

Bexley Team News

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

Sunday 11 October 2020 Issue 30

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Team Churches services this Sunday -

St. Barnabas 10.45 am Harvest Service

St. James 9.30 am Harvest Service

St. Johns 8.00 am Holy Communion 10.00 am Holy Communion followed by APCM 3.00 pm Evening Prayer.

Church open for private prayer throughout the day on Sundays and Wednesdays. Please adhere to social distancing and hygiene restrictions and guidance. An explanatory video is available on the St John's website in addition to signage around the building.

St. Mary's 10.00 am Holy Communion 3.00 pm Messy Church in hall. **Wednesday-** 10.00 am Team Holy Communion

The Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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 Additional Collect: God our judge and saviour, teach us to be open to your truth and to trust in your love, that we may live each day with confidence in the salvation which is given through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Collect for Harvest Thanksgiving: Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; 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 Additional Collect: Creator God, you made the goodness of the land, the riches of the sea and the rhythm of the seasons; as we thank you for the harvest, may we cherish and respect this planet and its peoples, through Jesus Christ our Lord

Bible Readings for this Sunday

Old Testament: Isaiah 25 v1-9 New Testament: Philippians: 4, 1-9 Gospel: Matthew 22, 1-14

Reflection

"Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself."

Mrs Dalloway (in Virginia Woolf's novel of the same name) is incredibly anxious about the party she's planning. Vanessa Redgrave plays this beautifully in the film adaptation, grating out 'Won't you come to my parrteeeee' to all and sundry with such desperate angst that you know that if the intended guests don't come to her party, and enjoy themselves, and have the perfect night she has been dreaming of, then her world will end and all will be ruin. Imagine if she had been in the position of the former boss of a friend of mine who organised a works-night out in a brewery which had zero attendance (draw your own conclusions on that one!!)

Many of us get quite stressed when organising an event – a party, a banquet, a fundraiser or even an act of public worship! Often the source of our anxiety can be attributed to our *expectations* of the event – our success criteria are based on how we can visualise the end product and we perceive any possible deviation

from that image as failure: If you plan an event and envisage a room full of people how would you feel if, when the event takes place, the people in the room are *not the people you had initially imagined*?

We often take this sense of failure (whether founded or misplaced) not only as a reflection on our planning, but on ourselves – Western ideology conditions us to value *control* and if our actions bring about an outcome we had not planned then we may well be psychologically predisposed to read this as a personal reflection. What happens when our church events and services don't go as planned - When they don't meet the vision we've had for them? Who does this reflect on?: The clergy? Volunteers? Local community? God? And what success criteria are using to judge this?: Numbers of attendees? Money taken?

One of the lessons of 2020 is that planning ahead can often prove utterly futile – we may have to close our doors, restrict numbers, or self-isolate at a moment's notice, and yet this doesn't seem to have diminished the sheer administrative weight of *planning*: Risk assessments, reopening plans, contingency plans, continuity plans – and that greatest of bureaucratic behemoths, the APCM: When we look back on the past year with a view to steering our churches' future directions in mission and ministry.

The APCM is one of the instruments by which we lay our banqueting table – if our church is to be (like the King's Banquet in Matthew 22) an Earthly metaphor for God's Kingdom, we must prepare the dinner and slaughter the fat calves (figuratively speaking). We must send out the invitations and open the doors. But what images do we have in our minds of the 'end product'? Our personal 'vision' of a successful church? ... And in a year, five years, longer, what's realistically the likelihood of our churches, and our Team Ministry, matching up with the pictures we've painted in our own heads?

Like the King in the parable, we cannot determine whom God will send through our doors in the years to come, and we cannot pre-empt their gifts or their needs. The churches God intends us to grow into are unlikely to resemble the vain edifices we might wish them to be: And how will we react when we see God's intentions diverging from our own? Will we feel we are failing? Will we blame the 'failures' on others and steamroller in our own agendas?

Perhaps it doesn't help that we have bought in so doctrinally to the very Western relationship between 'Leadership' and 'Control'. We talk about 'Christian Leadership' as a license to form our own *vision, drive, direction, strategy*... But are those really ours' to lead with? Or are these the areas where Christ leads and we must be followers?

Our mission is to prepare the room, open the doors and dispatch the invitations: We may be tasked with buying the flowers but it is God who will host the party. Rev'd Edward

From the Team Rector

I realise that there are many fundraising demands on all of us but I wanted to bring this to your attention, as it is rather unique, and a local initiative. A North Cray couple, Dave and Jacky Cook, (well-known at St James Church and close friends of the late John Harrington) regularly open their beautiful garden in Parsonage Lane, North Cray to raise funds for Demelza Hospice Care for Children. As they have not been able to open the garden this year, they have produced an online 'virtual' visit to their garden. The video includes music from the Greenwich Concert Band. Watching the video is a lovely relaxing way to spend a quarter of an hour. And afterwards, you may feel moved to make a donation. Both the video and JustGiving page are via the link - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/DaveandJackyOpenGarden> Reverend Ren

Our Annual Meetings have happened later than usual this year, for obvious reasons, but as St John's hold their meetings this Sunday, the Quartet of APCM's across the Bexley Team will be completed! Thanks to the clergy for making it possible for me to attend all four of them. I've expressed my thanks to people at the meetings

but I also wanted to record my thanks in the BT News to all our Lay Ministers, Churchwardens and PCC Members for the work they have put in over the last very difficult year. Thanks are also due to all the members of our congregations, who have adapted magnificently to the bewildering changes that we have been living through. These contributions to the life and worship in our four parish churches are invaluable. Even in challenging times, **every** person is part of the Team and we are blessed through each other. May we move forward together into the future. Reverend Ren

This Saturday is World Mental Health Day, and in the current climate it's more important than ever to think about protecting our mental health as well as our children's. Below is an activity you can do with children to help them process their worries in uncertain times.

<https://newsletter-giveaways.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Worry-Busters-Booklet-2018.pdf> Katrina

St James North Cray services

18th October 9.30 am Communion

25th October 9.30 am Service of the Word,

1st November 9.30 am Memorial Service (with Communion)

8th November 9.30 am Service

followed by Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial with two minutes silence at 11.00 am

St Barnabas, Joydens Wood services

18th October 10.45 am Communion,

25th October 10.45 am Service of the Word, 4.00 pm Sunday @ 4 – worship and activities for all ages.

1st November - the church will be open between 10.00 am and 12 noon for you to come and go as you wish and to light a candle in memory of a loved one. There will be music, readings & prayers throughout the morning.

8th November 9.00 am Informal Communion.

During the Remembrance Weekend (Saturday 7 November & Sunday 8 November) you are invited to wear a poppy and also BRING a poppy to place on our River of Poppies in the St Barnabas Church Grounds.

Prayers will be said, and two minutes silence held at 11.00 am on Sunday 8th November.

We gather from 10.45am FACE COVERINGS MUST BE WORN. Car park will be kept free of cars, parking is available in the surrounding roads.

St. Mary's, Bexley services

18th October 8.30 am BCP Holy Communion 10.00 am Holy Communion.

25th October 10.00 am Family service 3.30 pm Holy Communion

1st November 8.30 am BCP Holy Communion 10.00 am Holy Communion with prayer for wholeness & healing.

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

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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