



*Welcome to*  
St John the Baptist, Midsomer Norton  
7<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Sunday Services on YouTube**

During lockdown we will be recording and uploading the 9.30 service to YouTube. You will be able to watch the service from around 11am each Sunday. The link to our YouTube channel is on the front page of the [church website](#).

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***Please pray for:-***

**The Residents of:** Smallcombe Road,, Smallcombe Close & Southview.

**The Sick:-** Rachael Macfarlane, Miranda Cooper, Rose Stenner, Paul & Margaret Knott, Irene Leet, Fr Roy Boots, Nicholas Hambleton, Betty Chiplin, Ethan Horwood, John Lewis, Patricia Flagg, Pat Gilham, Bishop Peter Hancock, Vince Marriot, Christopher Watts, Faye McDermott, John Norman.

**Years Mind:-** (S) Winifred Haydon, Edith Pickett, Elizabeth Turner, Arthur Lane, Tegwen Wood (M) Mannig Tasceglan, Margaret Adams, Lesley Gannaway, Phillip Hill (T) Brenda Rutherford, Neil Webber, Peter Fussell (W) Flora Wills, Gladis Fea, Loretta Shears (T) Hilda Heaney, William Newton (F) Ethel Charlton, Kenneth Blackburn, Stan Hyland (S) Frederick Whale, William Harvey, Mary Burt, Alan Beacham.

## **The Collect**

Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works  
and your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,  
now and for ever.

## **A Reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 1 verses 15 – 20**

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Alleluia, Alleluia.**

The word of the Lord endures for ever.

The word of the Lord is good news announced to you.

Alleluia.

## **Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John chapter 1 verses 1 – 14**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come

into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ**

## **A Reflection from Fr Guy**

*“But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.”*

It's déjà vu - all over again! The prologue to the Gospel of John. The temptation to recycle a sermon is as strong as ever! But back to the present.

“No, I'm not standing for that. No, we don't want to change.”

It can be much easier to say “No”, than to say “Yes”. It takes less energy, makes fewer demands. “No” closes down options and keeps us safe; “Yes” opens things up and leads us into the unknown.

Many of us find it easier to say “No” to change; “No” to taking on new challenges, to accepting new or additional responsibility; “No,” to other

people's views and suggestions.

There can be a real fear about change and new ideas. Sometimes, we meet people whose first response, almost as a matter of course, is to say "No", firmly, and robustly, whatever the circumstance - to the immense frustration of all those seeking to move on, and to improve things. Perhaps we are one of them! Time to think *may* bring about a change of heart - but sometimes we remain immovable and cannot think or see beyond our "No".

St John, in his own unique way, sets out for us - in words which create a real sense of awe, and mystery, and wonder - Jesus' coming to us as the light of the world. He came in human form, God-on-earth, and yet he had been in the world, of the world, indeed was creator of the world, from the beginning.

And - John tells us - those who receive him, who believe in him, become "children of God". What great news!

John, in his poetic imagery, reminds us, too, that though Jesus was in the world, the world (or part of it) knew him not (or chose not to know him). Some did not, or would not, accept him. Some rejected him. Many, unthinkingly, despised him.

This marvellous opening section of John's Gospel is so closely identified with Christmas that it comes as a surprise to find it set as our Gospel reading today. It makes us do a double take. We check again. Is that really the right reading, now, in February?

Yet here, as we turn towards Lent, it is good to have St John's reminder that Jesus, even in all his goodness, in all his glory, was rejected and despised "*.. yet the world did not know him ... and his own people did not accept him*".

Such thoughts, if we take them seriously, should challenge us - really challenge us. And how good it is to be challenged!

Does our Christian faith affect the way we vote... the energy supplier we use, the car we buy? Does it impact the way we spend our time, our money? The way we give to charities or the way we respond to need? Do we miss chances to let Christ's word and light shine out through us? Are we too ready to say "No" when following the way of Christ pulls us out of our

comfort zone, conflicts with our “comfortable Christianity” and puts limits on our commitment?

Do we say “No” to change, wanting our Church to be just as it has always been?

