

**Sunday 24th January 2021
Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**

Readings for 24th January

Genesis chapter 14 verses 17-20

Revelation chapter 19 verses 6-10

John chapter 2 verses 1-11

From Churches Together in Hitchin:- Christchurch ask for prayers for all our churches at this time as they seek new ways of connecting with those who look to them for succour in these trying times.



From St Mark's Prayer Cycle:- This week we pray for St Mary's Church. We also pray for the Hitchin & Letchworth Foodbank; Food Rescue Hub; Feed Up Warm Up and Christians against Poverty debt help and job club.

This week please pray for the residents of Spellbrooke, Berkeley Close, Fosman Close

Prayer Requests – please send any prayer requests for the whole church to pray for to Andrew, who will then pass them on to the groups. Do contact your own group to ask for prayer too.



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY - Churches Together in Hitchin

We are in the middle of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Churches Together is holding a short time of prayer on Zoom each day at 6.00 pm. These will be led by ministers and members of different churches and will follow the theme for the Week - *Abiding in Christ*, based on John 15:1-17.

All are welcome to join the prayer time on any or all of the days.

Details of how to join were sent out last Saturday with the links for services and coffee and will be included again this Saturday or contact Maggie for a reminder.

Thursday 21st – Zeo Church

Friday 22nd Walsworth Road Baptist Church

Saturday 23rd – The Hub Church

Sunday 24th – Our Lady's

Monday 25th – St Mark's, Nick Smith

If you would like to follow the theme personally, whether or not you share in the prayers, go to [Resources for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021 \(ctbi.org.uk\)](https://www.ctbi.org.uk)

6pm Prayers – From Tuesday 26th onwards Gail will again be leading a short period of prayer on Zoom on the usual link which will be sent out on Saturday.

ONLINE CHURCH DIARY – links will be sent on Saturday morning.

Sunday 24th January – there will be a **Service of Communion livestreamed from church at 10am, on Zoom**. This will be recorded and uploaded to Youtube later in the afternoon.

As part of the annual ‘Clergy Swap’ we are very pleased to welcome Martha Inch from The Hub Church who will be preaching to us. Nick went to Walsworth Road Baptist Church last Sunday, and he will be leading and presiding for us this Sunday.

Monday 25th January - Morning Prayer Reading & reflection with John on Youtube.

Wednesday 27th January – **Online Morning Prayer** on Zoom at 9.15am.

Friday 29th January – **Morning Prayer Reading & reflection with Andrew** on Youtube.

Next Sunday 31st January there will be a **Communion Service on Zoom at 10am**.

This will also be recorded for Youtube.

This week our friends without computers will receive a copy of the sermon which Nick gave at the Service of the Word last Sunday.

CHURCH & COMMUNITY NEWS

Zoom Home Groups For Lent - Home Groups (also often called fellowship groups, small groups, or connect groups!) are a great way to deepen our faith and build supportive relationships with people in church. St Mark's already has a couple of groups that run, but many people aren't in a group at the moment. We'd like to run some groups over Zoom for Lent, with a potential view to establishing one or two extra Home Groups going forward. The Lent home groups would likely involve weekly sessions discussing a Christian book or book of the Bible together. If you think you might be interested, please get in touch with Nick asap: vicar@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk or 01462 434686. Note: if CTH decides to run



groups this year, we will use our groups to participate in that!

Thank you – Sue Prentice would like to thank everyone for their kindness and prayers while she was so poorly with coronavirus. She was overwhelmed by the support from St Mark's, and is glad to say that she is now feeling much better, although still getting very tired.

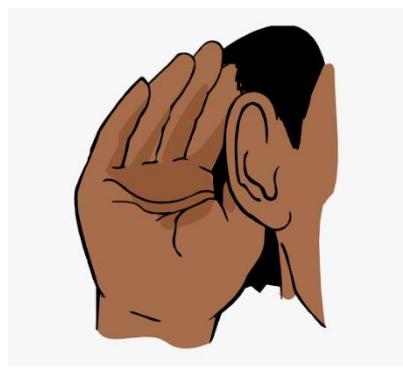
Children & Families – we thought you might like to see some photos of some of our church family – building a mini snowman!

Our Sunday School team have been sending out material linked to the day's readings on the Sundays when there is no All Age service. This consists of pre-prepared activity sheets from an

organisation called Roots, and a brief introductory email with a few questions. If anyone is able to help with sending these out occasionally please get in touch on admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk It would be once every 2-3 months.

Hitchin Team Bible Study on Zoom - Join us as we dig into St Paul's fascinating letter to the Ephesians. It has already started, but people are very, very welcome to join from this week! The next study is 2-3pm on Tues 26th and will continue at the same time on Weds 3rd, Thurs 11th, Tues 16th. See here for details and Zoom link.

The Food Provision service which has been operating from Our Lady's church under the leadership of Caritas project worker, Liz Wills, have been asked to expand their service. They have 14 new families they would like to deliver food to weekly. To be able to do this they need more drivers, using their own cars, who are able to help with deliveries of food in Letchworth. Can you help on Thursday afternoons at 3pm to deliver 2-3 food boxes to families in need? If you can please contact Liz Wills on 07877 902313 asap.



Is God calling you? Do you wonder from time to time where God is calling you next? If so, please consider coming on the 'Seeking the Way' course (3 x 3 hour Saturday morning sessions) which has moved online and takes place in February and March this year. Booking closes on 30th January. You can find testimonials from recent Seeking the Way delegates, and a short video, on the diocesan website.

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/events-and-courses/> Full details and help are available from Andrew (wilderspin66@btinternet.com or 456184)

St Mark's Prayer cycle 2021 – was sent out last week. If you didn't get it or would like a hard copy please let Maggie know.

Zoom church coffee hosts needed – do you have a Zoom account (basic or paid), and would you be willing to host an after-service coffee occasionally? Contact Maggie for more details.

Joy's Lockdown Musings... Joy is planning to make a collection of her musings over lockdown and have them published, to raise money for St Mark's and for the Guide Dog Association. She is looking for someone who is able to type them up and collate them for her, so if you have a bit of time on your hands and would like to earn some money, please get in touch with Joy on admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk

Guide Dogs - As some of you will know I sponsored a Guide Dog for St Mark's 2 years ago, called "Joy". She is nearing the end of her training now. I have sponsored dogs for years and heard last week that "Eve" has passed with flying colours and is now loving helping her new blind owner. Miss Ava Bush was a part of our Church family for many years in the late 70's

early 80's and she had a lovely Guide Dog called "Odin". They always sat on the front row on the right in Church. Odin had his own carpet offcut to lie on (tiled floor in those days). He used to take Ava to the altar and stand with his front paws on the kneeler for Communion. He received a blessing and a dog biscuit. Ava told me a story one day. She had prepared the dogs dinner and put it on the floor in the kitchen then the phone rang. She answered it and spent about half an hour chatting. Afterwards she then put her hand down beside her chair where Odin always came to sit with her for the evening but he was not there!! Ava went back into the kitchen and nearly slipped on a very wet floor. She then realised she hadn't given him the "eat it" instruction so he had had 30 minutes looking at his dinner with saliva pouring from his mouth. Ava was distraught and burst into tears and told him to "eat it" but before he did he insisted on licking her profusely as she knelt beside him saying "sorry". It was Ava and Odin who inspired me to love this cause. Joy xx

*If you would like to have a notice included please email
notices@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk
Please send notices by 7pm on the preceding Wednesday.*