



# All Saints' Church

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## Sunday 22nd June

### 9.45am Morning Worship led by Revd. John Kirkby

#### Readings

Galatians 3:23-end  
Luke 8:26-39

#### Hymns

355 Jesu lover of my soul  
685 In Christ there is no east or west  
568 Alleluia sing to Jesus  
88 Praise to the Lord

Dear All Saints',

I hope you are all surviving the heat! The joy of our British weather is that we have such a variety of temperatures and types of weather, but they are not always comfortable, especially when we have similar temperatures to those we have seen these past few days. I hope you have been able to stay cool and the heat hasn't hit you too badly.

There are several interesting Bible readings in the lectionary this week:

There are 2 options for the Old Testament reading. In Isaiah 65, God is responding to an accusation from the people that he has neglected them. In response God asserts his presence, that he reached out time and again and said, 'here I am, here I am', but the people chose to go their own way. It's a passage that reminds us of God's faithfulness and his commitment to having a relationship with us. A precious thing.

In 1 Kings 19 we hear part of the story of Elijah. We will hear of Elijah and Elisha for the next couple of weeks as well. This week the passage focuses on Elijah's despair as Jezebel seeks to kill him after he has defeated the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. An angel comes and provides bread and water to strengthen him and then he journeys to Mount Horeb where he encounters God in the sound of 'sheer silence' or a 'gentle whisper', depending on how your Bible translates it.

What might that sound of sheer silence actually sound like? Silence can be uncomfortable sometimes, it can be difficult to sit in silence, but silence can also be welcome, when you come from a loud, noisy place for example. God made his presence known in the pillar of fire in the wilderness and when Moses received the law on Mount Sinai (also called Mount Horeb) there was thunder and lightning, thick cloud, smoke and fire, but here his presence is marked by something much gentler. What has been your experience of knowing God's presence?

There are two psalms given for this week - psalms 42 and 43. In Psalm 42 we have those lovely lines "As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." Isaiah 65 speaks of God's longing for a relationship with us, psalm 42 speaks of our longing for a relationship with God. I'm sure that many of us have known what it is to long for water this last week. Do we recognise that same longing for God in us? The psalm ends with words of hope for those who find themselves struggling, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted with me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God."

The New Testament passage comes from Galatians 3, a letter which is also there in the lectionary for the next two weeks. The early church in Galatia has been working through what it means to be a Gentile and a Christian and what expectations should there be e.g. should Gentiles be circumcised. Paul writes to say that they should not be circumcised and talks about the importance of faith over the law. In this week's section he speaks of the freedom that is found through faith, that we are all children of God through faith and it is in that context that he writes those famous words that "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." As we seek to be a church that truly welcomes all, what might those words say to you today?

The Gospel passage tells the story of the man who is often described as the Gerasene Demoniac. In today's world we may ask questions about that description. Were there actually demons or did he have a mental health problem? We don't know, but the important thing is that Jesus was able to give him peace and reconciliation with his community. He went from living among the tombs to "proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him". For me there is something particular poignant about him initially being naked, but by the end he is clothed.

This Sunday is Sanctuary Sunday as we mark the end of Refugee Week. Elijah was in need of sanctuary as he fled from Jezebel and was given practical help as well as encouragement, food as well as his meeting with God, before being sent onwards. The man from the country of the Gerasenes had clearly gone through a lot and need peace and practical help to enable him to move forward. There can be mixed responses to the refugees who come to this country seeking sanctuary, and yet time and again the Bible encourages us to welcome the stranger. What might that mean for All Saints or for our own individual lives today?

Blessings,  
Rachael

**Morning Prayer** at 9am and **Eucharist** at 9.30am continue on Tuesday morning.  
Evening Prayer is on Fridays at 4pm. All welcome.

**"Coffee, Chat and Play"** meets on Tuesday mornings. All are welcome to enjoy refreshments and company in the Lower Hall from 10 - 11.15am.

