

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2021**  
**Sunday next before Lent**

**Readings for 14<sup>th</sup> February**

2 Kings chapter 2 verses 1-12

2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 3-6

Mark chapter 9 verses 2-9

**PRAYERS**



**From Churches Together in Hitchin:-** We pray today that, though it may not be possible to meet face-to-face, for the Churches Together in Hitchin Lent Study Groups, ways may still be found to enrich our devotional life through reading and reflection.

**The Hub Church** ask for prayers as they strive to hold a “Lockdown Pancake Day”. We pray with them that their members get into the spirit, despite not being physically together as usual. We pray that enjoyment and mutual support result.

**From St Mark’s Prayer Cycle:-** This week we pray for our own church, St Mark’s. We also pray for our local doctors and nurses and all working with them in the community.

**This week please pray for the residents of Redhill Road and Oughtonhead Lane.**

**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.



**6pm Prayers** – The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are encouraging everyone to join in prayer at 6pm throughout the month of February. The Litterick family will be leading us in a short period of prayer on Zoom (the link will be sent out again on Saturday). We hope you can join us for some or all of these sessions but if you are unable to please do try and pause at 6pm to join the nation for a few moments of prayer.

Here is the link to the resources and suggested prayers from the Church of England.

**ONLINE CHURCH DIARY** – links will be sent on Saturday morning. If you would like to receive the links please contact [admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk)

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February** – a service of **Holy Communion** will be livestreamed on Zoom at 10am and will be uploaded to Youtube for watching later in the afternoon.

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February - Morning Prayer Reading & reflection** with John on Youtube

**Ash Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February** – **Online Morning Prayer** on Zoom at 9.15am.

**Ash Wednesday Holy Communion Service** on Zoom at 6pm. This will also be uploaded to Youtube.

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February** – **Morning Prayer Reading & reflection** with Andrew on Youtube.

**Next Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February** will be our All-Age Service at 10am on Zoom, and a Service of the Word will be available on 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



Serving our communities since 1965

### **St Mark's Lent Appeal 2021 - Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre**

The Basma Centre was established on the Mount of Olives in 1965 as a home for Palestinian children with physical disabilities. Over the years, managed by the Anglican Episcopal Church in Jerusalem, it has developed its work to provide care for autistic children and their families. It has an inclusive school and a range of family support projects involving physiotherapy, help with speech and language, capacity building and job creation. In recent years, a lot of the work has been done through outreach centres in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, and it has been an internationally recognised beacon of hope for many. More about its great work can be found on

[About Us | The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre \(basma-centre.org\)](http://basma-centre.org)

Inevitably, Covid-19 has had a major effect on how the Basma Centre operates. For a time, its projects had to close but now it is developing imaginative new ways of reaching families through virtual therapy packages and careful personal contacts. To help in this, it has launched an appeal for better IT systems and PPE for staff - and this is what St Mark's is being asked to support in our Lent Appeal. As last year (the Olive Tree Project), we are doing so via the UK charity, Embrace the Middle East, which has prepared the following link to tell us more:

[Coping with Disability and Covid-19 in the West Bank — Embrace the Middle East \(embraceme.org\)](http://embraceme.org)

To donate, you can give by cash or cheque, payable to St Mark's Church. If you can gift aid please contact [admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk) and we will get an Appeal envelope to you). Please return your envelopes to John and Helen or to Maggie.

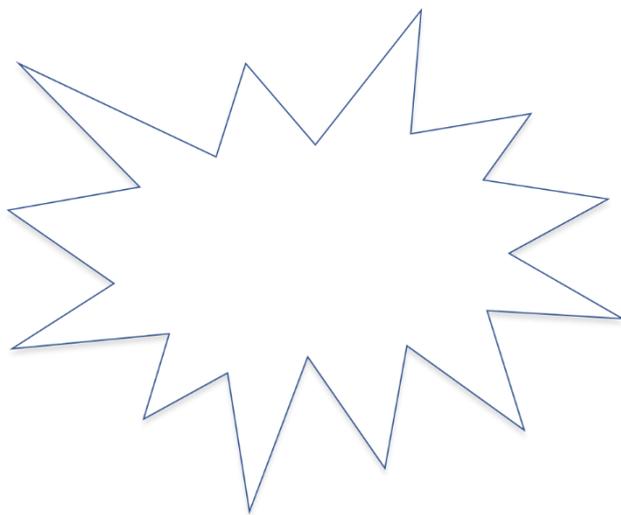
To give online, go to St Mark's website, <http://www.stmarks-hitchin.org.uk>, click on the orange Donate button, and select "Lent 2021-Basma" from the fund drop-down menu. Please try to get your donations in by Easter. The online fund will close off on 6 April.