Are we among those who reject him, who say “No” to him, who wound him, who nail him to the cross?

Yes, this Gospel reading does indeed challenge us. It sets our minds racing, too, as we approach our Lenten journey. Shall we, like so many, find it easier to say “No”? Shall we keep ourselves safe and keep our faith contained so that it does not make too many demands upon us or force us to change our ways?

Or shall we “see the light” and really make space for Jesus Christ to come into our lives and light up our lives, as we prepare ourselves anew to greet him at Easter, the risen Christ. Why not join us on our Lent Course, via Zoom, on a Thursday evening, as we learn together what saying “Yes” to the “light” may mean for us this Lent. Our study focuses on the Eucharist, which lies at the heart of this community of faith. I hope we will be brave enough to reflect on what it is to be Eucharistic when we have been deprived of the Eucharist. To be challenged as to how we can maintain and develop our understanding of Sacramental ministry in a time of isolation and loss.

Shall we say “Yes” to Jesus - and open up our lives to him, daring to walk with him into the unknown, to allow him to change us and unsettle us, and to discover the fullness of what it means to be children of God? We, like the people in Nazareth some two thousand years ago, have a choice to make, will we choose darkness or light? Will we say “Yes” to Jesus Christ and become children of God?

## **Prayers of Intercession by Mary Wilds**

We make our prayers to the Father, through Jesus Christ, the Word through whom all things were made.

*For the beauty of the earth,*

*For the beauty of the skies.*

As the first signs of Spring surround us, we give you thanks for all of creation, and we pray for your grace and strength to care for it as good stewards. By our thoughtless actions we have endangered your world. Help us to repent, and to play our part in securing a better future. We pray especially for world leaders who will gather in Cornwall for the G7 summit, and for those who will join in the Climate Change conference in Glasgow later in the year. Give them wisdom and inspiration, a readiness to acknowledge the urgency of the situation, and a willingness to set aside self-interest for the future of your creation. Lord of all, to thee we raise **This our sacrifice of praise**

*For the joy of ear and eye,*

*for the heart and mind's delight*

We thank you, Father, that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made”. You have given amazing abilities to those who engage in research to uncover the means to overcome diseases in the world. Thank you for those who have produced vaccines for coronavirus, and for its growing availability. We pray for all those who are involved in vaccination centres and local surgeries here and throughout the world.

Lord of all, to thee we raise **This our sacrifice of praise**

*For the joy of human love,*

*brother, sister, parent, child.*

We thank you for the joy and love we find in family and in community. Many of us have had to find new ways of being in touch, and we give thanks for the technology which has allowed us to do so. We remember those who feel particularly isolated, that they may be assured of your love and be strengthened by knowing that they can depend on you. May we be guided to use every opportunity to build up one another. Look in your mercy on the residents of Smallcombe Road, Smallcombe Close and Southview. Watch over the children

who are unable to attend school; give their parents patience and understanding in helping them with their school work.

Lord of all, to thee we raise **This our sacrifice of praise**

*For thy Church, which evermore lifteth holy hands above;  
offering up on every shore her pure sacrifice of love.*

We give thanks for the Church's witness to your love in these difficult times, through prayer and service. We pray for Archbishop Justin, Bishop Peter, Bishop Ruth; for Fr Guy and all the parish clergy, seeking to make your love known in the face of the lockdown. May they find the means to preach your word for the building up of your people, inspiring them to praise and worship in their daily lives, and so making you known in the world around us. We commend the Church "on every shore" that it may draw closer in unity and prayer. We remember our diocesan link with Zambia, where the pandemic is still growing, though cases are many fewer than in the UK. Education has been heavily affected, and we pray for the children where resources for learning are minimal.

Lord of all, to thee we raise **This our sacrifice of praise**

*Friends on earth, and friends above.*

We pray for those of our friends who are sick, and for all who have contracted Covid19; and for the hard-pressed NHS staff, giving thanks for their dedication. By name we bring before you Rachael Macfarlane, Miranda Cooper, Rose Stenner, Paul and Margaret Knott, Irene Leet, Fr Roy Boots, Nicholas Hambleton, Betty Chiplin, Ethan Horwood, John Lewis, Patricia Flagg, Pat Gilham, Bishop Peter Hancock, Vince Marriot, Christopher Watts, Faye McDermott, John Norman and his son.

