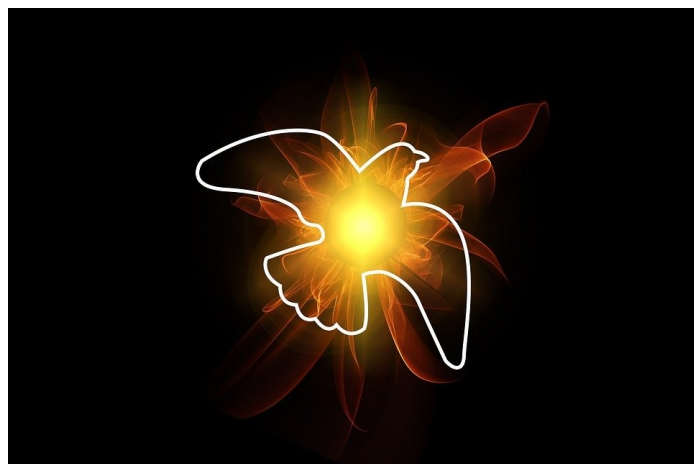


All Saints Church, Kempston  
St James's Church, Biddenham

## Virtual Church News

23 May 2021

### Pentecost (Whit 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) or call Jacqui on 356993.

#### This Week's Services

- Sunday 9.30am: Service at All Saints, Kempston
- 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 Saints 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).

*We look forward to seeing you in person!*

#### A Reading for the Week

##### Acts 2:1-13

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues<sup>1</sup> as the Spirit enabled them.

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

#### Message from Revd Eric Lomax

On the ceiling of the Sistine chapel in Rome there is an iconic image of God connecting with humanity. The first man, Adam, points up at the sky. God reaches down towards him. The spark of life, the Spirit of God, ignites as fingertips make contact. This life-giving Spirit is present in Genesis 1 as the Ruach (breath or wind) moves across the face of the waters and then the narrative takes us to Eden where God walks through the garden in fellowship with people. The blessing used by Jewish people, Shalom, is all about this ideal relationship between God and humanity, between human beings, and between people and creation. It is the presence of the Ruach, the Holy Spirit, that consolidates this relationship.

The fall of humanity in the Garden shatters this peace (Shalom) and the relationship between God and humanity is broken. The story of Babel, a little later, talks about further divisions. The building of the city and a great tower, again splits our relationship with one another; people are dispersed and languages are divided. It seems like the Spirit of God is withdrawn and human beings are no longer in communion with one another.

These great biblical stories (whether you view them as history or not) are there to inform us about the lack of Shalom that pervades creation. Whatever our interpretation we know about the truths expressed through the present conflict between Palestine and Israel, the pending environmental crisis, and the injustices that have sparked the Black Lives Matter protests. We absolutely want peace, but peace is an elusive jewel.

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.

The Love of Christ is not locked down  
**Virtual**  
**Virtch**  
**Church**  
St James, Biddenham, All Saints, Kempston

## Message from Revd Eric Lomax continued

Then we see how God has intervened with Christ. 'God showed his love to us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us,' the Bible tells us. (Romans 5:8). Lots of people are not entirely sure what that means. Often Christians use the word sacrifice and refer to Jesus as a final appeasement to God. The Bible is ambivalent about sacrifices. At times it looks like sacrifices are instructions by God, but the prophets draw a line under this by stating that God does not desire sacrifice (Matthew 9:13, Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:7-8), but rather that we would do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. Jesus was not sacrificed by God to God, but rather his death was a consequence of the natural tendency for us to scapegoat (John 11:50, John 18:14). It was the people who mistakenly sacrificed Jesus. God in Christ came to restore the relationship between God and people and we pushed God back out of the world and onto the cross. God turned our sinful misunderstanding into the miracle of redemption.

Through death, through resurrection, and through his ascension, it seemed that we were alone, but like Michelangelo's painting, The Creation of Adam, God had reached down and touched humanity with the spark of his life-giving Spirit.

This Sunday is Pentecost, when the disciples were filled with the Ruach, Spirit of God. This is too supernatural for a church that has been locked down with the physicality of the sacraments, but our buildings, our waters of Baptism, our candles, and our priestly robes are simply visible representations of the invisible God (the 39 articles of the Church of England asserts that this is true). God meets us in a way which is indeed supernatural. The Pentecost story uses the very physical images of wind and flame, but also tells us that those present came from all over the known world (Acts 2:5), yet as they were filled with the Spirit they could all understand what each and everyone was saying. Remember the division of languages in Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), well here at Pentecost, peace is restored amongst God's sons and daughters, and the Spirit of God fills us, empowers us, and leads unto the world to serve him. 'We are,' the Bible says, 'now a new creation, because the old has passed and the new has come.' Pentecost then is our birthday as a new living community, united and guided by the Spirit.

God Bless  
Eric

## Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

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## Biddenham Show Announcement

Due to uncertainties surrounding regulations for running Covid safe outdoor events, the Show Committee very sadly have decided to cancel this year's Show. We are sorry to disappoint, and our intention is to return in 2022.

Since our last Show 4 committee members have retired and if the Show is to go on, we need more help. We can't deny that the Show weekend is hard work, but it is great fun and very rewarding, with the profits being used to support village groups and organisations.

