

Dear Friends,

At Jesus' baptism there is the audible voice of God /'this is my Son, whom I love, I delight in him'/ (Matthew 3:17). Straight after that incredible experience, Jesus is plunged into the desert, and the devil comes after him. 'If you are the Son of God....' Notice the point of attack, the devil's main (only?) tactic is to get us to doubt God's word.

Spiritual attack doesn't come with howling demons and horns, it comes, more often than not, as the worm of doubt. 'You can't trust God.' 'You can't trust His word.' 'He doesn't really love you.' 'Give in just this once, nobody will know, God won't mind.' The temptation to doubt God, the temptation to dwell on the wrongs done to us rather than forgiving them, the temptation to act out of fear rather than trust, we've all been there. We've seen from the USA how a regular diet of a simple message ('the election was rigged') can convince huge numbers of people to believe a lie. The devil wants us to believe a lie, that God doesn't love us, or that He doesn't care, or that we know better than He does.

Many people have fallen for it. The antidote is to feast on the truth - you are God's child, He loves you, and He delights in you. We can trust God, we don't have to understand everything, or to know how it all turns out, that's His job. Your heavenly Father loves you, you are his child.

Zoom drop-ins: we're trying these out for both churches, to give a chance to people to catch up with each other and see a few friendly faces. They're happening every Monday, here's where to find them:

* St Peters, Monday morning on Zoom, for joining details please contact Frances Croxford francescroxford@hotmail.com

* St James 2.30-3pm Monday, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84164192567>, password Cuppa.

Please do just turn up or leave whenever's convenient!

New on the Youtube Channel

* The latest Virtual Assembly from Ruth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2z0vhc4MEA>

* A video from John Hanson helping us to understand depression, which went up yesterday for 'blue Monday'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNRHZlCjGg>

* Sermons in our 'Very Good Book' series: here is a special done by Chris H on 'how the Bible changes lives and nations'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccR3BxK8G2o> and here's Davids on

how the Bible reveals God to us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrUKRFg9RG8>.

* Last years Lent Course session on 'Is the Bible Reliable' has been broken down into a video series, which you can find here in the 'Playlists' section of the channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS_rhJBAJTiXz3kXLMN_Xw/playlists

Church Finances: we are so grateful for God's provision over the last year. Thanks to the amazing Gift Day and a couple of other pleasant surprises, St James ended up £16,000 in surplus on the year, which will keep us going until at least the summer of 2021. With the help of a very generous donation, St. Peters ended 2020 with a surplus of just over £5,000. All this in a year when the churches have lost an expected

£25,000 of income between them. A massive thankyou to Rob and Frances our treasurers, for steering us through.

*Lent Course: *Lent begins on 17th Feb, and we'll be doing an online Lent Course for the whole parish. This will (hopefully) get a lot of us together, and will give our brilliant cell group leaders a well deserved break. The course is likely to run on Weds evenings, and we're going to try to make it fun and uplifting, with something to bless and inspire us but not reams of in-depth teaching. It's for everyone, whether or not you're part of a cell group, more details nearer the time.

Favourite Bible Verse: we're starting on our latest Newsletter, which will be home delivered to people who can't access our online services.

If you have a favourite Bible verse, and would like to say (briefly) what it means to you, please do let David, Ruth, or Joanna in the parish office know, it would be lovely to put a few of these in the newsletter to encourage people.

Prayer Walk: A couple of St James folks are doing a regular (socially distanced) prayer walk on Wednesdays 2-3pm. If you'd like to do the same around your neighbourhood, please let them know (GSHardacre@btinternet.com), or if you're confined to the house, you could use Streetview to do a virtual prayer walk (<https://www.instantstreetview.com/@50.956043,-2.661378,156.79h,-10.65p,1z>). There's also our noon prayers every Wednesday on Zoom, please contact Mark Felstead mfelstead13@icloud.com for the address and password.

Please keep praying for Barry from St James, having treatment for cancer, and Terry from St Peters who is in hospital with Covid, as well as other folk in our churches who are struggling with physical and mental health through this very tough season.

As always, please do let us know if you'd value prayer, practical help, or just want a chat. May God richly bless you this week.

yours in Christ

David and Ruth

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<http://www.stjamesyeovil.org.uk/>
<http://www.stpeters-yeovil.org.uk/>

St James and St Peters on

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