

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

Virtual Church News

25 July 2021

8th 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

A Note on the Covid Relaxations

Following the relaxation of the Covid laws, you are no longer required by law to wear a face covering when attending the 9.30am services. It is also no longer a legal requirement that we hold your details for the purposes of Track & Trace. However, the Church of England is urging caution on relaxing these requirements. We would therefore request that you consider continuing to wear a face covering and providing your details when attending services. We would also ask you to maintain a sensible distance from other attendees. Please help us to keep all members of our church family safe and well. Thank you.

A Reading for the Week

Matthew 20.20-28

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favour of him. And he said to her, 'What do you want?' She said to him, 'Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.' But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to him, 'We are able.' He said to them, 'You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.'

When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'



This Week's Services

- Sunday 9.30am: Service at St James, Biddenham (see note below re coffee after)
- Sunday 1.00pm: Baptism of Margot at All Saints, Kempston
- Sunday 11.00am: Virtch (Zoom)
- Monday 9.00am: Morning Prayer (Zoom)
- Wednesday 6.00pm: Virtch (Zoom)

Please pray for Margot and her family as she is baptised on Sunday.

Coffee Anyone?

After this week's 9.30am service at St James's you are invited to bring a flask of tea/coffee and a cup and stay to gather (suitably distanced of course) for a drink and a chat either outside in the Churchyard or, if the weather is bad, in Church.



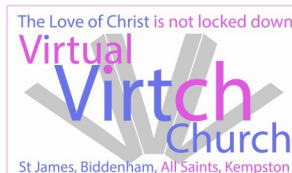
Message from Rev Eric Lomax

Probably the most explicitly easy to understand passages in the New Testament, but it had to be. This is because the message it gives is so alien to us; For ourselves, and our children, we strive for the biggest, the most successful and the best, when the Jesus we proclaim was so opposite to this. He stripped himself of anything that might be interpreted as power or wealth, wrapped a towel round his waist, knelt down on the floor, and washed his disciple's feet.

Continued on next page...

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 Rev Eric Lomax cont...

The sons of Zebedee were called elsewhere, 'the sons of thunder,' temperamental, perhaps judgemental, and certainly they knew their own rights. You can see, how, with such a pushy mother, they had ended up this way. She was clearly the kind who loved to name drop, telling her friends how her sons, James and John were 'close friends,' with the celebrity Messiah, Jesus.' It was with this in the forefront of her mind, that she decided to put a word or two in for them.

She must have approached Jesus with a worldly-wiseness that was not very wise at all, this is all about power, and about wanting them to supersede, but there was a profound cluelessness of who Jesus was, and what he was for; 'I can see the cake you are eating, and my boys should have a slice of that cake, and the very best slice of that cake; 'When you come into your kingdom, grant them also a throne, one at your left and one at your right?'

The point was that Jesus did not say 'no,' What he said was, 'you need to think about what you are asking.' Jesus could have, in fact, pointed to his own mother, Mary. 'In two, three months' time, when she is kneeling in the blood soaked dirt, at the foot of my cross, then ask me if you want the same glory for your sons. If you want them to have the same splintered, wooden, cross-shaped throne as me, and the same, stinging, crushing crown, then sure, they can have that, but would you really wish that upon anybody, particularly your two exceptional boys?

Church Services etc. on TV/Radio

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

Sunday 25 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 28 July

- 3.30pm BBC Radio 3 - Choral Evensong.

Rev Eric Lomax Contact Details

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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



We all understand this passage, don't we? We all understand it's implications. The point is, that I am not entirely sure that we do fully, truly, absolutely understand.

Look at our world, how our politicians strive for power without, as Barak Obama said of Trump, and could have as easily have been said of Johnson, 'an ounce of humility.' That is not the way of Christ. Nor, dare I say it is the icing on the cake method of faith that gives priority to our temples of accepted practice, our liturgies, our choirs, or our neatly formatted traditional worship, but without recognising the real reason that we are here.