The Church has been very supportive in the past and if you enjoy the Show and what it offers your family and the village, please don't leave it to somebody else to volunteer, but contact one of us now for more information as to how you can help.

Thank you.

The Show Committee

Stelios Mores	<a href="mailto:Stelios.mores@btinternet.com">Stelios.mores@btinternet.com</a>
Jane Knight	<a href="mailto:jane@80klt.co.uk">jane@80klt.co.uk</a>
Liz Hurford	<a href="mailto:lizhurford@btinternet.com">lizhurford@btinternet.com</a>
Pia Carey	<a href="mailto:piacarey@live.co.uk">piacarey@live.co.uk</a>

## 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.



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

## Let us pray...

Dear Lord  
We are conscious of our failure to serve you,  
Of our unity,  
And our lack of strength.  
Gracious Lord,  
Fill us with your Spirit,  
And empower us with the truth of your Gospel.  
Through Jesus Christ,  
Amen



## All Saints Annual Meetings

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

*The first part of our reading is the same as for the grown ups, but we have reproduced the whole reading here for ease.*

### Acts 2. 1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a noise came from heaven. It sounded like a strong wind blowing. This noise filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something that looked like flames of fire. The flames were separated and stood over each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages. The Holy Spirit was giving them the power to speak these languages.

There were some religious Jews staying in Jerusalem who were from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a crowd came together. They were all surprised, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were completely amazed at this. They said, "Look! Aren't all these men that we hear speaking from Galilee? But each of us hears them in his own language. How is this possible? We are from different places: Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the areas of Libya near Cyrene, Rome (both Jews and those who had become Jews), Crete and Arabia. But we hear these men telling in our own languages about the great things God has done!" They were all amazed and confused. They asked each other, "What does this mean?"

But others were making fun of them, saying, "They have had too much wine."

But Peter stood up with the 11 apostles. In a loud voice he spoke to the crowd: "My fellow Jews, and all of you who are in Jerusalem, listen to me. Pay attention to what I have to say. These men are not drunk, as you think; it is only nine o'clock in the morning! But Joel the prophet wrote about what is happening here today:

'God says: In the last days I will give my Spirit freely to all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. At that time I will give my Spirit even to my servants, both men and women and they will prophesy. I will show miracles in the sky and on the earth: blood, fire and thick smoke. The sun will become dark. The moon will become red as blood. And then the great and glorious day of the Lord will come. Then anyone who asks the Lord for help will be saved.'

## The All Age Bit!

This week we are exploring the story of Pentecost with a reading from Acts 2 verses 1-21. How amazing must it have been to experience the Holy Spirit at Pentecost! The arrival is described as a strong wind and the Holy Spirit appeared like flames on people's heads! The story tells us a lot about what it is like to be filled with the Holy Spirit and the different gifts that the Holy Spirit can give us. People spoke in many languages. Peter received wisdom and the ability to teach and share clearly. Peter also spoke about the promises that God had made to the prophet Joel - that the Holy Spirit would give people the gifts of prophecy and was available to all kinds of people.

### Activities

**Fire Crowns** - can you make a crown with flames on it to represent the flame on the people's heads at Pentecost. Perhaps use a strip of card from a cereal box to make a band around your head. Then find some yellow/orange/red paper, card or pictures from magazines and cut out some flame shapes to stick onto the band.

**Many languages** - Jesus' friends were suddenly able to speak (and understand) many different languages! Can you speak more than one language? See if you can find out how to say 'hello' to people in lots of different languages.

**Charades** - instead of trying to understand each other in different languages, try to understand each other without using words at all and play a game of charades. Act out a favourite book or film title for the others to guess!

### Song

Blowing Wind and Tongues of Flame

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBQyw\\_1Wc\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBQyw_1Wc_A)

### Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the story of Pentecost! Thank you that you did not leave us alone on our mission for you, but that you sent a helper, the Holy Spirit. Thank you for the wonderful gifts of the Spirit which help us to live for you and to share your love with others. We ask that just like at Pentecost, people today would see your Spirit at work in your church here in our communities and come to know you.

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



All age reading taken from the International Children's Bible.



## Suggested Music for this week

O thou who camest from above  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ6pmSEzJ5A>

Breathe on me breath of God  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_-2AOW1ZgW0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_-2AOW1ZgW0)

Be still for the presence of the Lord  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwJKTdOJQ60>

Come Holy Ghost  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjKcc8lclx0>

## Bedford Foodbank

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

Items currently needed: UHT Milk, Cup-a-Soup, Jumbo Hotdogs, Tinned Tuna, Ham (Small Tins), Jam, Coffee, Shampoo, Washing-Up Liquid, Anti-Bac Spray, Shower Gel.

Please continue to support this valuable charity and help them prevent hunger in our community, either with donations of food or financially. 804 people were fed in April (269 of them children).



## 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)

## Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

### Sunday 23 May

- 8.00am Three Counties Radio - weekly service.
- 8.10am BBC Radio 4 - Sunday Worship.
- 10.30am BBC 1 - Sunday Worship.
- 1.15pm BBC 1 - Songs of Praise.
- 3.00pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

### Wednesday 26 May

- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

## 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)

## 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)



## 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).