

The Parish of St George's, Benenden

Our Mission: "To know and love Jesus and make his love known to all"

Sunday 20th December The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Collect: God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 20th December – The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings: Romans 16.25-end, Luke 1.26-38

8am	BCP HOLY COMMUNION AT ST NICHOLAS, SANDHURST led by David Harmsworth & Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen
10am	HOLY COMMUNION AT ST GEORGE'S led by David Harmsworth & Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen

THE WEEK AHEAD

Revd David will be on holiday from Christmas Day, returning on 2nd January.
Please contact David Collard, Churchwarden, Tel 241944,
should you require the services of a priest during this time.

Monday 21 st	8am	Morning Prayer at St George's
	7.30pm	Online Benefice Carol Service Link via: https://youtu.be/xAZAt1P2tbg
Tuesday 22 nd	8am	Morning Prayer at the Mission Church, Sandhurst
	9-11 am	Preparing St George's for Christmas
	10am	Holy Communion at the Mission Church, Sandhurst led by Revd Rosemary Kobus van Wengen
Wednesday 23 rd	8am	Morning Prayer at St George's
CHRISTMAS EVE	3pm	Crib Service on the Green
	11.30pm	Midnight Service
CHRISTMAS DAY	8am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Family Service – NB ticketed only
	10.45am	Family Service – NB ticketed only

Please note: St George's will be closed from mid-morning on Tuesday 22nd until Boxing Day. If you need access during this time please contact David Collard at 7 Fuggles Court, Tel 241944 or contact Revd David.

Sunday Next: Sunday 27th December – The First Sunday of Christmas

Readings: Galatians 4.4-7, Luke 2.15-21

NO SERVICES IN BENENDEN OR SANDHURST ON SUNDAY 27th DECEMBER.

Readings: Sunday 20th December

Romans 16.25-end

Final Doxology

²⁵ Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

Luke 1.26-38

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' ³⁴Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' ³⁵The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.' ³⁸Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN BENENDEN



- **Monday 21st December 7.30pm** - Benefice Carol Service *streamed on-line* Link via <https://youtu.be/xAZAt1P2tbg> available shortly before 7.30pm.
- **Christmas Eve 3pm** - Nativity Service at the top of The Green at 3pm (no ticket required). All are invited to attend in Nativity costume.
- **Christmas Eve 11.30pm** - Midnight Communion (no ticket required)
- **Christmas Day 8am** Holy Communion, 9.30am ticketed Family Service, 10.45am ticketed Family Service. (Bring an opened present with you to the Family Services.)

NB TICKETS FOR THE 9.30 OR 10.45 CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY SERVICES MUST BE BOOKED AND COLLECTED IN ADVANCE. LAST FEW TICKETS REMAINING FOR BOTH SERVICES. If you wish to attend but have not booked please contact Cathy, our Benefice Administrator, as soon as possible stating the number of tickets requested.

Email: benendenchurch@gmail.com Tel 07971 459 592 (Cathy private mobile)

PLEASE NOTE:

The effect of going into Tier 3 (from lockdown) is:

- the churches are open for public worship
- but we are not allowed "to mingle" before or after a service

Please remember: "Hands. Face. Space" and to keep within your social bubble.

Thank you! Revd David

St. George's Crib service - 3pm - Christmas Eve

Are you planning on coming to the Crib service? We are going to hold this; but it needs to be Covid-safe, to protect all of us, our families, and those who are vulnerable.

The first step is that this is an outdoor service; we therefore have plenty of fresh air and plenty of space at the top of the Green. Even though it is outdoors we will still be following the "Hands. Face. Space" mantra:

- Please hand sanitise before you arrive (and as you think necessary)
- Wear a face covering at all times. (We are allowed to sing outdoors, but wearing a face covering minimises the risk of transmission even more.)
- 2m spacing Respect the distance to other social bubbles at all times

The latter is tricky because this is essentially a service for the children. To minimise the children moving around they need to be able to see what is going on. The nativity story characters are gathering at the lych-gate – which is becoming "the stable"; it would be better if adults were sitting down so that children can stand and see. So, if you can bring garden chairs that will help please. (Sitting down also reduces the tendency to "move forward for a better view"!)

The road at the top of the Green will be coned off; please stay on the grass or on the road either side of the Green.

There will be a carol service sheet available for the service; we do not want these back! Please take them home with you at the end of the service. The service is expected to last 35/40mins; please disperse and head home straight away. There will be buckets for a "retiring collection". (We also have a contactless card-payment system which you are welcome to use.)

So, for a Covid-safe Crib Service for us all, remember:

"Hands. Face. Space." And no mixing of social bubbles.

Thank you.

Revd David

Daily Scripture and Reflection is posted on the St George's Church website and Facebook page every day of the week.

PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION REGARDING OUR CHURCH SERVICES

Website: <http://www.benendenchurch.org/>

Facebook Page: @StGeorgesBenenden

A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com>



Comfort and Joy is the Church of England's Christmas campaign for 2020.

It holds together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be the Church's role, both nationally and locally, to provide consolation, rather than assume everyone will be ready to join in jubilation.

We also have to anticipate there may be further spikes.

This Christmas the Church will need, in the words of St Paul in Romans 12.15, to 'Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep'. We will aim to celebrate where we can together in one place – but also embrace a wider community that wants to join in the celebration but may not be physically able – or emotionally ready – to do so. We hope that Comfort and Joy will enable us to build a campaign that both enables us to reconnect with the rich and joyous traditions of the past and to offer God's consoling love in the present.

Sunday 27th December:

With all the busyness of this extraordinary year, we have decided, in line with guidance from our Bishop this week, not to hold any services in the parish on the 27th December. The statement from the Diocese reads, *"In the interest of people being able to take a proper break after Christmas, Bishop Rose is encouraging those involved in church leadership not to feel under any pressure to hold live church services (either online or in person) on Sunday 27 December."*

The thinking behind this is to give all involved in the services that day in both parishes (sidespeople; organists; choirs; readers; intercessors; those preparing and leading worship and those preparing sermons) time off with their families during the "Christmas Covid window" from the 23rd and 27th December. It's not just about the time on the Sunday, it also frees people up from the preparation time. Reading in the Church Times: the Diocese of Ely have already formally implemented this across their Diocese.

I trust that everyone will understand this decision, and allow those who have worked so hard for us all in the unprecedented times to have a rest with their families.

Revd David.

Contacts: St George's Church, Benenden

Church Office	Cathy Baker, Benefice Administrator. The Mission Church, Back Road, Sandhurst TN18 5JU Tel: 01580 850 849 E-mail: benendenchurch@gmail.com
St George's Churchwarden	Mr David Collard Tel: 01580 241 944 E-mail: julia.collard@btinternet.com
St George's Parish Safeguarding Officer	Ian Malaugh Tel: 01580 240 999 E-mail: ianmal@sky.com
Priests	Revd David Commander, Rector. The Rectory, The Green, Benenden, TN17 4DL Tel: 01580 240 658 E-mail: revdavidcommander@gmail.com (NB The Rector's day off is Thursday) Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie, Curate Tel: 01233 820100 Mobile: 07766 711957 Email: rev.ylva@gmail.com Revd Dr Rosemary Kobus van Wengen Tel: 01580 764 857 Email: rosemaryvanwengen@gmail.com