

HAPPY FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

The Church has a custom of blessing homes on the Feast of the Epiphany. Family and friends gather to ask God's blessing on their homes and those who live in or visit the home. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk blessed during the Epiphany liturgy and write above the home's entryway, 20 + C + M + B + 21. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house." The "+" signs represent the cross and 2021 is the year.

Blessing the Chalk

V. Our help is the name of the Lord:

R. The maker of heaven and earth.

V. The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in:

R. From this time forth for evermore.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And also with you.

Let us pray.

Loving God, bless this chalk which you have created, that it may be helpful to your people; and grant that through the invocation of your most Holy Name all who use it in faith to write upon the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, may receive health of body and protection of soul for all who dwell in or visit their home; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Instructions for Blessing your home

Using the blessed chalk mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch step) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 21 while saying:

The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and twenty one years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year.

Amen.

Then offer the following prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and for ever. **Amen.**

At times God has commanded his people to mark their doors. The Israelites marked their doors with the lamb's blood on the night of the passover. A similar command was given with the **Shema Yisrael**:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart ... and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deut. 6:4-6, 9)

"Chalking the door" is a way to celebrate and literally mark the occasion of the Epiphany and God's blessing of our lives and home. With time the chalk will fade. As it does, we let the meaning of the symbols written, sink into the depths of our hearts and be manifest in our words and actions.

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

Sharing God's grace and love in our community



3rd January 2021

Vicar: The Revd. Canon Roxanne Hunte
Asst. Priest: Mother Susan Wheeler-Kiley

THE EPIPHANY

President, Mother Susan Preacher, Cicelyn Hinds

Isaiah 60.1-6 * Psalm 72.1-7, 10-14 * Ephesians 3.1-12 * Matthew 2.1-12

Access online worship via

www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood

Forthcoming diary

Sunday 10 th January	The Baptism of Christ	8am (BCP) and 10am Parish Masses
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CHURCH NOTICES

Please note that Mother Roxanne and Josh will be on holiday next Sunday. Please contact the churchwardens in the first instance, or Cicelyn or Mother Susan (07890 780572 except on Fridays) should you require assistance.

Mother Susan will preside at 8am and 10am at Church while online worshippers will be directed to the Services provide by the Archdeacons - there will be no livestreaming from Church.

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Today, we pray for: Archbishops Justin and Stephen. In this Diocese, Bishops Christopher, Jonathan, Richard and Karowei; **St Clement with St Peter, Dulwich** Cécile Schnyder (PinC).

The bishops in our link Dioceses in Zimbabwe. At the beginning of this new year let us remember in our prayers our Archdeacons - Rosemarie Mallett (Croydon); Moira Astin (Reigate); Simon Gates (Lambeth); John Kiddle (Wandsworth); Alastair Cutting (Lewisham & Greenwich); Jane Steen (Southwark); Pray for the Bishops, priests and people of the Episcopal Church of Alexandria.

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 and Aberdeen families.

RIP – Olu Aberdeen. **Years Mind.**

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There is still time to contribute to the **Name a Star** Campaign and make a donation to St Mark's Church Fund. Donations so far range from £100 per Star to £20 per Star. Remember you can **Name a Star** to celebrate your special event – Birthday, Wedding Anniversary, or Thanksgiving for something else OR in memory of those whom you love but see no longer, whose nurturing have helped you to become the person you are today. The Campaign runs until the end of Christmas, 31st January when we celebrate Candlemas/Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

COLLECT

O God,
 who by the leading of a star
 manifested your only Son to the peoples
 of the earth:
 mercifully grant that we,
 who know you now by faith,
 may at last behold your glory face to face;
 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.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 60:1-6*

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

PSALM *Psalms 72:1-7. 10-14*

*R Kings bow down before him;
 all the nations do him service.*

Give the king your justice, O God,
 and your righteousness to the king's son;
 That he may rule your people righteously
 and the poor with justice;
 That the mountains may bring prosperity
 to the people,
 and the little hills bring righteousness. *R*

He shall defend the needy among
 the people;
 he shall rescue the poor and crush the
 oppressor.
 He shall live as long as the sun and moon
 endure,
 from one generation to another. *R*

He shall come down like rain upon the
 mown field,
 like showers that water the earth.
 In his time shall the righteous flourish;
 there shall be abundance of peace
 till the moon shall be no more. *R*

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall
 pay tribute,
 and the kings of Arabia and Saba
 offer gifts.
 All kings shall bow down before him,
 and all the nations do him service. *R*

For he shall deliver the poor who cries out
 in distress,
 and the oppressed who has no helper.
 He shall have pity on the lowly
 and poor;
 he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
 He shall redeem their lives from
 oppression and violence,
 and dear shall their blood be in his sight. *R*

SECOND READING *Ephesians 3:1-12*

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has

carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

GOSPEL *Matthew 2:1-12*

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

POST COMMUNION

Lord God,
 the bright splendour whom the
 nations seek:
 may we who with the wise men
 have been drawn by your light
 discern the glory of your presence in
 your Son,
 the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.