



**St Mark's Church Hitchin**

**15<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Services & events for today**

8am Said Holy Communion  
10am Holy Communion –  
*children, please join us in church  
to begin with as we light the  
advent candles*



**Readings**

Isaiah 35. 1-10  
James 5. 7-10  
Matthew 1. 18-25

**Hymns**

**A&M 24** Hark a thrilling voice  
**A&M 131** Love divine  
**A&M 470** Hills of the north rejoice  
**JP 65** Hosanna, hosanna  
**JP 64** Great is Your faithfulness

**Prayers**

**From the Churches Together in Hitchin Prayer Link:** We pray for the Hub Church as they make Christingles this morning. May the true meaning of Christmas be apparent during both the preparation together and the following service. We also pray for the Carols in the Market Place being led this afternoon by Churches Together in Hitchin and Hitchin Community Brass Band.

**From the St Mark's Cycle of Prayer, we pray for:** our organist, choir and music group, preparing for all the Christmas services. We also pray for people living with drug and alcohol addiction, at this potentially

difficult time of year, and for the agencies supporting them. We pray this week for residents of Milestone Road and Truemans Road.

**NOTICES**

**Our Scratch Nativity** will be on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 10.45. This will be narrated by our Pathfinder group. We would like to invite any children who would like to join in to come dressed up as Mary, Joseph, or an Angel, Shepherd or Wise Man. They don't need to learn any lines or rehearse but can just follow the instructions of the Pathfinders on the day. We can't wait!

*Pippa Lally & Rachel Drury.*

**Christabel's Jams and Marmalades**

A large quantity of marmalade and jam, made by Christabel, will be available in church **TODAY**. Donations (min of £1) will go to church funds.

**The vicar is moving on!**

It was announced on 1<sup>st</sup> December that Jane has been appointed as the next Archdeacon of St Albans. She is sad to be leaving us, and we are sad to lose her, but we are also delighted for her, and very pleased that her many gifts will be shared more widely. We have been blessed to have Jane, James, Elliot, and Amelie with us for so long, and we pray that God will bless the whole family in their new home, will bless Jane in her new ministry, and hope that they know they will always be welcome here. All this means that Jane will be leaving St Mark's with her last Sunday being 9th February. The "letter" that Jane read out on Sunday, and Louise's response, is on the notice board at the back of church.

**Quiz Night** A huge thank you to Michael Orton for organising our recent quiz night, and to everyone who came and supported. It was a great evening and raised £354.50

**TWO Christmas Appeals**

*(place donations in the appropriate box at the back of church please)*

**1. Christmas Hampers for North Herts Sanctuary**

Donations of Christmas Goodies would be gratefully received, particularly festive items: tins of fruit, mince pies, Christmas cakes, crackers, sweets, chocolates, fancy biscuits, Christmas puddings, nibbles and fizzy drinks etc. (Please NO ALCOHOL of any description!)

**2. 'Somewhere to go at Christmas' initiative**

Gifts for the homeless/lonely. This year the organisers are collecting items to make up shoeboxes for Males and Females. Suggested items include socks, gloves, hats etc to keep warm; luxury items like sweets, bath bombs, chocolates, perfume candles; and necessities like shower gel, toothpaste, sanitary towels, flannels, creams, shaving foam etc. All unwrapped.

*Many thanks. Pastoral Group.*

**Christmas Services**

Services to celebrate Christmas this year are:

**Sunday 22nd Dec**

10am Holy Communion  
10.45am Nativity with carols  
6.30pm Service of Lessons and Carols

**Christmas Eve**

2pm Family Crib Service  
*(calmer version)*  
4pm Family Crib Service  
11.30pm Midnight Communion

**Christmas Day**

10am Family Christmas Communion

**Christmas Outreach**

We will be singing carols at Westbourne House Care Home on 17<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm. We will also be singing carols at Westmill Lawns on 19<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30pm. Your company and fellowship is more important than a tuneful voice! Do join us if you can to share the good news.

### Cleaners wanted for next year...

would anyone like to join our merry band of cleaners – just for the church, not hall, kitchen or WC's. You can choose your own time, and it comes around about every 2 months, so just 6 times a year. Speak to Joy Bennett for more information.

### Nowhere to go this Christmas?

Feed up Warm up are teaming up with "Somewhere to Go" – Join us on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day between 10am-5pm for Christmas food, festive fun and good company, at Our Lady Immaculate and St Andrew Catholic Church.

See poster on the noticeboard for more details. If you are able to help volunteer on any of those days please see poster for contact details. Shifts are for 2 hours starting from 9am until 6pm

### Taize service 26<sup>th</sup> January

Our Taize service on 26<sup>th</sup> January will be held, exceptionally, at 5pm to allow time for other events taking place that afternoon. It would be lovely to see you at that service, a quiet time of prayer, readings and chants, with a reflection from Jane.

### Carols in the Market Place

This annual Churches Together in Hitchin event will take place on Sunday 15th December at 4.00 pm. The carols will be introduced by the Rev Andrew Henton Pusey of Walsworth Road Baptist Church and the Rev Phil Jackson of Zeo Church and they will be accompanied by Hitchin Community Band. All welcome - bring friends and family with you for this half an hour of Christmas worship.

### Twinkly Fairy Lights!

If anyone has any battery operated twinkly white fairy lights that they would be prepared to lend for the Crib Services on Christmas Eve please let Jane know. *Thank you*

### Church Diary for week of Dec

#### Tuesday 17

2pm Carols at Westbourne House

#### Wednesday 18

9.15am Morning Prayer  
2pm Strathmore Infants Carols  
7.15pm Choir Practice

#### Thursday 19

2.30pm Carols at Westmill Lawns

#### Friday 20

9.30am Little Lions  
2.30pm Nativity rehearsal

### Hall Bookings for w/c 16 December

**Mon** 7-8pm Tai Chi

**Tues** 7-9pm NCT Yoga

**Wed** 11.30-12.30 Tai Chi

5.30-7pm Yoga

8.15-9.15pm Tai Chi

**Thurs** 11-12pm Hall Cleaning

1-3.30pm Private booking

6-10pm Private booking

### Services and events for Sunday 22 December

8am Said Holy Communion

10am Said Holy Communion

10.45am Nativity Service

6.30pm Service of Lessons & Carols

### Cranberry Sauce

Thank you very much for all the jars of cranberry sauce donated for the Christmas hampers. No more after this Sunday (today) please.



### St Mark's extends a warm welcome to newcomers!

Please do join us for a drink and a biscuit at the end of the service.

If you would like to discuss getting involved in the life of St Mark's, please email

[wardens@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:wardens@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk)

or call Jane on 01462 434 686

DO PLEASE TAKE THESE  
NOTICES HOME WITH YOU

See our website,

<http://www.stmarks-hitchin.org.uk>

for the latest information about  
events and services.

St Mark's church is entirely funded  
from donations and hall hire.

**We receive no external funding.**

If you would like to contribute to our  
running costs, please enquire about  
giving by Standing Order, or using a  
Gift Envelope

If you would like to have a notice  
included in the next news sheet, for  
a maximum of two weeks,

please email

[notices@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:notices@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk)

or ring Maggie Mellersh on 504003

Please send notices by 7pm on the  
preceding Wednesday.

### Prayer for Today

God of hope,  
in these times of change,  
unite our nation  
and guide our leaders with  
your wisdom.  
Give us courage to overcome  
our fears,  
and help us to build a future  
in which all may prosper and share;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen.