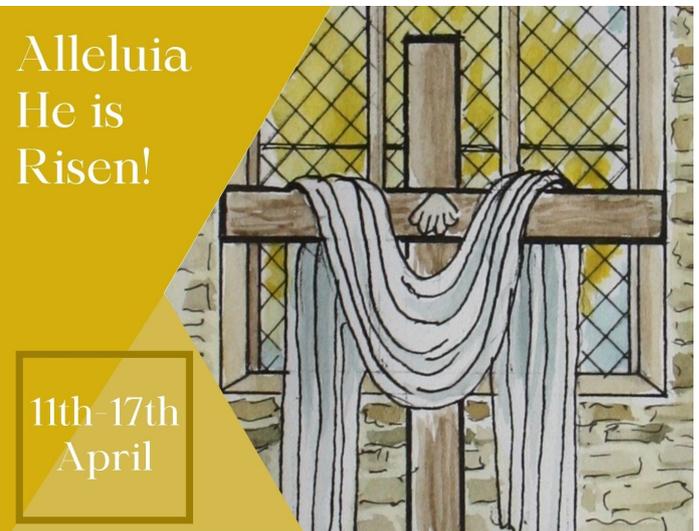


### Message From Rev Eric Lomax

How often do we forget what God has done for us? I see it all the time in churches, when we focus on the superficial, and the meaningless. Churches can lose track all the time by spending time on the structures, the liturgy, the rituals, as if anybody has ever been saved by ritual.

Just look at Judas, you know, Judas Iscariot! People probably do not realise that his name, a Hebrew name, is deeply ironic. It quite literally means 'memories of the Jewish people.' His name was deeply rooted in the past, a past filled with religious tradition. It is only later in the story that we discover that Judas is the betrayer, the one who sold Jesus out to the authorities, but here we see a different side to Judas. Judas was here shown as the pragmatist. He knew the value of stuff.

*Continued on next page...*



## EASTER

**Holy Week**  
**Monday:** 7pm Evening Prayer (All Saints)  
**Tuesday:** 7pm Evening Prayer (St James)  
**Wednesday:** 7pm Evening Prayer (All Saints)  
**Thursday:** 7.30pm Holy Communion (St James)

**Good Friday**  
10am Children's Event (St James)  
12pm & 2pm Reflection (All Saints)  
1pm & 3pm Reflection (St James)

**Easter Sunday**  
8am Service of Light (St James)  
9am Service of Light (All Saints)  
10am Holy Communion (both churches)

Everyone  
Welcome!

## Reading for the Week

### John 12. 1-8

<sup>1</sup>Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup>There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. <sup>3</sup>Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. <sup>4</sup>But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, <sup>5</sup>'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' <sup>6</sup>(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) <sup>7</sup>Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup>You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

### Message continued...

If computers had been a thing in those days Judas would have been a wiz on the old spreadsheet.

He was sat at a table in a household where Lazarus and his sisters had prepared an amazing meal for Jesus. We can only guess why they were there, but then something happens. Mary (not the mother of Jesus!) starts behaving in a way that can only be described as inappropriate. Religious people have very particular ideas about appropriate behaviour. Certainly in the synagogue, and in the church, there were ways that people (particularly women!) should not behave, and this was it. Mary took a bottle of very expensive perfume, and kneeling down at Jesus' feet, she began to mop that perfume all over his feet with her hair.

It was Judas who criticised this appalling, sensuous, and wasteful, behaviour. Judas was, in public, a dignified man who knew what was appropriate and what was not appropriate.

'What are you doing woman,' he said, 'That perfume costs a fortune. Why are you wasting it when it could have been sold and the money given to the poor?'

Wow, Judas had assigned his name to charity, giving money to the poor. He knew how to take the moral high ground. The writer then tells us he had no right to take the moral high ground. The Gospel writer tells us that he used to slip himself, from time to time, a few coins from the common purse.

Jesus responded to Judas with modesty; 'You will always have the poor with you, but Mary bought this so that she could keep it for the day of my burial.' Jesus was reminding those present what he was going to do for his people, and indeed for us. He was about to die. The story tells us something else just as important. The clue was sitting in the room with them. Mary and Martha were the sisters of Lazarus, and he was right there in the room with

them. He says nothing in this story, but in the story before, Judas had been in a tomb, dead, for several days. Jesus had wept next to the tomb, not with the crocodile tears of a benevolent benefactor, but with the real tears of a man filled with grief. 'Lazarus come forth,' Jesus had said, and the man whose body was already in the early stages of decomposition, rose up from death and came out of the tomb. Jesus had then said, 'unbind him,' and they had stripped the risen Lazarus of his grave clothes.

Judas had forgotten, probably Martha had forgotten, and even Lazarus himself seemed oblivious to the reasons why Mary was abandoning all her dignity here. Mary was shaming herself for one reason, and one reason alone; gratitude for what Jesus had done for her, her sister and her brother. He had raised Lazarus from the dead.

Christ died on the cross, and he died on the cross for you, and for us. Our places of worship, therefore, should be filled with the sweet perfume of our gratitude, our gratitude for what Jesus has done for us. Amen.

God Bless  
Eric

### Let us pray...

Gracious Father,  
you gave up your Son  
out of love for the world:  
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,  
that we may know eternal peace  
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen



### Children in morning services at St James

John & Sue Lambert have restarted Explorers for the children once a month and from April this will be on the 4th Sunday. This means that we will have an All age service on the First Sunday and Explorers on the fourth. It may be that in time we will be able to have Explorers on three Sundays a month but in the meantime we want to give the children more on the other Sundays and also allow their parents/carers to join in the service. We have prepared some material based on the Lion Story Bible that we will have at church ready to be used with no further preparation. If you think that you can help either on your own or with another person and would be happy to be on a rota then please let me know. You can contact me on 07968157556 or [simon@5kings.co.uk](mailto:simon@5kings.co.uk).

