

BIBLE READINGS for - December

Day	Psalm	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading
Mon.	15 th 40	Isaiah 49:14-25	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Tues.	16 th 70	Isaiah 50	1 Thessalonians 5:12-end
Wed.	17 th 75	Isaiah 51:1-8	2 Thessalonians 1
Thurs.	18 th 76	Isaiah 51:9-16	2 Thessalonians 2
Fri.	19 th 146	Isaiah 51:17-end	2 Thessalonians 3
Sat.	20 th 46	Isaiah 52:1-12	Jude

Points for Praise and Prayer

- Let us give thanks that Claire Coleman has been provisionally accepted by Operation Mobilisation (OM), to serve with their Central Asia Team. Claire will first have to attend OM's Global Orientation conference for new recruits, due to be held in Mosbach, Germany in mid January 2009. If you would like to know more about Claire's plans, and perhaps consider supporting her in prayer and/or financially, please take a copy of her first newsletter from the literature table.
- Please remember to pray for all the Christmas services here at St Mark's, as well as those in neighbouring Gillingham churches. Perhaps you might like to say a special prayer for the 'Take-away Christmas' at 3.00pm on Sunday 21st, when there are likely to be quite a number of visitors. Please pick up one of the leaflets which give details of our services, so that you can pray accordingly.
- Please remember Janet Mann whose mother died recently after a long illness. The funeral will take place on Thursday, and Ernie will be officiating at the service. Please continue to pray for David Bairnsfather's sister, Ella. She had surgery last week-end and is recovering, but the family need God's wisdom to know how best to provide for her aftercare.
- Continue to remember those of our number who are in need of the Lord's healing. Daphne Beck, John and Doreen Bodkin, Rose Clay, Des and Celia Dickinson, Bruce and Natasha McCready. Give thanks that both Chris Green and Terry Whittaker have recently had good news about their respective conditions and that baby Zak, son of Bridget and Robbie is home and making good progress.
- Urgent prayer is needed for the people of Zimbabwe. As you know, many people have already died since the cholera outbreak, and general conditions continue to deteriorate. Please pray that positive action will be taken by both the African Union and the United Nations to end the power-struggle, and for a new day to dawn for the many whose suffering is beyond belief. If you would like to be better informed in your prayers, please pick up a copy of the e-mail 'SOS for Zimbabwe' from the literature table.
- Our Mission Partner for the month is Carri McFarlane. Please see the missions board

Associate Vicar:	Revd Glenn McWatt	01634 575280
Youth Worker/School Chaplain	Mike King	07790 178554
Children's Co-ordinator:	Sarah Ryan	07949 751730
Church Administrator:	Pam Alexander	Church office: 01634 570489
Playgroup Leader:	Julie Hanning	07807 577836
Pastoral Assistant:	Keith Sheepwash	01634 571841

If you would like a visit from one of the staff please phone to make an appointment

Email: admin@stmarkschurchgillingham.co.uk Website: www.stmarkschurchgillingham.co.uk

MARKtime

14 December 2008

The Weekly News-sheet for St. Mark's Church, Gillingham
with St. Mary's Island Church (a Local Ecumenical Partnership)

A Mission Shaped Church

Connecting people with Jesus

PRAYER FOR TODAY

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the
just, that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Today's Services

The Third Sunday of Advent

10.30 am: Holy Communion

6.30 pm: Evening Worship

Reflection: Mike King

Reflection: Glenn McWatt

Readings: Matthew 2: 1-8, 1; 18-25

Reading: Luke 1: 57-80

Luke 1: 26-38

Theme: 'Who do you want to copy?'

Theme: 'God's promises fulfilled'

Other services today: **11.00 am** - Carol Service at St Mary's Island Church

3.30 pm - Carol Service at Mountevans House

5.00 pm - Carol service at St Mark's House

WELCOME TO ST. MARK'S

If you are new to St. Mark's we hope that you enjoy your time of worship here with us today and that you will want to come back again next week. Please pick up a Welcome Leaflet from the back which has information about all the regular activities.