Many thanks in advance for your generous support.

John Richardson, on behalf of the St Mark's Mission Giving team

**Thank you** Roger and Naomi would like to say a big thank you to all their friends at St. Mark's for all the love and support they have received during what has been a difficult month for them. The thoughtful cards, prayers and messages have been greatly appreciated.

**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 after this. The initial Lent Groups will meet weekly and involve discussing a Bible study guide called *'Living Faith: invitations from the cross'* (a book that the Lent Groups were due to study last year before lockdown struck). One group led by Helen Richardson will be on Mondays at 2pm, and another by Nick on Thursday evening at 7pm. So if you think you might be interested in a Lent Group, please get in touch with Nick asap: [vicar@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk) or 01462 434686.



WOW moments.

**News from Sunday School** – this week we're looking at the story of the transfiguration where Jesus takes 3 of his special friends on a walk up a mountain, and Jesus appears to them dazzling bright – the disciples were AMAZED! WOW! Have you ever been amazed by God's handiwork – perhaps in nature, seeing something for the first time, or hearing someone say something? If you'd like to please write it down (using the star template if you want) and email it in so we can all share God's

The **Church of England's Lent theme** this year is based on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book for 2021, *Living His Story* by Hannah Steele. Both the book and the accompanying



daily reflections encourage all Christians to think about their calling, how to share their faith and reflect on the difference Christ makes in our lives. From Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday there are six reflections for each week which will include a short Bible passage, a brief exploration of the reading and a prayer. Each week has a unifying theme and an

action to be taken during the week. You can sign up for the reflections by email, download the app or use the Daily Hope phone line. See

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livelent-2021-church-resources-gods-story-our-story>

**St Mark's Talent Show....** Don't forget to get in touch with Joy Bennett if you'd be interested in joining in a Church Zoom Talent Show – you don't have to be an expert at anything, it's mainly a chance for us to get together and have fun! Please contact Joy via [admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk) Date & time TBC.



**Sing-along leaders needed** – The Howard Garden Day Centre in Letchworth is looking for someone to come in occasionally and lead a sing-along session, for about 20-25 minutes. The centre is for older and vulnerable adults from Letchworth and Hitchin, and they come in for a cooked lunch and a bit of social contact. They sometimes have a quiz, or some gentle exercise, and also enjoy singing some of the old favourites. For more information contact Maggie (who works there as the cook!) on [admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarks-hitchin.org.uk)

### **Willow and Tim's Wedding**

I was reminded when I looked at my calendar this morning that it was Willow and Tim's wedding anniversary on 4th Feb. Willow is our middle child. It was a very rushed event put together in a matter of weeks due to Tim being deployed to Afghanistan for a long tour of duty, and wanting to make Willow his wife before he left. It turned out that he had to leave the day after the wedding. The Royal Anglian Chaplain, Malcolm, arranged for special arrangements with regard to the lack of time for the Banns of marriage to be read. A small wedding party assembled in the magnificent Church of St Mary's Bury St Edmunds in the side chapel dedicated to the Royal Anglian Regiment. As you can imagine it was a very moving and emotional service. When discussing it afterwards with friends who were kindly very concerned and keen to know how it went the Husband said it was a wonderful occasion and we found it brought a tear to our eyes when the happy couple walked out to "Zobra The Greek" this resulted in a few raised incredulous eyebrows until I interjected and said it was actually "Zadok The Priest" I have said it before you can't make these things up. Since then Willow and now Major Tim have made us very proud of them and their 3 lovely children Ben, Lucy and Adam. Joy xxx

*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.*