

# Bexley Team News

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

10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Issues 43

The Baptism of Christ

The Covid infection rates are very high in the Bexley area and the NHS is under extreme pressure. Currently places of worship are legally allowed to stay open, however, the Team have decided that for the moment Team churches should be closed. Bishop James has granted permission for this, currently to the end of January. The situation will be kept under review. During this difficult time, we as a Team want to do what we can to support each other. Zoom and online services continue. Please do contact a member of the Clergy Team if you are worried or concerned about anything. Contact details are given below.

## Team Services and Worship material in Lockdown

**Saturday 9 January at 5.30 pm**

***Saturday NightWatch Zoom Service***

In Jewish understanding, the Sabbath begins as night falls on the Eve of the Sabbath, and for Christians it is an opportunity to put aside the cares and concerns of the Monday to Saturday week of tasks and activity and to prepare ourselves to keep Sunday as 'a Day of Holy Rest'. This short, informal service will include material to help us to reflect on the week that has past and will be suitable for all ages.

This week, for our reflection time, you may find it helpful to have with you photos of yourself as a baby, a teenager and an adult. We won't be asking anyone to share these! Alternatively, you might prefer to spend some time beforehand thinking about yourself at those times, so you have an image in your mind.

**Sunday 10 January at 10.00 am**

***Sunday Zoom Service for The Baptism of Christ***

A Service of bible reading and prayer. See the final sheet of the BTNews for the songs.

*Invitations to the above Zoom services have been emailed. If you haven't received the Zoom links please contact any member of the Team Clergy. We try and make it possible for people to 'dial in' to these services and where this can be done, dial-in details are shown on the email we send, but sometimes the technology lets us down! Please contact us if you are having problems and we will do what we can to help you.*

**Sunday 10 January at 10.00 am**

***Livestreamed Holy Communion***

A livestreamed service of Holy Communion from St John's. This will be available to view at 10am on St John's Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/stjohnsbexley](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsbexley) It is possible to view the stream without having a Facebook profile. The video will remain accessible after the event.

**Sunday 10 January**

***Bexley Team Children's Church***

This year we want to offer our families a weekly Bexley Team Children's Church.

Material can be seen at any time by following this link. <https://youtu.be/Y81GNpo1fC4>



**A Daily Bible Passage** and reflection is sent out to those who request in on email, or via a dedicated WhatsApp Group. Please let Rev Ren know if you wish to be included in this.

**Bible Readings for The Baptism of Christ** Genesis 1, 1-5 Acts 19, 1-7 Mark 1, 4-11

**The Collect for the Baptism of Christ:** Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; 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.

**The Alternative Collect:** At the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognise him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

## Rev'd Ren writes-

"That's torn it!"

In our Gospel reading today, Mark takes us to the moment when Jesus comes to John the Baptist at the River Jordan. Jesus seems to have a clear sense of purpose, but Mark offers us no explanation about what it was that compelled Jesus to go to John to be baptised. It is left to Matthew to give us the clue that Jesus asks John to Baptise him, in order to 'fulfil all righteousness' (Matthew 3.15).



Clearly, Jesus shows great humility as he submits to John's baptism, and we are in no doubt that it is a pivotal moment! Look at verse 10. *10*As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being **torn** open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

Mark uses the particular Greek word *Schizo* for torn twice in his gospel. The first is here at his baptism, then, if we fast forward to the Crucifixion, as Jesus breathes his last... *38* The curtain of the temple was **torn** in two from top to bottom. (Mark 15.38)

The word used comes from the Greek root *skhizein* to split, tear apart, rend. (From it, we get the word "schizophrenia", that terrible splitting of the mind.) It's a strong word, almost a violent word...

Matthew and Luke, in their gospels, have the heavens "opened." Mark alone has them "torn apart."

By Jesus submission to baptism, in Mark's dramatic language, the boundary between heaven and earth was ripped wide open.

And why would Mark use that particular word?

Well, what is simply opened could be closed again; what is torn apart cannot easily be refastened.

So that same Greek word is used by Mark for the tearing of the heavens and the tearing of the curtain that gave access to the Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem Temple. At Jesus' baptism as at his death, his ministry is book-ended by the awe-inspiring ripping apart, the permanent opening of our access to the most holy, to heaven, to God. In that moment, all is changed. May we live out that reality in our daily lives.

**Deanery Confirmations** These will be on Sunday 18 April 2021 at 6.30pm at Holy Redeemer, Lamorbey with Bishop James. Please speak with any of the Team clergy if you are interested in being confirmed.

## St Mary's

Betty Richardson's funeral will be at St. Mary's on 13<sup>th</sup> January at 10.00 am

We are very grateful to the 200 club which last year raised £950 for St. Mary's. 200 club membership subscriptions are due - if you haven't already paid this please contact Ann Whatson also if you would like information on joining. Tel 01322 526869

Bible Reading Fellowship notes- subscriptions are now due - some are overdue. Please contact Jenny Lee to pay for your subscription. Tel 01322 522068

Friends of St. Mary's- normally you would expect to receive a letter or e-mail at this time of year setting out our programme for the months ahead. You will understand why this has not been possible. Depending on the Covid situation, the Committee of the Friends is hoping to meet in March to draw up plans for the remainder of the year. We will be in touch with you as soon as possible thereafter. In the meantime we hope you are and will continue to be keeping well at this very difficult time. Mary Andrews – chair.

## 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) Sermons are posted each Sunday at [fatheredwardbarlow.wordpress.com](http://fatheredwardbarlow.wordpress.com) Social Media - engage with us via Facebook (/stjohnsbexley), Twitter (@stjohnsbexley) and Instagram (@stjohnsbexley)

## St James, North Cray

Each week the musicians at St James North Cray offer links to a selection of songs and music for us to enjoy. These can be found on our website [www.stjamesnorthcray.org.uk/welcome/music/](http://www.stjamesnorthcray.org.uk/welcome/music/)

### THE BEXLEY TEAM CLERGY

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**Songs for Zoom worship – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January at 10am.**

**Spirit of the Living God (Iverson)**

1 Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on me  
Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on me  
Melt me mould me  
Fill me use me  
Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on me

2 Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on us  
Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on us  
Melt us, mould us  
Fill us, use us  
Spirit of the Living God  
Fall afresh on us

**O Worship the Lord...**

1 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,  
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;  
with gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,  
kneel and adore him the Lord is his name.

2 Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,  
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,  
comfort thy sorrows and answer thy prayerfulness,  
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

3 Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness  
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;  
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness  
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

4 These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,  
he will accept for the name that is dear;  
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,  
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.