

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

Virtual Church News

**23rd January 2022
3rd Sunday of Epiphany
(4th 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 Normal Sunday Services

1st Sunday of the month

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

2nd Sunday of the month

- 9.30am Morning Worship 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 Morning Worship 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.

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.



Reading for the Week

Luke 4.14-21

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the
captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

Message from Rev Eric Lomax

Over the last month, our Labrador, Nutmeg, has been suffering, and has been placed on a course of chemotherapy. It is amazing how we, as humans, can build up a loving relationship with a completely different species, and see them as a member of our family. There is something about Nutmeg's dependency on us that reminds us of our responsibility to that creature. I remember a comment in the wonderful miniature philosophical work by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, called 'The Little Prince,' in which he ponders; 'You become responsible forever for what you have tamed.'

This could, equally, be a beautiful reflection on God's love for us. Our creator is bound to us and loves us because we are his creatures.

Jesus loved these poems from the book of Isaiah which was compiled roughly 500 years before. Isaiah spoke directly about God's wish to redeem his people,

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Message continued...

but he also spoke of justice and compassion as being at the core of what God calls his people to be. The God of Isaiah spoke of the justice and compassion of God. Something about the words of the prophet Isaiah spoke to Jesus about the heart of God for his creation. He loves each of us, and hates to see us suffering.

In this extraordinary reading, Jesus not only announces himself as the servant of God, but also as our Servant; one who comes to the weakest, the most alienated, the most oppressed of us; to bring good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, sight to the blind, and liberation for the oppressed.

What is amazing about this reading was that Jesus stood up in the synagogue, amongst the religious people, to make this statement. The fact is, that these people had become complacent and self righteous. They had, over the years, developed a sense of superiority. They judged those who did not meet their exacting, and often misled standards.

Jesus stood up, read from Isaiah, and announced that this was who he was, and this is what he is for. The passage tells us that all the eyes in the synagogue were on him, and no doubt there was the realisation that if Jesus represented God in this way, then they should also be like this, if they were to reflect their creator.

Because of this, we realise that we find in these words the prototype for what we, as the church, should be. We are not here to be self-righteous or religious, we cannot demonstrate superiority or discrimination in any way. We are truly here to reflect God in Jesus Christ, by allowing the Spirit of the Lord to anoint us to bring good news to the poor, freedom to the captives and a new vision and perspective to those who are blinded to the truth. If we are to be truly like Jesus, then that will make us true subversives and revolutionaries, a counter culture to what we see around us.

God bless, Eric

Bedford Foodbank

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

In December they fed 1,299 people (489 children) who were identified through over 200 referral agencies in the community. This was a huge increase on previous months.

Food urgently needed includes: Milk (Longlife), Fruit Juice (Longlife), Cup-a-Soup, Tinned Potatoes (large), Coffee (100g), Teabags (40/80), Hotdogs (Jumbo), Tinned meat in sauce (e.g. curry, chilli), Shower gel, Sponge Puddings.

www.bedford.foodbank.org.uk



Let us pray...

God of all mercy,
your Son proclaimed good news to
the poor,
release to the captives,
and freedom to the oppressed:
anoint us with your Holy Spirit
and set all your people free
to praise you in Christ our Lord.
Amen



Living in Love & Faith

The St Albans Diocese warmly encourages you to join in the Living in Love and Faith course taking place in the Diocese and across The Church of England as we explore together Christian teaching and our understandings of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

If you're not sure about what this is all about, there is a short film to watch which features some people who have already taken part. You can watch this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUwaXHOJQMo>

You can join this course online via Zoom. The course will be run by Bishop Michael. There are five sessions which are all on Wednesdays from 7.30pm to 9.00pm on 26 January, 2 February, 9 February, 23 February and 9 March.

To book a place please go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/living-in-love-and-faith-llf-course-msn-tickets-229353130387>



Suggested Music

O for a thousand tongues to sing
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-dEfvz6Vms>

My God, how wonderful thou art
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUOWT1AMyrM>

All heaven declares
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPkZAjA610k>

Be still for the presence of the Lord
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APvI38MO0UA>

Reckless love
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-D3OI1kyHg>

Courage
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRKDWo8JKXg>

All Age Reading

1 Corinthians 12 v 12-31a

¹² A person's body is one thing, but it has many parts. Yes, there are many parts to a body, but all those parts make only one body. Christ is like that too. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, and some of us are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some of us are free. But we were all baptized into one body through one Spirit. And we were all made to share in the one Spirit.

