

STRANGERS? VISITOR? FAMILY!

All being well, [you know what I mean!] on Wednesday, 6th January we will observe the great festival of Epiphany: a more ancient feast than Christmas day itself. This holy day of obligation for the faithful Christian recalls the arrival, in Bethlehem, of the *Magi*, the Wise Men (S.Matthew Ch.2). Possibly three magi, maybe more, or only two! It doesn't say, just that three gifts are offered. They may have arrived by camels, horse, or on foot – it doesn't say. What it does say is they brought three strange gifts for Jesus who, by now, is probably a toddler not a baby: why else would Herod order the killing of boys 2 years and under after they leave? It also says that, on arrival, they went into *the house*, not a stable, where they find the *child* with his mother Mary. So, where is S.Joseph?

Our Church's Crib never has the Magi WITH the Shepherds. The shepherds and sheep are only 'at the manger' with the Holy Family for the traditional twelve days of Christmas. The Magi figures 'travel' around the Church windows from Christmas until Epiphany. The camels 'travel' too. Though *not* in the gospel text they are hinted at in the first reading and psalm. For Epiphany the shepherds and sheep are cleared and the *baby* Jesus replaced by a *child* figure.

The Magi showed immense dedication seeking and finding, finally in Bethlehem, that which they had longed to see – the work of God revealed in a child; his Son and Saviour for *all* nations. The *Epiphany figures* stay at the crib until the following Sunday evening when Christmastide then ends. It concludes with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the end of all those hidden years.

Our own baptism constitutes us a part of the People of Christ: his spiritual family; a member [as in a limb] of his Body; '*temples of his Spirit*'. So, church buildings are dedicated as meeting places for the Church *proper*, the family of Christ. S.John's Dedication feast, the 'birthday' of the Church *family*, will fall on Sunday, 31st January 2021. For 159 years it has been set apart for our use that we might be a people, like the Magi, on a journey, dedicated to *seeking Jesus Christ*, and meeting with him in 'the house' of prayer. The Magi met Jesus in Bethlehem, which means '*house of bread*'. We are able to meet [except in Lockdowns] the living Christ in his *house of bread*, the Holy Eucharist, every Sunday, every feast and even every weekday in this people's house of prayer.

If you've never been before, or only occasionally visit us, why not come along on this great feast: and in 2021 cease being a stranger, or a visitor, for we'd all dearly love you to become, with us, a 'family member'.

Fr James

The Bridge

Monthly Magazine of the Parish of Higham (Ss. John & Mary) with Merston

S.JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH - WORSHIP

Most MASSES also provided via Zoom

All others are held subject to the current Government guidelines.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday MORNINGS 9.30 am
Tuesday and Thursday EVENINGS 7.30 pm

Sunday Mass in Church only) MORNING 9.30 am

*Please contact **Pat Merrison** by text -07842336907 or email*

p.merrison@btinternet.com if you wish to join us as numbers are limited

Sunday Mass in Church and via Zoom 11.00 am

Sunday evening Mass in Church (only on request) 5.30 pm

Private Prayer daily - 10 am - 6 pm - times published in the Bulletin each week – available on the Home page of the website.

WEDDINGS and FUNERALS MAY BE HELD IN CHURCH – ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED by the number of people permitted at the time.

Check news for up-to-date information

FUNERALS ARE ALSO HELD AT CREMATORIA.

Baptisms / Confession / Anointing Contact Fr. James

In an emergency please contact him at any time or, if he is not available, one of the Churchwardens (details below).



PARISH The Rev'd. Canon James F. Southward

PRIEST The Vicarage, Hermitage Rd Higham, Kent, ME3 7NE.

