

Bexley Team News

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

Sunday 5 April 2020 Issue 3

Palm Sunday

PUBLIC WORSHIP HAS BEEN SUSPENDED IN ALL CHURCHES & PLACES OF WORSHIP.

Collect for Palm Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love to the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example
of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and for ever. Amen



Bible Readings for Palm Sunday

Old Testament Reading Isaiah chapter 50 v 4-9a
New Testament Reading Philippians chapter 2 v 5-11
Suggested Gospel Reading The Gospel of Matthew chapter 21 v1-11

Reflection

As we hunker down and maintain our 'social distancing' it is a far cry from the great crowd that pressed around Jesus to greet him as he entered Jerusalem. Yet in our minds eye we can be there and observe the great welcome he received (Mt. 21 v 9).

As I reflect on the events of Palm Sunday and Holy Week my thoughts go to two memories. Firstly, last year's Palm Sunday procession from St. Mary's hall to church, led by the cross and choir as we sung 'Ride on ride on in majesty'. Secondly, walking last year through Jerusalem's Damascus gate to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the traditional (and well attested) site of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of our Lord.

As I reflect on the Bible readings and these memories I find myself pondering the fickle nature of we human beings and life itself. The broadcaster Piers Morgan's catch line on twitter is "One day you're cock of the walk, the next you're a feather duster". The Jesus who was welcomed into Jerusalem would in less than a week be condemned by those same crowds (Mt 26 v22.23), deserted by his closest followers (Mt 26 v69-75) and nailed to a cross.

We are assailed by an enemy we cannot see. Mighty economies stagger. Those often discounted by society- NHS workers, care workers, delivery drivers and maintainers of our infrastructure are, at least for the duration, heroes. Hero to zero and zero to hero. And yet as Christians we know that, whatever might

be thrown at us, God is greater. Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Good Friday lead inexorably to Easter Day and the resurrection. But that is for next Sunday. For now let us sit where we, help where we can, and remember that God is with us through all the fickle strangeness of life- and beyond. Clive

Activity- Palm Sunday cross

To learn how to make an Origami Palm Sunday cross see <https://www.origami-resource-center.com/easter-cross.html>

This week is Holy Week

Rochester Diocese has a dedicated page for Holy Week and Easter see <https://www.rochester.anglican.org/resources/seasonal/easter-and-holy-week/>

Suggested Bible reading for **Maundy Thursday**- John 13 v1-17, 31b-35

Family time. At the time of Jesus, it was customary for people to have their feet washed by a servant when they visited a house. At the Passover Meal Jesus washes the feet of the disciples- read the account in John 13:1-20. Take a bowl of water and a towel and wash the feet of the people in your home. If that seems too ucky wash their hands instead! As you are doing it think about how it feels to wash your mum, dad, brother, sister, partner, child's feet. Imagine being a disciple and Jesus washing your feet. Write a postcard or letter to a friend describing the event and how it has made you feel. Say a prayer giving thanks for all the people who do things however great or small for us. And ask God how we can help others at this time.

Suggested Bible reading for **Good Friday** - John chapter 18 v 1 – chapter 19 v 42

Collect for Good Friday

Almighty Father,
look with mercy on your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hand of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen



Prayers

Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and gave them new life, be with doctors, nurses and carers, as they act as agents of your healing touch. In desperate times, keep them strong yet loving; and when their work is done, be with them in their weariness and in their tears. Amen. *(Althea Hayton, adapted)*

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.

Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. Amen.

Around and about

We encourage everyone to pause and say the Lord's Prayer at 11.00 am each day and to pray at 7.00 pm each evening. We can be together in prayer even when we are apart.

What do people really think about the Bible? Bible Society has commissioned a survey by YouGov and the results are available at lumino.org.uk. Eight different spiritual types have been identified according to their attitude to the Bible. Find out the spiritual make up of your community by putting in your postcode. **Chocaholics** - the first person to email Clive with the result for their postcode will receive a Meaningful Chocolate Company Easter Egg. Winner announced in next issue.

Bexley Foodbank. The most needed items this week are toiletries, shampoo/conditioner, dried noodles, sugar, sponge puddings and packets of custard. We can no longer access the collection boxes in churches but most supermarkets have their own if you are out doing essential shopping. Bexley Foodbank will also receive donations of items taken to them directly, see <https://bexley.foodbank.org.uk/locations>. You may also wish to consider donating to them financially at <https://www.give.net/bexleyfoodbank>

If you know someone who would like to receive weekly issues they can email revlcivewood@gmail.com with the subject 'Bexley Team News'

Bishop James has extended by six months the date by which Annual Parochial Church Meetings must take place. This date is now 31st October. Those who serve as PCC representatives and would have been due for re-election will therefore be able to continue for an additional six months 😊

The Church Times is currently offering a super deal 10 copies for £10 with no commitment to continue. Go to www.churchtimes.co.uk/subscribe or call 01603 785911. Church House Bookshop has compiled a list of suggested titles for these troubled times which can be found on their website and are now offering postage and packing free of charge. Also the Time to Pray app, is now available to download free.

News from around the Churches

St John's, 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

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