

Bexley Team News

St Barnabas, Joydens Wood
St James, North Cray
St John the Evangelist, Bexley
St Mary the Virgin, Bexley

Sunday 14 June 2020 Issue 13

The First Sunday after Trinity

We welcome our new Team Curate Matt Hodder and his family as they arrive this week!

PUBLIC WORSHIP HAS BEEN SUSPENDED IN ALL CHURCHES & PLACES OF WORSHIP. IN LINE WITH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE THE TEAM CHURCHES ARE PREPARING TO BE OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER ONLY-

St. Barnabas- from 20th June open on Saturdays and Sundays 9.00 am – 11.00 am

St. James- from 22nd June open on weekdays midday – 1.00 pm

St. Johns- The hope is to prepare St John's for daytime opening on Sundays. This is currently contingent on finding sufficient volunteers to assist in maintaining cleanliness and social distancing. Should you wish to volunteer please contact Edward (fr.edwardbarlow@gmail.com). In the meantime your prayers and patience are appreciated.

St. Marys- from 21st June open on Sundays and Wednesdays 10.00 am - midday

The Additional Collect

God of truth,
help us to keep your law of love
and to walk in ways of wisdom,
that we may find true life
in Jesus Christ your Son.

Bible Readings for this Sunday

Old Testament: Genesis 18. 1-15

New Testament: Romans 5. 1-8

Gospel: Matthew 9. 35-10. 8



Reflection

So many of our significant church celebrations seem to have passed by under Lockdown – the events of Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Sunday, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, and of course it has been St Barnabas Day on 11 June. We have marked these special days differently, as we have created Sacred Spaces in our homes, but there remains a sense of something missing, perhaps a sense of dislocation. Maybe we have realised over the last weeks and months that part of our identity as Christians comes from our gathering together Sunday by Sunday. Those words as we come to the communion table *'The Lord is here.... His Spirit is with us'* are a reminder that we are unified and bound together in and through God's presence.

That longed-for day of fully meeting together has not yet arrived, however it has been announced that church buildings can open for Private Prayer from Monday 15 June. We have had to make local decisions about how this is done practically, as our buildings differ so much. Opening for Private Prayer is a start at least, and we can hope that the day when we worship together in our church buildings is not too far off.

Our reading from Romans this week reminds us of our enduring identity in Christ, that through the grace of God, in spite of our faults and frailties, we are restored to a great hope. Our gospel reading reminds us that those first disciples were a mixed bunch but summoned together by Jesus for a special shared task. He chose them not because they were brilliant, capable articulate men. They clearly weren't. Among them were fishermen, a 'tax-collector' serving the interests of the occupying Roman army and a 'Zealot' a member of a nationalist movement who would stop at nothing to overthrow that same army of occupation. Not the ideal material for building a cohesive team, but for all their faults, they were given authority by Jesus, the authority to overcome evil. They have been with Jesus so they have been prepared by his teaching. They are equipped by the Holy Spirit to do the things he has done. They are to rely on God's provision as they go amongst the people.

The basis on which the Twelve were sent remains the basis for our Christian witness today. The mission of the Church continues to be the mission of Jesus. We too – another mixed bunch - are called by Christ, called to follow him and to reach out in his Name. We may feel ourselves to be inadequate for the task, for who could heal leprosy, drive out evil spirits, raise the dead?