The real reason we are here is to be the reflection of the Christ who came to serve others, and not to serve himself; 'For the son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give himself as a ransom for many.'

Our sons of thunder are the perfect examples of the successful and arrogant in the church, those who believe that glory comes with success and power. Jesus, instead, tells their mother that parenting disciples comes at a potentially bitter cost. Her sons are following Jesus down a long and bitter road, and they are doing it not for themselves, but for the redemption of many.

God bless
Eric

Let us pray...

Lord God,
your Son left the riches of heaven
and became poor for our sake:
when we prosper save us from pride,
when we are needy save us from despair,
that we may trust in you alone;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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), Coffee, Biscuits, Shampoo, 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.



All Age Reading

2 Samuel 11 v 1-15

In the spring the kings would go out to war. So in the spring David sent out Joab, his servants and all the Israelites. They destroyed the Ammonites and attacked the city of Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed. He walked around on the roof of his palace. While he was on the roof, he saw a woman bathing. She was very beautiful. So David sent his servants to find out who she was. A servant answered, "That woman is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam. She is the wife of Uriah the Hittite." David sent messengers to bring Bathsheba to him. When she came to him, he had physical relations with her. (Now Bathsheba had purified herself from her monthly period.) Then she went back to her house. But Bathsheba became pregnant. She sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

So David sent this message to Joab: "Send Uriah the Hittite to me." So Joab sent Uriah to David. Uriah came to David. And David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, "Go home and rest."

So Uriah left the palace. The king also sent a gift to him. But Uriah did not go home. He slept outside the door of the palace. He slept there as all the king's officers did.

The officers told David, "Uriah did not go home."

Then David said to Uriah, "You came from a long trip. Why didn't you go home?"

Uriah said to him, "The Ark of the Covenant and the soldiers of Israel and Judah are staying in tents. My master Joab and his officers are camping out in the fields. It isn't right for me to go home to eat and drink and have intimate relations with my wife!"

David said to Uriah, "Stay here today. Tomorrow I'll send you back to the battle." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. Then David called Uriah to come to see him. Uriah ate and drank with David. David made Uriah drunk, but he still did not go home. That evening Uriah went to sleep with the king's officers outside the king's door.

The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by Uriah. In the letter David wrote, "Put Uriah on the front lines where the fighting is worst. Then leave him there alone. Let him be killed in battle."

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!

We continue looking at the book of 2 Samuel. David is described as a 'man after God's own heart' - his behaviour and commitment to his relationship with God is often used as an example for others to follow. However, it is also important to remember that David made mistakes. Today's story is one of those times. David's behaviour in the story is displeasing to God as he wants something that doesn't belong to him and he takes it. In next week's story we will explore how God sent Nathan to hold David accountable for his mistakes. God loves us enough to forgive our mistakes.

Activities

Heads or tails: play the heads or tails game which is all about choices. Everybody begins standing up. They then choose heads (hands on heads) or tails (hands on bottoms). Someone flips a coin. If you have chosen correctly you stay in the game and remain standing. If you made the wrong choice you sit down and are out for the rest of that round. The winner is the last one to remain standing.

Eraser art: The Bible promises that God removes, or wipes away, our sins and offers forgiveness. Create some art by colouring in a whole page with pencil. Using an eraser remove areas of the pencil to create a picture. Alternatively you could put strips of masking tape across a piece of paper, paint a picture over the top of it and then remove the tape to reveal the finished image.

Song

Wonderful Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxoggZ2ueJ0>

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the story of David and Bathsheba which reminds us that we can choose to live right for God and make good choices. Help us to be strong when we face temptation and to

Suggested Music for this week

Come down O love divine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXO4rqBQOAU>

All creatures of our God and King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUZD0hgtSgE>

Panis Angelicus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkrW3nRPGo4>

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXyHMMMy4YyY>