



A Blessed Christmastide to you and yours; and every good wish for a happy and healthy New Year in 2021
Well, what a year we've had!
Thank you very much for all your

support to the ministry team here in the United Benefice during this time. We've said goodbye to our departed members Marlene Bogle, Colin Squirrel, Don Hollyoake, Hubert Burke, Abdul's dad and Lynne's mom. We've all been affected by COVID-19 in one way or other. Whether it's missing coming in to church when we felt at our lowest; or we were (and still are) shielding and/or isolating; we've lost loved ones but couldn't attend their funerals in person; we've been tested positive for COVID-19, or unable to visit our loved ones in Care / Nursing Homes, or other reasons altogether.

In spite of our losses, we have some positives for which we give thanks to God. We've made it to Christmas 2020! We've added new words and meanings to our vocabulary like Zoom and Microsoft Teams; and have made more use of social media platforms like Facetime, WhatsApp video, Twitter, Facebook, etc. and of course have increased our use of the telephone as we kept in touch with one another. Whether we felt able to attend church in person or were only able to access online worship – we give thanks to God. As a result of our Zoom Confirmation classes, we have up to 7 persons to be confirmed next February 6th at our Deanery Confirmation at St. Jude with St. Aidan Church. So we do have a lot to be thankful for even though we're now in Tier 4. We now have a vaccine which we hope will halt the spread of the virus, keeping it at bay altogether. During this time, we can still attend public worship as we adhere to the COVID-19 rules – wear a mask if you can, wash your hands often or use hand sanitiser / anti-bacterial wipes, maintain 2m physical distance and open windows and doors to allow ventilation. Congregational singing is still not allowed, neither is the sharing of the peace.

Other activities **not allowed** include:

- Church services or carol singing in a public outdoor space beyond the churchyard/church land
- Physical meetings for PCC, APCM etc. in church or church hall
- Weddings with more than six present; anyone working is not included
- Provision of youth services.

I conclude with a **Thank You** from our Archdeacons: "Research indicates that there has been almost no traceable transmission of COVID in places of worship in the UK. We know that you, your wardens and others, have taken great pains to ensure COVID-secure practice and the work you have done in risk assessing and implementing this has been outstanding. Whether or not you decide to continue worship in church now, we would like to congratulate you on the excellence of the provision you have made. Thank you." They continued, "Online worship can be hard work and we are so grateful for the heroic efforts made by clergy and lay leaders to ensure that services have continued and the vulnerable been attended to. We are proud of your persistence and dedication. Please, look after yourselves and give yourselves time for rest and recreation after Christmas."

Welcome to the United Benefice of Holy Innocents & St. Mark, South Norwood

Sharing God's grace and love in our community



27th December 2020

Vicar: Canon Roxanne Hunte

Asst. Priest: Mother Susan Wheeler-Kiley

First Sunday of Christmas

President and Preacher, Mother Roxanne

Isaiah 52.7-10 * Psalm 98 * Hebrews 1.1-4[5-12] * John 1.1-14

Access online worship via

www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood

This week's diary

Sunday, 27 th December	Today	9pm Compline online
Monday, 28 th December	The Holy Innocents (Boxing Day transferred)	7.00pm St. Mark's Fundraising Quiz Night online 9.00pm Compline online
Tuesday, 29 th December	John, Apostle and Evangelist (transferred)	9.00pm Compline online
Wednesday, 30 th December		9.00pm Compline online
Thursday, 31 st December	John Wyclif, 1384 (New Year's Eve)	10.00am Mass at Holy Innocents 9.00pm Compline online 11pm Watchnight tbc

CHURCH NOTICES

Pastoral Care: Mother Roxanne is still available on Tel. 020 8916 1830 or Mobile 07723 038215 or mtrroxanne@gmail.com Mother Roxanne is not available on Mondays; or Mother Susan (07890 780572) on Fridays.

For your prayers: Archbishops Justin and Stephen; Bishops Christopher, Jonathan, Richard and Karowei in this Diocese; the bishops in our link Dioceses of Zimbabwe. From the diocesan Calendar, we pray for His Holiness Pope Francis, Bishop of Rome; His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch; and the Revd Prof Dr Ioan Sauca, Interim General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Pray for Bishop Ivan M Abrahams, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council; and the Revd Chris Ferguson, General Secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. **The sick** - Alec, Una, Claude, Helen, Linda, Mick, Jennifer and Reuben, Ted, Marie-Gabrielle, Vera, Barry and Valerie, Sheila, Andrew Scorgie, Joanna Simpson, Rose, Amanda, Allison and Caroline. **The bereaved** – the Davies family; **RIP** – Olu Aberdeen.

COLLECT

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in
your own image
and yet more wonderfully
restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in
our humanity,
so we may share the life of his
divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my
God; for he has clothed me with
the garments of salvation, he
has covered me with the robe of
righteousness, as a bridegroom
decks himself with a garland, and
as a bride adorns herself with her
jewels. For as the earth brings
forth its shoots, and as a garden
causes what is sown in it to spring
up, so the Lord GOD will cause
righteousness and praise to
spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep
silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I
will not rest, until her vindication
shines out like the dawn, and her
salvation like a burning torch. The
nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory; and
you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will
give. You shall be a crown of
beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of
your God.

PSALM Psalm 148

*R Praise, O praise the name of
the Lord.*

Alleluia!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.

Praise him, all you angels of his;

praise him, all his host.
Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars. **R**

Praise him, heaven of heavens,
and you waters above the
heavens.

Let them praise the name of the
Lord;

for he commanded and they
were created.

He made them stand fast for ever
and ever;

he gave them a law which shall
not pass away. **R**

Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea-monsters and all deeps;
Fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing his will;
Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars; **R**

Wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and winged
birds;

Kings of the earth and all
peoples,
princes and all rulers of the
world;

Young men and maidens,
old and young together. **R**

Let them praise the name of the
Lord,

for his name only is exalted,
his splendour is over earth and
heaven.

He has raised up strength for his
people

and praise for all his loyal
servants,

the children of Israel, a people
who are near him.

Alleluia! **R**

SECOND READING

Galatians 4:4-7

*A reading from the letter of Paul
to the Galatians.*

When the fullness of time had
come, God sent his Son, born of
a woman, born under the law, in
order to redeem those who were
under the law, so that we might
receive adoption as children.

And because you are children,

God has sent the Spirit of his Son
into our hearts, crying, "Abba!
Father!" So you are no longer a
slave but a child, and if a child
then also an heir, through God.

GOSPEL Luke 2:15-21

*Hear the gospel of our Lord
Jesus Christ according to Luke.*

When the angels had left them
and gone into heaven, the
shepherds said to one another,
"Let us go now to Bethlehem
and see this thing that has taken
place, which the Lord has made
known to us." So they went
with haste and found Mary and
Joseph, and the child lying in the
manger. When they saw this, they
made known what had been told
them about this child; and all who
heard it were amazed at what the
shepherds told them. But Mary
treasured all these words and
pondered them in her heart. The
shepherds returned, glorifying
and praising God for all they had
heard and seen, as it had been
told them. After eight days had
passed, it was time to circumcise
the child; and he was called
Jesus, the name given by the
angel before he was conceived in
the womb.

POST COMMUNION

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son shared at
Nazareth the life of an earthly
home:
help your Church to live as one
family,
united in love and obedience,
and bring us all at last to our
home in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.