Except for the first Sunday of the month during term time, groups for children and young teenagers meet at the Old Vicarage each Sunday morning from 10.20 am. All children (except the under 5's) are escorted back down to Church at the end of the morning. There is usually a crèche for babies in the Church Vestry during the morning service. All our Youth Workers and helpers are CRB checked through the diocese for your child's protection and safety.

What's on this week at St. Mark's

Monday 15th	7.30 - 9.15 pm - Landmark - (14-18's) - Old Vicarage 'Landmark Christmas Party' 8.00 pm - Standing Committee meeting - Old Vicarage
Tuesday 16th	8.00 pm - Home Groups
Wednesday 17th	9.00 am - Holy Communion in Church 1.15 pm - 2.45 pm - Parent and Toddler Christmas Party - Vicarage Hall
Next Sunday - 21st December	10.30 am - Service of Carols and Readings 3.30 pm - 'A Take-away Christmas' (Event for all)
Monday - Friday during term time - 9.30 am - 12.15 pm - Playgroup	

Dates for your diary.....

Wednesday 24th December - Late Night Communion Service

Thursday 25th December (Christmas Day) - Family Communion Service

Sunday 4th January - All Age Family Worship

Monday 5th January - Start of school term

Tuesday 6th January - Pastoral leadership team meeting

Friday 9th January - Monthly prayer meeting

Sunday 11th January - Children's Sunday groups resume



If you wish to ensure that Christian images continue to be published on stamps each year, please ask for them specifically when you buy stamps for your Christmas cards.

There will be no children's groups on Sunday 21st because of 'A take-away' Christmas taking place in the afternoon

Many will be sad to hear that Gill Post has passed away following a long battle with cancer. Her funeral took place this week.



The Rectory
Newton Longville
Bucks. MK17 0BH
Tel. 01908 647694

To all our dear friends at St. Mark's,

Warm greetings to you all from a very cold and frosty Newton Longville, but not so cold Rectory.

Judith and I wanted to write before the final rush for Christmas to say a huge thank you for your love, support and prayers for us over these past months. Cards, calls and visits both before we left Gillingham and here have meant a great deal to us both. We have all enjoyed Judith's mixer tho' the mower, due to rain and frost, has not really seen the light of day yet. We thank you for these and other expressions of your love and generosity.

I've taken my fair share of services throughout the Benefice. Most Sundays I'm involved in two places as well as mid week funerals and even one wedding where the happy couple drove off in a sparkling "all purpose" agricultural vehicle. Imagine that up Canterbury Street!

Although to those of us from the South East, Milton Keynes seems to be way up north we have been pleasantly surprised to find that we are very central. My sister Mary is only a couple of hours away by car, the train station in Bletchley is ten minutes away as is Sainsbury's, B&Q, Ikea and Tesco's etc. The shopping in the Milton Keynes Mall, twenty minutes away, is similar to Bluewater but not so pricey and high class and a much larger selection of shops. Judith is able to get down to Tearfund in an hour and a bit, so it's all quite near.

Being nearer to Naomi and David in Oxford we are able to see them and the family most weeks and Kezia has even been to stay for a couple of nights in her own small bedroom!

We have both been struck by the friendliness of everyone here, both church and non church people all smile and talk and seem to go out of their way to be helpful. Within the five Churches in the Benefice nearly everyone is over sixty, with few exceptions, and since there has been a fairly long interregnum with no resident priest in the parish there may be some catching up to do in the new year. Following on from the lovely service of welcome here the area Bishop popped in to have a prayer and see how we were getting on. A nice gesture we thought.

Judith joins me in wishing you all God's many blessings for Christmas and the New Year and we look forward to keeping in touch.

John Saunders

Please use the board at the back of the church for Christmas greetings cards