## Suggested Music

Be still for the presence of the Lord  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOCfPJLOvC4>

Lord I lift your name on high  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVqWEtfpTgo>

Such Love  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ih10m0qoouk>

How deep the father's love for us  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TlyMxBj17LE>

May the grace  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INPoOfJFJ5s>

## Bedford Foodbank

Please continue to support this valuable charity. They fed 1,478 people in January (504 of them children). This is a huge increase on previous months and the same time last year. See their website for up to date details of what they need. [www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk)

## Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

Tel: 01234 328452  
Mob: 07805 879537  
Email: [Rev.ejlomax@gmail.com](mailto:Rev.ejlomax@gmail.com)

# ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIDDENHAM SPRING TEAS



Plant Sale

Cream Teas

Tea Towel  
Display

**Sunday 8th May**  
**2.30pm - 5.30pm**  
**St James's Churchyard/Barn**

PLANT CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME TO JANE (359014) OR  
PAM (327035) OR DELIVER TO 49 CHURCH END

ALL PROCEEDS TO ST JAMES'S CHURCH

## Ukraine Financial Support

To help meet the cost of supporting people fleeing the war in Ukraine, the Church (St James Biddenham) has launched an appeal for funds from the local community. Funds will be held in a restricted account and will be used only to help meet the many needs of those refugees arriving in Biddenham and Bedford for however long our support is required.

Please consider giving to this fund. There are a number of ways you can make a donation: By cheque – payable to "Biddenham PCC" (Please include a note of your name and address so as to allow Gift Aid to be claimed). Place your donation in a Gift Aid yellow envelope (available in Church). Please mark the envelope "Ukraine Support". By Bank transfer – sending your donation to the following account:

Biddenham PCC  
Sort Code: 60-02-13 (NatWest Bank)  
Account No: 51317710

In the reference field please enter "Ukraine" followed by your postcode and house number.

Gift Aid will be claimed where possible – adding 25% to the value of your donation.

Donations can be handed to a Church Warden or simply placed in the weekly collection. Alternatively, donations can be sent to the PCC Treasurer at 32a Church End, Biddenham, MK40 4AR. Thank you.



ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIDDENHAM

# MUSIC FOR MAY

A concert by the Ouse Valley Singers  
with soloist Philippa Jones

Saturday 21st May  
Biddenham Pavilion, Deep Spinney  
7.30pm

Tickets £10 (light refreshments included)

For tickets, contact:

Anne 214805 or Sue 342373

All proceeds to St James's Church



# All Saints Church, Kempston

## **Dedication Service for the preservation and replacement of two ancient bells, and the refurbishment of the ring of 10** **Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 4pm**

We'd like to thank everyone for their support for the Appeal Fund. The work was completed in December 2019, enabling us to ring for Christmas services and for the New Year.

To celebrate the completion of the project we invite you to a dedication service, followed by refreshments in the church hall.

All are welcome



Please contact Dr Nicola Darwood  
(113 High Street, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7BP  
or [n.darwood@gmail.com](mailto:n.darwood@gmail.com))  
by 26<sup>th</sup> March if you wish to attend

### **The All Age Bit**

In our reading today, Mary's perfume was very expensive, that is why people were so shocked that she gave it to Jesus. But Mary understood how special Jesus was and how precious it was to spend time with Him. Just like Mary's perfume sometimes there is a cost to spending time with Jesus, we might have to give up doing something else that we also enjoy, but time with Jesus is precious and important.

#### Activities:

**Bubble prayers:** Open a door or window from your house and send out some prayers into your community. If you have bubble mixture, blow bubbles down the street. Just as the bubbles float down the street, pray that God's peace and comfort would travel out to your neighbours.

**Smell challenge:** Take it in turns to smell various items whilst wearing a blindfold – can you guess what you are smelling? It could be a nice smell e.g. chocolate, or a not so nice smell e.g. dirty socks. Spend some time wondering what Mary's perfume may have smelt like?

#### Song:

#### **Our God**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpAZ2yFxEwk>

#### Prayer:

Father, thank you for the story of Mary which helps us to know that spending time with you is precious and important. Help us to be more like Mary and to spend time with you this week in prayer and worship. Amen.

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

### **Electoral Rolls & Annual Meetings**

The Church Electoral Rolls are being revised by the Parochial Church Councils until Monday 4th April for All Saints and Tuesday 12th April for St James's. Following the revisions, copies of the Rolls will be exhibited at the back of the relevant church for inspection. Forms for application for enrolment can be obtained from:

All Saints: Shirley on 07469 205 938 or emailing [shirleybrown2227@yahoo.com](mailto:shirleybrown2227@yahoo.com)

St James: Jacqui on 0778 686 710 or emailing [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com).

Completed forms should be returned by the end of the revision period as set out above.

The Electoral Roll is akin to a membership list for the church. Being on the roll enables you to take part in the proceedings of the Annual Meetings, which will be held as follows:

All Saints: Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April\* at 7.30pm in the Church Hall. **Please note the change of date from that previously published.**

St James: Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Church Barn.

Please contact the relevant PCC Secretary on the above contact details if you have any queries.

### **Prayer Group**

Our joint prayer group meets online at 8pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Join us in praying for our churches, communities and beyond. For details, or to request prayers, email [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com)

### **All Saints Missions Table Top Sale**

Please note that there will not be a Missions Sale at All Saints in April, but we plan to resume in May, date yet to be confirmed. Thankyou to all who contribute and donate.