

# Bexley Team News

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

Sunday 31 May 2020 Issue 11

Pentecost (Whit-Sunday)

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

## Collect

God, who as at this time  
taught the hearts of your faithful people  
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:  
grant us by the same Spirit  
to have a right judgement in all things  
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;  
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.



## Bible Readings for this Sunday

Old Testament: Numbers 11. 24-30 New Testament: Acts 2. 1-21 Gospel Reading: John 20. 7. 37-39

This is the link to a video of Ren leading a **Short Service for Pentecost** on YouTube. This will also be accessible through the St James North Cray Website <https://youtu.be/zbxmgB-E3g>

## Reflection on today's gospel reading

In 1998 I was a finalist in The Prayer Book Society's *Cranmer Awards*, a national reading competition for young people. Each contestant was expected to recite a portion of the Book of Common Prayer from memory in front of an audience and a panel of judges.

My 'party piece' was the Collect, Epistle and Gospel for Whit-Sunday (also called Pentecost) – this meant those Parthians, Medes, Elamites and so on were committed to memory and, whilst a bit rusty, I could probably give it a worthy go again.

The first reading on Pentecost is seen by some as a bit of a 'short-straw' as the reader must rattle off a list of place names from the Apostles' world, and there's always the worry of an unexpected minibus load of Pamphylian tourists arriving at the last minute.

This list reflects the first people the Apostles meet receiving the Holy Spirit – the first recipients to the Church's ministry and the first links in a long chain that will stretch out from Jerusalem to the ends of the Earth (Yea, even unto Bexley). What this means is that from day one the Church was diverse – those called to receive the Good News belonged to completely different races, cultures and languages – and when they heard the Apostles preach they continued to hear them in their own languages.

The Church across the world grows as a continuing part of that legacy, and continues to reflect that

diversity as God calls people from a whole multitude of cultures, backgrounds and characteristics. God calls together those who are different, and calls us together *because we are* different – we can see that within our four congregations and across the churches of the team which are themselves diverse.

We are called to be *one* body, but that isn't to say that our diversity must be lost: Tipped into a melting pot where we can be remoulded as identikit 'Christians'. Instead we are called to bring our differences to enrich the whole; each of us bringing distinct gifts, and I think this is particularly pertinent as we explore how we will grow together as a team of churches: homogeneity is clearly anathema to the idea of a *team*. When true collaboration takes place the task may be one, but the people are different.

Many of us are missing time spent together in our distinct parish churches and as a whole team. The things I miss the most probably aren't those attributes I have in common with others but those which are different, and I therefore can't imitate in my own life no matter how much I try.

When the time comes for us to come back together I very much hope that we will do so with new lenses on the uniqueness each one of us brings to the table, and it will be in this spirit that we continue to live, grow and serve together as one diverse Church. Rev'd Edward

### Prayers

O Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who with the Father and the Son abides one God, descend this day into our hearts, that while you make intercession for us, we may with full confidence call upon our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen  
*from the Mozarabic Sacramentary*

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.



Last week's Messy Church at home on the theme of Ascension challenged us to make our own cloud. Our picture shows April doing that! This week Messy Church at home has lots of ideas and activities on the link below to introduce children to Pentecost, we hope you can enjoy. <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/resource/messy-church-home-pentecost> If you are looking for more resources for your family to grow in faith during this time, the Church of England also has some wonderful videos and resources on the following link <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/faith-home/i-am-parent> Best



\*\*\*Do you have news, information or ideas for Bexley Team News? Please contact Rev'd Clive, contact details below.\*\*\*

If you are enjoying free time during the lockdown, here are some more ideas to help you grow your Christian faith:

Find a book of the Bible you are not familiar with, or a Gospel, and read it all the way through to get an overview. Download some study material afterwards to help understand if necessary.

The Talking Jesus course is currently free until the end of August 2020. Simply enter your email address on the website [www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/324865/Talking\\_Jesus\\_the.aspx](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/324865/Talking_Jesus_the.aspx) to receive a promotional code and follow the instructions to get it. Join with some friends.

If you want to do some serious study during the lockdown, the Westminster Theological Centre [wtctheology.org.uk/wtctresource/](http://wtctheology.org.uk/wtctresource/) are offering all their online courses for free until at least the end of June. Why not give them a go?....and let us know how you get on.

### **Between ourselves**

**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 on 01322 523071 or [maryrose.andrews@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### **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](http://www.justgiving.com/stjohntheevangelist-bexley)

Suspended Sermons are posted each Sunday at [fatheredwardbarlow.wordpress.com](http://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-

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

### **THE BEXLEY TEAM CLERGY**

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