

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

Virtual Church News

11 July 2021

6th 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)
- Wednesday 6.00pm: Virtch (Zoom)

There will be no midweek services during the period 2-12 July.

A Reading for the Week

Ephesians 1:3-14

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will - to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment - to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Virtch

Zoom services are normally 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

Before I came to Kempston and Biddenham, I had seven parish churches, beautiful old buildings. Six of them were medieval, and in the twelfth century church of St John the Baptist, Colsterworth, was an ancient stone cross (or the remains of it), with familiar Celtic motifs that predated the church by five hundred years. If I travel up north, I will still go and sit in that beautiful building. Sir Isaac Newton was Baptised in the font there in 1643, and I have a copy of the Baptism register bearing his name.

The church has beautiful stained-glass windows, and on a bright summer morning, around 11am, the sun shines through the South window on the cross, casting a rainbow of light upon the ancient stone. It is beautiful.

Two miles up the A1 is one of the other former parish churches. The Gothic church of Holy Cross, Great Ponton has a fifteenth century tower (most church towers are a lot newer than the original buildings) that is vastly out of proportion to the rest of the building. The house next door belonged to a wonderful West-Indian man who was the stunt coordinator of a number of major Hollywood films, and wanted to celebrate the church, together with his house because it contains the most complete collection of renaissance wall paintings in the UK. I find the cavernous church challenging because of one simple factor.

Continued on next page...

Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

Sunday 11 July

- 8.00am Three Counties Radio - weekly service.
- 8.10am BBC Radio 4 - Sunday Worship.
- 1.15pm BBC 2 - Songs of Praise.
- 3.00pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

Wednesday 14 July

- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

Message from Revd Eric Lomax

The dark-wood reredos (panel behind the altar) contains all ten commandments from Exodus 20, in large, bold letters, the impact of which is to riddle anybody who sits in the pews with buckets of guilt.

Did you know that there is actually no such thing as an altar in an Anglican Church? An altar is an old testament concept which was used by the people of Israel to sacrifice animals to their God, Yahweh. The Bible talks about Jesus being the one final sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1-18) who died for us, to restore our relationship with God. If this is the Jesus that we believe in then there is no longer any need for us to sacrifice anything. Jesus has done it all.



We are blessed because
Jesus' light is projected on
our hearts by a powerfully
loving God

Of course, in our society, we still feel in our bones that sacrifices are necessary. Innocent or guilty, we like our scapegoats. Sometimes these scapegoats feel immensely justified, such as this month's scapegoat, Matt Hancock. Mostly we need to step back and think whether, given our own hidden, or not so hidden failures, sacrificing somebody or something else serves any purpose at all. Even in the Old Testament, some 500 years before Jesus was born, it is declared that God does not want sacrifices, (Micah 6:1-4, 6-8), but rather, our God, Yahweh, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, wants justice and mercy.

The commandments, although they provide a good basis for modern law, belong somewhere else, rather than over the communion table. A simple cross is placed upon the altar in Holy Cross church, which reminds me and you that, although I am rubbish at being good, what matters is what the one good man, Jesus Christ, has done for us.

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



That perfect man died because of God's grace and love for you.

Isaac Newton's church up the road is, apart from the windows, a grey, ancient building really. Isaac Newton would have loved the coloured light that illuminates the ancient cross, because it was he who separated white light into its component colours of the rainbow. These colours do not belong on the cross, but they are projected into the church by the early morning sun.

At the start of our reading from Ephesians it says that we are blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ. That means that we have no light of our own except that which God has given to us through Jesus. We are blessed because his light is projected on our hearts by a powerfully loving God. It is not our own light, but we love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19)

God Bless

Eric

Let us pray...

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
May the lord make his face to shine upon you,
And be gracious to you.

May the Lord lift his countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Amen



Bedford Foodbank

Items currently needed: UHT MILK, Cup-a-Soup, Fruit Juice (Longlife), Tinned Carrots/Peas/Sweetcorn, Tinned Tuna, Tinned Fruit, 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

David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel. There were 30,000 of them. Then David and all his people went to Baalah in Judah. They took the Ark of the Covenant of God from Baalah in Judah and moved it to Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant is called by the Name, the name of the Lord of heaven's armies. His throne is between the gold creatures with wings that are on the Ark of the Covenant. David's men put the Ark of the Covenant of God on a new cart. Then they brought the Ark of the Covenant out of Abinadab's house on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, led the new cart. This cart had the Ark of the Covenant of God on it. Ahio was walking in front of it. David and all the Israelites were playing all kinds of musical instruments before the Lord. They were made of pine wood. There were lyres, harps, tambourines, rattles and cymbals.

Suggested Music for this week

Before the throne of God above

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70SelutxNWI>

O perfect love, O perfect sacrifice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAM6sZRioeM>

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpkEeXWtWg0>

I am not alone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpkEeXWtWg0>

Glory be to Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOTTBL5UQE8>

Prayer Request from Tearfund

Children continue to bear the brunt of the escalating violence in Mali. More than 1,300 schools are closed as a result of insecurity in the country. This often leads to children being forced into work or marriage. Pray for long-term solutions to the violence so that schools can safely reopen. And ask God to protect children at risk of exploitation.

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).

The All Age Bit!

This week we are exploring the story of dancing King David which you can find in the Bible at 2 Samuel 6 verses 1-5. Why do you think David celebrated and danced when the Ark of the Lord was brought to Jerusalem? The Ark of the Covenant was built to carry the stone tablets containing the laws that God had written for his people. God gave instructions to Moses of how it should look and be constructed. Earlier in 1 Samuel 4, the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant but it caused so many problems for them that they returned it. When it was brought back to Jerusalem it was a reminder that God was with his people and that God's promises and agreements with his people had not changed.

Activities:

Musical instruments: make a musical instrument from recycled materials:

- Decorate an empty bottle or tube and fill it with dried rice, lentils or pasta to make a shaker;
- Stretch elastic bands of different sizes across an empty plastic tub. Decorate the tub and then play your instrument by plucking on the elastic bands;
- Fill some empty bottles or jars with different amounts of water and then tap them with pencils or spoons to see what different sounds you can make.

Active Worship: There are so many different ways that we can show our love for God and worship Him.

- Put on a favourite worship song and praise God with music, singing, dancing and instruments;
- Get creative and worship God through crafting, drawing or painting;
- Worship God through sharing love and serving others;
- Worship God by taking care of his creation, eg by collecting litter in your local area.

Song

I'm Gonna Jump Up and Down (Be Happy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxDmS7Vc5Tw>

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the story of David dancing with joy as the Ark of the Covenant returned to Jerusalem. Help us to be worshippers of you, giving you glory and praise for the good things you do in our own lives. We pray for the leaders in our own lives, that they would give themselves wholeheartedly to loving and serving you. Amen.

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