



## Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2020

Dear all,

Here begins our final update of 2020. A different year, but a year where we have seen God move and continue to know the hope that he brings for the future.



Personally, we are so grateful that Christmas is about celebrating the birth of Jesus and dwelling on the wonder of who He is and what he came to do. Yes, we will miss seeing family, but at the same time we are looking forward to starting new traditions and trying to keep Jesus central in the midst of it all.

We are aware that some of you are now spending Christmas on your own. Please, please let us know who you are. We want to ensure that you have contact with at least one person from the St Andrew's family on Christmas Day. Do drop us a text, give us a call or drop us an email. Due to the change in the government guidance at the weekend and the knowledge that many will now be alone we are putting on an extra service on Christmas Day. Do join James, myself and the boys in church on Christmas morning at 9am for a brief and simple (and probably slightly chaotic!)

communion service. We will be having a 10.30am service online as well.

Between now and then we have our Carol Service at 6.30pm on Christmas Eve online. We're really sad not to be doing this outdoors as planned but please do be inviting others to join with us on Facebook. Carol Services are such an easy service to invite people to and our prayer is many will join and here the good news of Jesus this year. We had invited those who put a star on the Christmas tree to pick up their star at the Carol Service. As this service is now online please feel free to come and pick up your star at a time that suits you.

On Sunday 27th December, there will be no service at 9am. For the 10.30am online, Martyn Turner has pre-recorded a sermon and Sarah has produced a video. There will be no formal service, but we are very grateful for the work they have put into these videos.

On Sunday 3rd January, we hope to be back as normal at 9am in church and 10.30am on Facebook. In person services



are currently allowed in any tier (including tier 4), we believe our services in church to be safe and Covid-secure and so hope to continue these. We love the 9am service in church and know those who attend also appreciate it. However, we will continue to be aware of Covid rates locally and take advice as to what we should do. Please do be praying for us as we make these difficult decisions.

On the evening of Sunday 3rd January, we will be gathering on Zoom to worship together at 8pm. Please do join us as we start the year in declaring that God is good and He is sovereign over all.

On a personal note thank you so much for the many Christmas cards and gifts we have received from you. No gift has yet been opened but much joy has come from

the many cards, so thank you. Baby Gandon is due at the end of January, so unless baby comes early, we look forward to seeing you at the start of 2021.



May we take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas, whatever your celebrations look like, may you know the comfort and joy of our wonderful saviour this year.

With all our love and prayers.  
Zara & James



**Congratulations** to Ben & Sue (known as 'The House of Lords') and Doris & Petra (known as 'Mother and Child') who were joint winners of the Quiz last night, guess who came last? (known as 'Help, there's a reindeer in the vicarage!') Thanks to Phil for hosting and organising it!

Thanks again to all who have donated to the **Christmas Food Parcels** project, which will be distributed to fourteen local families tomorrow. I know they will be extremely grateful. Thanks too to Pam and team for all your hard work.





# Christmas at St Andrew's!

## Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December

6:30pm Carol service – now ONLINE ONLY

## Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December

9:00am Holy Communion – IN CHURCH

10:30am Online Christmas service

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December

No 9:00am service

10:30am Online videos available

## Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

9am Holy Communion Service in Church

10:30am Online worship service

8:00pm Worship Night on Zoom



Please know that we are thinking and praying for you all,

James and Zara

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Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December

Dear church,

Firstly we just want to acknowledge that many of you may be feeling down right now after Boris Johnson's announcement this afternoon. Personally, we were really looking forward to seeing family at Christmas, it was one of the things that was keeping us going and now we are not going to be. It's sad and it hurts. I know that when we acknowledge my emotions, like we so often see David do in the Psalms, we invite God to come and heal our hearts. This isn't always an instant fix but in time I see how God has been working in me. Can I encourage us all to keep giving our emotions to God and asking Him to bring his healing. By doing this we help to stop long term resentment building up and help to keep our relationship with God and others free from bitterness and pain.

As you may well have seen via text message, we have made some decisions about our outdoor services this week. We love to worship together in person and were so excited by the prospect of our outdoor services tomorrow (Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>) at 3pm and on Christmas Eve at 6.30pm. With cases rising again locally and the news of a more contagious form of the virus being announced, we have decided to move these services online. We do this with a heavy heart, but believe safety needs to come first.

If you would like a craft pack for tomorrow (Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>) afternoon service then please pop to the vicarage between 11.30am and 2pm and we will give you the things that you require for the service.

We will still be meeting at 9am in church and 10.30am online tomorrow. Please do join us. We have Steve Proudlove preaching at 9am and a fantastic nativity put together by Sarah and John Potts at 10.30am. The nativity contains many of our children and young people and watching it has brought us such joy in seeing them, as we know it will for you too. Ultimately, it tells the story of hope. Hope that Jesus, a newborn baby, came to save the world.

Whether you are seeing others or not this Christmas, I thank God that the story of hope lives on through Jesus and the retelling of his birth. We are praying God's comfort and joy over you all.

As well as our services tomorrow, we have coffee after the 10.30 and 11.45 on zoom. In the evening, Phil Dabbs our fantastic quiz master is hosting our church Christmas quiz also on zoom. Each household is asked to bring three questions to contribute to the quiz. I look forward to 'seeing' you in whatever form that takes in the morning,

With love and prayers, James