

# Across the Downs

Church News Sheet for the Downs Parishes of  
Chilbolton, Crawley, Littleton, Sparsholt and Wherwell  
Rector: Revd Jax Machin 01962 880845

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

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Services for Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
*St Stephen's Day (translated from 26<sup>th</sup>)*  
Patronal Service in Sparsholt **cancelled**



Services for Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021  
*The Second Sunday of Christmas*  
10.00 am (Li) Morning Prayer



Services for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
*The Baptism of Christ*  
Service to be confirmed



**\*\*Please note that, during current coronavirus restrictions, all seats must be booked via the Benefice Office: 01962 880845\*\***

## **Prayer for the Week – St Stephen's Day**

Gracious Father, who gave the first martyr Stephen grace to pray for those who took up stones against him: grant that in all our sufferings for the truth we may learn to love even our enemies and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt, looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us, Jesus Christ, our mediator and advocate, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Readings:** 2 Chronicles 24: 20-22 Acts 7: 51-end  
Matthew 10: 17-22 Psalm 119: 161-168

## **Bishop Tim's Christmas Message**

**We all know that this year's Christmas celebrations will be different. For many families, there will be no celebration, as they come to terms with spending Christmas without their loved ones, and perhaps grieving.**

The coronavirus pandemic, which has devastated so many lives, has emphasised how fortunate we are to live in a country where we can access free medical care through the NHS, regardless of our background or financial status. For many of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the Anglican Communion, access to medical care is not freely available, and the pandemic has pressurised under-staffed health services in our Companion Links Provinces.

In the Diocese of Winchester, this year's Christmas Appeal is raising funds through the Archbishop of Canterbury's Anglican Communion Together in Unity Appeal to support Covid-19 projects in Chile, Burundi, DR Congo, Myanmar, Rwanda and Uganda: our gifts will be designated to support the projects which these Companion Link Provinces have submitted. By giving generously to our friends in the Anglican Communion, we can help to bring hope and light this Christmas.

The birth of God's Son Jesus Christ, more than 2000 years ago, brought new hope and light to a broken world: the promise of a transformed world and eternal life with him. This same promise is offered to each of us today.

Usually, Christmas brings with it the comfort and joy of family, friendship and celebration. For Christians celebrating the true meaning of Christmas, comfort and joy are found in knowing the love of God, who came to us in the birth of Jesus, and who comes to us now in all our joys and sorrows, celebrations and disappointments. It is my prayer that we all find comfort and joy this Christmas, perhaps in unexpected ways, and as we journey together into 2021, may we be 'surprised by joy'.

Please donate to the appeal: <https://www.give.net/dioceseofwinchester>

+Tim

*The Right Reverend Tim Dakin, Bishop of Winchester*



## DIARY

**All regular meetings, groups and special events remain cancelled across the Benefice**

### **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

9.30 am          Benefice Morning Prayer (on Zoom, please contact  
Charlotte Nash: [charlotte@cjnash.com](mailto:charlotte@cjnash.com)).

**The Benefice Office will be closed from midday on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December until 9.00 am, Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.** In event of an emergency, please call the Rector, **Revd Jax Machin**, on **07761 055 228**.

The Benefice Office is closed to visitors until further notice due to the COVID-19 virus but is 'open' for all other business. Please contact Caroline McAulay on **01962 880 845** or on [office@downsbenefice.org.uk](mailto:office@downsbenefice.org.uk).

**Please do visit our website:** [www.downsbenefice.org](http://www.downsbenefice.org) where you can find streamed services, letters and reflections from Revd Jax, prayers, daily readings, Kids Corner and so much more – all updated daily.

### **Parish Magazine Deadline**

A reminder that copy for the February/March 2021 edition of the Crawley, Littleton & Sparsholt Parish Magazine should be submitted by **12.00 noon, FRIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> January** at the latest. Details of where to send your article or information can be found at the back of the current magazine. Many thanks.

### **The Boaz Project**

The good news is that the Boaz Project has reopened to members – building back up little by little, although we are closing from Christmas Eve until 4<sup>th</sup> January to keep everyone safe. We have worked hard behind the scenes to build up covid-safe operating procedures so we could restart.

If you would like to resume or start volunteering at Boaz, please get in contact. If you would like to attend as a member (our name for service users) then also please call up or email us. [admin@boazproject.co.uk](mailto:admin@boazproject.co.uk); telephone: 01962 761749.

Boaz eggs are being supplied to Barton Stacey Post Office and Stores. Please do not attempt to access the site to purchase eggs.

### **Street Pastors**

Winchester Street Pastors will be seeking new members in the New Year.

The pastors who offer support and reassurance on the night-time streets are looking for people to start training, probably in February.

Contact Mark Hibbert-Hingston for more information on 07740 288654 or [winchester@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:winchester@streetpastors.org.uk)

### **Andover Food Bank**

We just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported the Andover foodbank during the past, somewhat challenging, year. We are, as always, immensely grateful for your continued generosity.

Everyone at the Andover foodbank wishes you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

### **NightShelter Christmas Gifts**

There has been a wonderful response to the appeal for gifts to for the NightShelter. These have been taken down to the shelter and will be distributed over Christmas.

We thank you all for your great generosity.

*Margaret and Bryan Harris, St Catherine's, Littleton*

Please send all items for Across the Downs to Carol Ward: email [carol.ward@daleclose.co.uk](mailto:carol.ward@daleclose.co.uk), or telephone 01962 883185, by 12.00 noon Thursday at the latest. **If you would like to receive future editions of the newsletter by email, please contact me on the above address.** Thank you.