

For your prayers:

Please pray for those who are sick including Raymond Blackwell, Colin Johnson, Brenda Linney, Zoe Grist, Kathy Keffler, Jill Muir, Val Flippance and Karen Bucknall.

Please pray for the families and friends of those who have died recently including Michael Selley, Veronica Rowan, Margaret Randall Barbara Wolfanden and David Powell.

We also remember Charles Martindale, Frederick Yeates, Alan Rogers, Meg Rae and Peggy Harris. whose year's mind falls at this time.

WEDDING AND BAPTISM ENQUIRIES

All enquiries about weddings or baptisms should be made directly to the Vicar or Curate —contact details below.

CONTACTS:

Parish Office 01242 224883,
parishoffice@stmarysck.org.uk

Vicar

Revd Graham Bowkett, 01242 253402
vicar@stmarysck.org.uk
(Day off—Tuesday)

Curate

Revd Adrian Beere, 07788 725331
curate@stmarysck.org.uk
(Day off—Friday)

Church Wardens

Jean Hockett, 01242 300415
Colin Revell, 01242 285757
churchwarden@stmarysck.org.uk

Vergar and Sacristan

Derrick Walker 01242 525742
sacristan@stmarysck.org.uk

Bells:

Hilda Ridley, 01242 511706

Pastoral Team Lead

Alison Talbot, 01242 520294

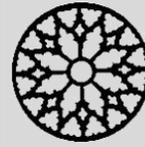
Pastoral Team contacts

Alison, Heather, Jenny and Lynne
pastoral@stmarysck.org.uk

Collect for Christmas Eve

Almighty God,
you make us glad with the yearly
remembrance of the birth of your
Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as we joyfully receive him as
our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold
him when he shall come to be our
judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever..
Amen.

Items for inclusion in the Notices need to be emailed to
churchwarden@stmarysck.org.uk by **Wednesday** each week



St Mary's Church, Charlton Kings
Sunday, 20th December, 2020—Advent 4

While it is good to be able to welcome people back to congregational worship in St Mary's an equally warm welcome is offered to the congregation which joins us online. The service will continue to be live-streamed for those unable to come to attend in person. If in church the requirements of social distancing and the wearing of face masks remains in place, as does the ban on congregations singing but we hope you enjoy listening to that of our choir.

TODAY'S SERVICES**8:00am Holy Communion**

President: Rev'd Graham Bowkett

10:00am Holy Communion

*We are delighted to welcome the
Bishop of Tewkesbury to preside at
our Parish Eucharist this morning.*

President : Bishop Robert

Preacher: Rev'd Graham Bowkett

Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-28

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.
Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer E**Post Communion Prayer:**

Heavenly Father,
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised
saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace
your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

6:30pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (online)

We welcome representatives from the County Army Cadet Force who will be doing some of the readings and leading the prayers at this service.

Due to potential difficulties in managing numbers in a safe, socially distanced way, it has been decided that this year our carol service should be live-streamed via the internet with only those who are participating by reading or singing present in St Mary's.

Regular Services:

Sundays: 8:00am Holy Communion (CW Order 2)
10:00am Parish Communion (CW Order 1)
Thursdays 11:00am Holy Communion (CW Order 2)
Monday to Friday: 9:00am Morning Prayer 5:30pm Evening Prayer

What's On:

Monday 21st

3:30pm Funeral of Michael (Mike) Selley Crematorium

Wednesday 23rd

12:00noon Interment of ashes of Veronica Rowan Churchyard

Thursday 24th CHRISTMAS EVE

10:15am Little Fishes via Zoom (contact Anne on 260575 for link)

11:00am Holy Communion (Common Worship Order 2) Church

11:30pm Midnight Mass Church

No congregation in church, this service will be live streamed via St Mary's website

Friday 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00am Parish Communion (Common Worship Order 1) Church

(NB There will not be a Holy Communion service at 8:00am on Christmas Day)

Sunday 27th John, Apostle and Evangelist

8:00am **No service**

10:00am Holy Communion Church
(Common Worship Order 2: 'Traditional' Language)

From the Vicar

I'm writing this amid this strange and peculiar December where services are controlled to make sure people don't come into contact with each other. Some services are even conducted behind closed doors. It is sort of Christmas, the TV adverts tell me so!

Interestingly this year of course we are all urged as much as possible to support our high streets – business is in a bad place, spend everybody it's your duty.

This is where I, as a Christian, am theoretically going to get all flaky about Advent and its meaning, and make as many disparaging comments about the capitalist takeover of the Christmas narrative as I can pack into five hundred words. Strike at the heart of all that is wrong, and demand everyone answers the question, the

perennial question: 'What have modern Christmas celebrations got to do with Christmas?' Well I'm not going to, because we all know that on the high street, as well as on-line broadly – the answer is nothing. It's just a brilliant excuse to make some people rich and sadly other people poorer.

According to the Gospel of Luke: 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God/Heaven.' But of course, every rich person I have ever met claims richness is relative. I have even met people who are fabulously wealthy but claim border line poverty because they drive a four-year-old Range Rover!!

What is really sad, and the eventual point I would like to make, is that it is not the commercial assault and theft of the Christmas celebration that makes me really sad, but rather in doing so there seems to be an attempt to replace the wonder and awe of a gift from God, with a gift from the high street. The Spirituality of the event is lost in gooey sentimentality and misdirected sopiness, which really serves no purpose.

Now, the scholars of Spirituality out there will immediately ask, what do you mean by Spirituality? Do you mean Eastern or Western Spirituality, Secular, Esoteric, Interfaith, Health, Gender, Economic, Business, or even bizarrely Capital spirituality? But hold on, what about Educational, Age Related, Women's, New Age Spirituality. Surely you do not accuse them all do you? Well yes mostly all of them.... because it really depends on how they are practiced, often they are about the individual and practiced in a hedonistic and relative way. They, in our Western world, are simply about making the individual feel better, more content, more in harmony with oneself. Choose one, any one - it's about private tastes, it's just like Christmas on the High Street – you pay your money, you make your choice.

The word Spirituality - and this might surprise you - owes its origin directly to the Christian context. Formerly there was no direct parallel word outside of Western language, despite everyone else's wish to claim it. Spirituality is profoundly Christian, and firmly grounded in the desire to seek the transcendent reality, the Divine God, who loved the world so much he gave us Jesus. Jesus, the only present, the only gift anyone could ever really want or ever need. All the other stuff is rubbish, superfluous, irrelevant – including 'Spectrum Personal Comparative Spirituality'. That's the top of my list of rubbish.

Happy Christmas every one, Bless You All.

Graham