

Bexley Team News

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

Sunday 12 July 2020 Issue 17

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Services in Team Churches this Sunday-

St. Barnabas 10.45 am Service of the Word

St. James 9.30 am Service of the Word

St. Johns 9.00 am Mattins 3.00 pm Evening Prayer. Please if you can download the Daily Prayer App and get the service by switching to 'Traditional' in the menu. Hard copies will be available.

St. Mary's 10.00 am BCP Morning Prayer

- these will all be said services with no hymns/songs

Team Churches open for private prayer-

St. Johns Sundays between Mattins and Evening Prayer

St. Mary's Until midday after morning prayer and on Wednesdays 10.00 am to midday

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified: hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth to the glory of your name; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Bible Readings for this Sunday

Old Testament: Genesis 25 v.19-34 New Testament: Romans 8 v.1-11 Gospel: Matthew 13 v.1-9, 18-23

Reflection

A few months ago, in a moment of lock down boredom, we decided to clear out the small shed in our garden. As we tidied the broken pots and reams of twine, we came across a very old packet of sunflower seeds which had been left by the tenants before us (or perhaps even the ones before them!)

We decided to plant them in a pot to see what would happen. We tenderly watered and waited, waited and watered until finally they burst forth into visible life. However, they looked a little sorry for themselves, never really at home in their small plastic pot. Fast forward to two and a half weeks ago and we carefully loaded the pot of small sunflower seedlings onto the removal truck, ready to be planted in our new garden in Bexley. In all honestly I suspected they might not survive the trip. Thankfully they did, and we planted those small sunflowers into the flower bed in the back garden. The children spent time digging and raking; clearing small twigs and bits of stone out of the soil. These tiny forgotten seeds in a shed in Cambridge have now grown abundantly and rapidly, producing a crop far exceeding what we might have imagined, and it's down to some good quality Bexley soil which had been looked after and tended to.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus begins telling the large crowd a set of seven parables; stories explained in the language of the day. The first one talks about how the seed sown is like the word of God being scattered

around. It's sown liberally, far and wide onto anything and everything. But the seed fails to take root most of the time. In verses 18-23 Jesus helpfully explains the meaning of His parable, and it's far more about the soil than the seeds. Sometimes a lack of understanding means the seed fails to take root, as in the seed on the path. Let us never be afraid to ask questions of our faith and of that which we struggle to understand, no matter how simple it might seem. Jesus spends lots of time asking and answering questions, so we can do that too!

Sometimes the soil we have is so rocky and full of other stuff, that the seed fails to find the necessary space for long term growth, despite its early promise. A regular moment to pause and think 'have I made any space for God today?' is a beneficial habit to get into. Then again, some seeds fall among soil so full of thorns that the joy of the Good News is soon choked. Jesus uses examples of worries of the world and seeking after wealth as potential 'thorns' in the soil, but perhaps it could be other things too. Health worries, stress, work pressures, family commitments. All things which can affect anybody, but all things which we as Christians can approach in the knowledge that God loves us and gives us life.

Finally we hear of the seed which takes root in good soil. That tiny seed produces far more than expected. So perhaps this week we might reflect on our own soil, safe in the knowledge that the farmer will keep scattering the seeds. We might reflect on what it is that stops us from receiving the word of God and allowing it to grow abundantly and rapidly, producing a crop far exceeding what we might have imagined. Matt Hodder

Prayers

Creator God, we are troubled by the conflict in the world
Help us to confront and challenge prejudice, greed and hatred
and all that prevents people from living fully and freely.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Faithful God, your son Jesus Christ,
called ordinary people to follow him as disciples.

Help us to respond to that same call
and to share your gospel of hope in our communities.

We pray for our new curate Matt Hodder, and for his family as the

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Healing God, we pray for all those who are sick, that they might be deeply aware of your presence with them.
We pray also for those who care for the sick and the broken.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Eternal God, your love reaches beyond the grave. At the end of our days on earth be with us,
with those we love, and with those whom we love who have gone before us. We hold before you those who
have recently died and those bereaved.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Almighty God, May we all be changed and transformed to become, day by day, more like your Son Jesus
Christ.

Merciful father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

Looking ahead- resumption of Holy Communion services at the Team Churches

There will be Holy Communion services on Sunday 19th July at St. James North Cray (9.30 am) St. Mary's (10.00 am) and St. Barnabas (10.45 am) and on Sunday 26th July at St. Johns' (10.00 am)





April and Acer enjoying the activities from last Sunday's Messy Church theme 'Messages and Messengers'



This week we have something a bit different to share. Dr Dave does Messy Science!! Watch the video below and have a go....<https://youtu.be/JTCOhY5HhG4> Katrina

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) and Twitter (@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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