Perhaps as we gradually emerge from Lockdown, we will be encouraged to make known our Christian faith, because we, like the first disciples are granted the authority of Jesus. It is my prayer that we will discover new courage through the companionship of each other, the stories of faith that we will share, knowing that we are with others who have also been called by Jesus, and that we draw strength from each other for all that lies ahead. Rev'd Ren

St Ithamar of Rochester

Last Wednesday 10th June was the day the Church remembered St Ithamar. Andrew Hill writes- St Ithamar is a little known saint in the great scheme of things but important to Rochester. As last Wednesday would have been a service at St Mary's I have done one of my Odd Talks about Saints- I find St Ithamar is one of those saints who you want to know not because of what we know about him but because of what we don't! He was Bishop of Rochester in the 7th Century but all that is really known about him is a few sentences from The Venerable Bede. We don't even know his real name. He took a name from the Old Testament on consecration. (From the reading from Numbers). Following the death of St Paulinus, Bede writes; "In his place, Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors for learning and conduct of life". Not sure what Bede actually was implying there about the average Kentish person, being born in the county myself! Up until then all Bishops had been either followers of St Augustine from Rome or Irish. So what is perhaps more interesting is that the Church in the 7th Century seemed to have been an organisation that had the foresight to appoint someone from the local community, the Saxons, to be one of its leaders. A lesson 1400 years later may still need to be learnt in some circles. Ithamar went on to consecrate Deusdedit, as first Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury. The date of his death is difficult to establish, suggestions being anywhere within a nine year window from 655, but the day is given as 10th June. His name doesn't appear to be mentioned again in Church history until a list of 19 Miracles of St Ithamar appears in the 12th Century by an unknown writer. Miracles are said to have occurred at his tomb which involved healing of various sense deficiencies, hearing, sight etc. restored. This building of his cult may have been political, given that England was in the middle of a civil war at the time and having a Saint on your side helped! But it is likely that, despite how little we know about him, he was the first local born Bishop in England. The crypt in Rochester Cathedral has a chapel dedicated to St Ithamar. Andrew

Prayers

Our prayers this week are offered by Andrew-

As the Church reopens its' buildings for private prayer
let us pause and pray for our church leaders.

For those in times past who established the Church in England.
For those today, who have had and still have difficult decisions
to make, whether at local or national level. For those affected
by Covid 19. Those who have been infected, who have had to
isolate, whose loved ones have been affected and who have
been unable to be with their communities.

Remembering the Chaplains of Hospitals and Care Homes and Ministers officiating at funerals. We give thanks that the Church has still been able to be the Church, through different ways of worshipping, keeping in touch with congregations and providing relief and support. Amen

Keep us, good Lord under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen



This weeks messy church activities can be found on the link below. We hope you enjoy.

<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf/Messy%20Money%20at%20home.pdf>

Katrina

Church Magazine Howlers

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5 pm - prayer and medication to follow.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?'

Come early and listen to our choir practice.



Church Security Please continue to be watchful, prayerful and alert.

Matt Hodder We would like to welcome Matt and his family by providing a box of food treats (sweet or savoury, but non-perishable only please) when they move into their new home on 23 June. Please contact Mary Andrews by Wednesday 17th June at the latest on 01322 523071 or maryrose.andrews@gmail.com if you would like to contribute.

St. Mary's We are grateful for the ongoing financial support for St. Mary's even as we are unable to meet. The box hedging in the memorial gardens has been affected by box blight and will have to be replaced. This will be done over the coming months. We are very grateful for the kind donation of £300 towards the cost of this work.

St. John's Giving to St John's: You can give financially to the continuing upkeep and ministry of St John's via our Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/stjohntheevangelist-bexley

Suspended Sermons are posted each Sunday at fatheredwardbarlow.wordpress.com Social Media- engage with us via Facebook ([/stjohnsbexley](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsbexley)) and Twitter ([@stjohnsbexley](https://twitter.com/stjohnsbexley)).

Help offered/needed If you or someone you know **needs help** or if you **can offer assistance** please contact-

St. Mary's Bexley contact Christine Wood 01322 270942 chrisawood2003@yahoo.com

St Barnabas, Joydens Wood- contact Rev'd Ren or Kevin Clarke 07791582546 kacrat@btinternet.com

St. James, N Cray- contact Rev'd Ren or David Stevens 0208300 0867 davidstevens112@aol.com

St. Johns, Bexley- contact Revd Edward Barlow contact details below

THE BEXLEY TEAM CLERGY

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