**Friendship Club** meets in the Lower Hall on Tuesdays at 2.30pm. This week will be a speaker from the Chilterns Neuro Centre.

**Leprosy Mission Coffee and Lunch:** over coffee on **Sunday 29th June** Matt Henderson will be talking about the work of The Leprosy Mission and will explain how our donations help perform the modern day miracle of curing this debilitating disease. A simple soup and roll lunch will then be available after the talk for those who would like to stay. Please sign up on the form in church or email me at [spalls@mac.com](mailto:spalls@mac.com) if you would like to have lunch with us that day. Everyone very welcome. Steve Spall

**Circuit Evening Zoom service** on **Sunday 22nd June** will be led this week by Revd. Joy Mayisiri. These services take place on the 4th Sunday of every month at 6pm. The Zoom link and codes are below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92078621815?pwd=HDXreQcYEQlumWXjkckcalpGjOxsIO.1>

Meeting ID: 920 7862 1815

Passcode: Worship

**Christian Aid:** the Berkhamsted team are grateful for £3,538 raised during Christian Aid Week. In addition, there will be a considerable sum via Gift Aid.

**Church Garden:** the fruit bushes in the west church garden (by the kitchen window) are beginning to ripen as are the strawberries. There is also more rhubarb. Please help yourself! Doubtless the birds will take their share. While you are there do take the opportunity to walk the perimeter of the church since you will see, although some effort has been to restore parts of the garden, there is still much to be done. Please consider offering to give a hand with removing offending weeds and dead heading. We do have professional gardeners coming towards the end of July for work on trees and large shrubs. **"Every little helps"**. Thank you.

**Berkhamsted School** is holding their **annual Tea Party** for local senior citizens on **Thursday 3rd July**. If you are interested in going, please see the notice in the hall for further details.

The next organ recital will be another on **Sunday 6th July**, when the organist will be Peter Wright.

As you know, Revd Rachael will be leaving us in July. Her **final service at All Saints'** will be on **Sunday 20th July**, followed by a church lunch. Her circuit farewell service will be at 3pm on 20th July at Hemel Hempstead Methodist Church. The **circuit welcome service** for our new minister, Revd Caroline Wickens, will be at All Saints' on **Sunday 31st August** at 3pm.

## Prayer Requests:

For: Ida Rance; Margaret; Penny Perry; Chris Billington; Audrey and Paul Cox; Jonathan and Ann Hayes; Helen and Sarah; Marion and Julian; Fay and Eddie Cuthbert; Mark, Nicola and family; Terry; Lesley Whittaker; Chris.

We pray for our neighbours throughout the world whose lives have been changed by the events in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon, and pray especially for all those who have lost loved ones and homes due to the conflict. We pray that this conflict may not escalate further into neighbouring countries. We pray too for all aid workers who have died or been injured while trying to bring supplies to those in need and for their families.

We pray too for those who are caught up in war in other parts of the world, including Sudan and Ukraine and for those facing the threat of starvation in the ongoing hostilities.

We also pray for:

All who are refugees, especially those who are not receiving help to rebuild their lives in safety.

We pray that the issue of climate change may not be forgotten and all the nations may act to secure the safety of our world. We pray too for all whose lives have been badly affected by climate changes in the areas where they live, especially the people of Bangladesh.

We pray that all MPs may serve their constituents and country with integrity and care for all they represent.

We continue to pray for the children and their families of our church and town and all who work in the NHS; Social Services and the charities who are supporting the sick or frail.

We pray for those who are helped by Embrace the Middle East, Karibuni Children; the Leprosy Mission; Phakamisa, DENS; the Way Inn with Open Door, Swan Youth Project and for all those who work in these organisations.

We continue to pray for those whose need is ongoing:

Paul Sear and his wife, Peggy; Julia Wright; Corinne & William; Gary Andersen; Charlie; Graham Rule; Clare Hancock; Heather Gifford; John Malcolm; Valerie Ruddock; Jenny Wells; Barbara Conway; Marnie Taylor; Leslie.



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