

Today Father John Hall is to lead our worship when we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, which marks the beginning of a season which recognizes Jesus to be the Son of God.

The word 'epiphany' means 'manifestation' or 'appearance', and the Feast of the Epiphany marks the recognition of the new-born Jesus by the world. Later, the Church remembers the Baptism of Christ by John, when a voice from heaven declares Jesus to be God's beloved Son. Finally, on 2 February, the season of Epiphany ends with the Feast of the Presentation. Jesus is brought to the Temple by his parents according to the law of Israel. There, he is recognized by Simeon, who declares him to be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of God's people Israel.' The traditional service for this feast includes a procession of candles, and so it is often known as Candlemas.

**The Government has chosen not to suspend public worship in England and with this newsletter is a letter to you from the Wardens outlining the present situation for worship at St George's**

The church will continue to be open for private prayer and reflection on Wednesdays from 10am-1.30pm, this is for individual persons, single households or support bubbles, entering the church to sit or pray on their own and not as part of a group.

**A massive thank you to everyone who contributed to our services over the Christmas and New Year period. Particularly to Father John, the Churchwardens, the Sacristans, Susan and the Choir and to everyone who contributed readings, prayers and music.**

**Daily Hope**, is a free national telephone line, offering music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of the phone. It has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

The line - with an introduction from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**. Options available include *Prayer During the Day* and *Night Prayer* updated daily providing comfort and spiritual nourishment to those most isolated in our society. A section called *Hymn Line* offers callers a selection of hymns, updated daily.

**Items for future Newsletters** We welcome contributions and if there is an item, or two, that you would like to share with us please forward to the editors.

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## St George's Church

### Latest Government regulations on Public Worship – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

By the time you read this you will be aware that the Government has put the country into lockdown again, possibly until mid-March. However, permission has been retained for churches and places of worship to remain open for individual prayer and public worship.

Bishop Martin has written to all clergy and churchwardens acknowledging that for some parishes it may not be possible to safely sustain public worship. If this is the situation Bishop Martin has given his permission for any church to close by means of, for St George's, a PCC resolution.

Earlier this week all members of the PCC were contacted with an overwhelming majority in agreement that public services should continue at St George's. The church will also continue to be open for private prayer on each Wednesday 10am – 1.30pm, this is intended for individual persons. We are very fortunate in that Fr John Hall has confirmed he is willing to take the next three Sunday services during January. We will, however, closely monitor the situation.

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We thought it a good idea that at this time we remind ourselves of the regulations we must adhere to when attending church, particularly at this time of lock-down:

- Before entering church please apply your face mask and sanitize hands on arrival and on leaving.
- On arrival it may be necessary to form a small queue, and a 2-metre distance should be kept between each person until it is your turn to enter.
- Do not mingle with anyone outside of your household or support bubble whilst in church, before or after the service.
- If we don't already have it, we need to record your name and 'phone number as you enter the church. *Please be assured that this information is kept simply to support the Track & Trace service, and in line with Government guidelines is held for 21 days and then destroyed.* If you have a mobile phone you may register your attendance by way of the Test & Trace app displayed on the porch wall.
- It is essential that immediately worship has ended people disperse, retaining social distance without further interaction, even outside. *Why not give that person you would like a chat with a 'phone call when you get home!* As of this Sunday the South Porch door will also be available to leave by.
- Please take your service sheet away with you at the end of the service.

With all good wishes and thank you for helping to keep everyone who attends St George's safe. Keep well and strong and if you feel unable to attend church, you will be in our prayers.

Geraldine and Jill  
The churchwardens