¹⁴ And a person's body has more than one part. It has many parts. ¹⁵ The foot might say, "I am not a hand. So I am not part of the body." But saying this would not stop the foot from being a part of the body. ¹⁶ The ear might say, "I am not an eye. So I am not part of the body." But saying this would not make the ear stop being a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, the body would not be able to hear. If the whole body were an ear, the body would not be able to smell anything. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹ If each part of the body were the same part, there would be no body. But truly God put the parts in the body as he wanted them. He made a place for each one of them. ²⁰ And so there are many parts, but only one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the foot, "I don't need you!" ²² No! Those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are really very important. ²³ And the parts of the body that we think are not worth much are the parts that we give the most care to. And we give special care to the parts of the body that we want to hide. ²⁴ The more beautiful parts of our body need no special care. But God put the body together and gave more honor to the parts that need it. ²⁵ God did this so that our body would not be divided. God wanted the different parts to care the same for each other. ²⁶ If one part of the body suffers, then all the other parts suffer with it. Or if one part of our body is honored, then all the other parts share its honor.

²⁷ All of you together are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of that body. ²⁸ And in the church God has given a place first to apostles, second to prophets, and third to teachers. Then God has given a place to those who do miracles, those who have gifts of healing, those who can help others, those who are able to lead, and those who can speak in different languages. ²⁹ Not all are apostles. Not all are prophets. Not all are teachers. Not all do miracles. ³⁰ Not all have gifts of healing. Not all speak in different languages. Not all interpret those languages. ³¹ But you should truly want to have the greater gifts.

And now I will show you the best way of all.
Reading taken from International Children's Bible courtesy of Bible Gateway

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St James's
Church
Biddenham

30th
January
6pm

CHORAL EVENSONG

Everyone
Welcome!

No booking required

Join us for our quarterly Choral Evensong service with choir.
Following the Book of Common Prayer, this service, often only held in larger churches and cathedrals, has something for everyone!



Spring Harvest/Greenbelt

In previous years groups of people from our churches have attended these events. Both events are planned to take place this year. Please use the following links to book or for more details.

<https://springharvestevent.org/booking>

<https://www.greenbelt.org.uk/buy-tickets/>

Book now

Limited availability



SPRING
HARVEST
2022

RESTORE
RENEW
REBUILD

MONEY BACK
GUARANTEE



Book into Spring
Harvest 2022
with confidence

Harrogate 9-13 April

Skegness 11-15 April

Minehead 18-22 April

The All Age Bit

This week we continue to look at 1 Corinthians. This passage teaches us that we are all part of the body of Christ (the church). Each of us is important and we each have a part to play in God's church.

Who do you think is the most important person at All Saints/St James's? We may think that this person is important but the passage reminds us that no part of the church/no one person is more important than any other. We should love and care for all those in our church family. The church family is like a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece may seem small and unimportant, but without it the picture is incomplete. The church is the same - we may feel that the part we play is small and unimportant - but we are part of the big picture of what God is doing in the world. In order to work properly, each puzzle piece needs to be positioned in the right place and connected to the other pieces around it - that is why we go to church or take part in small groups - to connect with other Christians around us.

Activities:

Jigsaw Puzzle - If you have a jigsaw puzzle at home, why not have a go at completing it. Look at an individual piece and think about how little of the overall picture it gives, but when it is fitted together with other pieces, that picture starts to come together.

Body Parts - This week's passage talks about what might happen if the whole body was just one giant body part (that would be very strange, wouldn't it!) Challenge each other to complete a simple task, but only using one part of the body e.g. open a door using only your knees, or unwrap a sweet using only your toes. How well do you manage? Or you could try saying that there is a certain part of your body that you are not allowed to use - e.g. tie your shoelaces without using your thumbs!

Songs and videos:

The Body Song <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8eTSnxDo1s>

Virtual Sunday School - The Body of Christ - Celebrating Diversity <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfbjttWNRV8>

Jesus Returns to Nazareth (see adult reading for this week) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rMBXz0NNMXw>

Prayer:

Jesus, help us to think this week about everyone in our church family, in our community, our country and our world. We pray in particular for those who find it difficult to connect with others, perhaps because of conflict, persecution or ill health, and for those who feel they are worthless and insignificant. Help us to care for all members of your church and to be welcoming and loving to everyone we meet. Amen.

Resources from *Roots and Journey Together* (www.tath.co.uk)

In association with Bedford Quakers & Malawi Orphan Fund

"Unlock Uni"

Alex Mnatzaganian & friends present

A concert in aid of disadvantaged young people in Malawi



3 - 4.30pm, Sunday 27th Feb 2022

Christ Church, 140 Dudley St
Bedford MK40 3SX
Donations welcome



Imagine this...

You've got the grades, you've got the tuition loan,
but you don't have a family.

You can't afford a laptop, books, food.

So, no uni for you?

Learn more and donate at unlockuni.org



Each month Bedford Quakers support a chosen charity.

For February 2022 we are helping students of Mchinji Children's Home, also known as "Home of Hope" - a large residential school, home to over 600 of Malawi's most vulnerable children and young people.

By contributing financially, we will help "unlock university" for students who have the grades but not the means to attend.



All proceeds will be presented to and administered by Bedford-based charity Malawi Orphan Fund.

Registered UK Charity 1110640.

lquakers.org.uk/bedford
malawiorphanfund.uk
ccbedford.org