We commend into your keeping, heavenly Father, friends above - those whom we have known and loved and whose earthly course is over. Amongst those who have died recently we remember Captain Tom Moore, with thanksgiving for the inspiration which he has given to so many. We pray, too, for those whose anniversaries fall this week: (S) Winifred Haydon, Edith Pickett, Elizabeth Turner, Arthur Lane, Tegwen Wood; (M) Mannig Tasceglan, Margaret Adams, Lesley Gannaway, Phillip Hill; (T) Brenda Rutherford, Neil Webber, Peter Fussell; (W) Flora Wills, Gladis Fea, Loretta Shears; (T) Hilda Heaney, William Newton; (F) Ethel Charlton, Kenneth Blackburn, Stan Hyland; (S) Frederick Whale, William Harvey, Mary Burt, Alan Beacham.

Lord of all, to thee we raise **This our sacrifice of praise**

**Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

### **Post Communion**

God our creator,  
by your gift  
the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,  
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:  
may we who have been nourished at your table on earth  
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross  
and enjoy the delights of eternity;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### **THIS WEEK**

**TUESDAY** 09 February      10am – 12 Noon      Private Prayer

**SUNDAY** 14 February      9.30 am      Holy Eucharist

### **ASH WEDNESDAY**

On Ash Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.00pm, the Holy Eucharist will be celebrated with the Imposition of Ashes in church. We hope to record this service, which will then be streamed on our YouTube channel.

### **LENT COURSE**

Our Lent Course this year will be held on Thursday evenings 7.00pm to 8.30pm via Zoom. The Pilgrim Course entitled [The Eucharist](#) has six sessions and we will begin on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February.

As we journey together through Lent, I hope and pray that we may learn together and share our stories as we explore how worship shapes our entire lives.

Please let me know if you would like to join us on this journey through Lent. I will require your email address for the zoom link, which you will receive on Thursday afternoon every week. I will also deliver the Course booklet to your home.

I look forward to our Lenten journey,  
Guy

[vicarmsnstjohns@gmail.com](mailto:vicarmsnstjohns@gmail.com) or tel: 412904

### **Church family updates: -**

**Patricia Flagg** having had her first hip replacement recently is going to have her second hip replaced on Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> February.

**Rose Stenner** is now very frail and has lost her power of speech but is quite tranquil.

**Pat Gilham** has settled in well at Whitehaven and appreciates phone calls on her mobile phone, she is interested in what we are all doing and looks forward to when she can have visitors.

### **Because of Covid Restrictions**

A reminder to let Carol know by email or phone if you hope to be able to come to our 9.30am service on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February ([carolmoore226@yahoo.com](mailto:carolmoore226@yahoo.com) or 01761 412226)

*For further information please refer to our website [www.stjohnschurch.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurch.org.uk)*

### **Third National COVID 19 Lockdown**

In the light of guidance from Her Majesty's Government, the Church of England and the Diocese of Bath and Wells, our Parish Church will be open for public worship, private prayer, and funerals.

The Parish Eucharist will be celebrated on Sundays at 9.30am. This this will be recorded and streamed on our YouTube channel at 11.00am.

The church will be open for private prayer on Tuesdays from 10.00am to 12noon.

During lockdown the population are asked to stay at home. Public worship is permitted so long as the provision can show that it is COVID-safe.

We encourage everyone to follow this guidance:

Persons with any symptoms should not attend church.

Persons shielding (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable) should not be in wider circulation during the third national lockdown (commenced 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021).

We advise that anyone with an underlying health condition such as asthma or heart disease or in the clinically vulnerable group through age (70 years of age and over) should not attend public worship at this time.

Definitions for CEV and CV are available on the [NHS website](#).  
Thank you for your cooperation and stay safe.