Telephone 01634-717360 Email saintjohn.higham@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE NOTE: FATHER JAMES IS NOT NORMALLY AVAILABLE ON THURSDAY

HON ASST PRIEST FATHER PETER BOLTON 17 HERMITAGE ROAD, HIGHAM TEL: 01474 822726

THE

Mrs Teresa Joblin Hill Cottage Telegraph Hill, Higham

Tel: 01474-823186

CHURCHWARDENS

Mrs Helen Walker 11 S. John's Road, Higham

*** Tel: 01474-396569**

CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

THE HALL IS NOT OPEN

Liz Croker

Tel: 07811 028803

* Evening calls only on these numbers please

January 2021 at S.John's, Higham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

MASS) SUNDAYS WEEK) Mon., Wed, Fri. & Sat. 9.30am.
 TIMES) 9.30am; 11am [on zoom] DAYS) Tu. & Th., 6.30pm;

Except: 1st JAN., 6th JAN., and Sunday 31st Jan. – See details below

DAY	DATE	CELEBRATION	INTENTION
Fri	1st	MARY, MOTHER OF GOD; 10AM	(S) God's Blessing on 2021
Sat	2nd	Ss Basil Bp, & Gregory Nazianzen <i>Teachers</i>	(m) The Ecumenical Patriarch
SUN	3RD	2ND SUNDAY IN CHRISTMASTIDE	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	4th	Xmastide Feria after Christmas	Messianic Jews
Tue	5th	S.Roger of Todi <i>Religious</i>	(m) Retired Clergy
Wed	6th	THE EPIPHANY OF OF THE LORD	9.30AM SAID 7.30PM SUNG (+) Richborough parishes THE PARISH
Th	7th	Xmastide Feria after Epiphany	Evangelists & Missionaries
Fri	8th	Xmastide Feria after Epiphany	The hungry and needy
Sat	9th	Xmastide Feria after Epiphany	Walsingham Shrine
SUN	10TH	THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	(+) THE PARISH
<i>Christmas-tide ends today Ordinary Time begins tomorrow</i>			
Mon	11th	Feria (Ord. Week 1)	Higham Parish Council
Tue	12th	Feria	Local Schools
Wed	13th	S.Hilary of Poitier ; <i>Bishop, Teacher</i>	(m) Forward-in-Faith
Th.	14th	Feria	The deanery of Strood
Fri	15th	Feria	SSC clergy
Sat	16th	Feria <i>MASS OF REQUIEM</i>	(v) + RIP's & Anniversaries
SUN	17TH	2ND ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity [18th to 25th Jan.] begins			
Mon	18th	Feria (Ord. Week 2)	Reformed/Protestant Christians
Tue	19th	Feria	Anglican tradition Christians
Wed	20th	Feria <i>MASS FOR UNITY</i>	(v) For Christian Unity
Th.	21st	S.Agnes; <i>Virgin Martyr</i>	(m) Persecuted Christians
Fri	22nd	Feria	Catholic/Uniate Christians
Sat	23rd	Feria	Orthodox/oriental Christians
SUN	24TH	3RD ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	25th	The Conversion of S.Paul	(f) Christian missionaries
The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity ends			
Tue	26th	Ss Timothy & Titus; <i>Missionary Bishops</i>	(m) The PEV's
Wed	27th	Feria (Ord. Week 2)	The Archdeacon
Th.	28th	S.Thomas Aquinas; <i>Priest, Teacher</i>	(m) All who assist at our masses
Fri	29th	Feria	Our Church membership
Sat	30th	Feria <i>MASS OF REQUIEM</i>	(v) Deceased Church members
SUN	31ST	S.JOHN'S DEDICATION FEAST 10AM	(+) THE PARISH
<i>159th ANNIVERSARY OF CONSECRATION (29th JAN. 1862)</i>			

KEY: (+) Holy Day of Obligation; (S) Solemnity; (f) Feast; (m) Memoria (v) votive

THE JANUARY REQUIEM

is on SATURDAY 16th January 2021 at 9.30am

*The recently departed, and those named below will be prayed for at this Requiem.
Those named below are remembered on the Sunday before and the actual date itself.*

1 st	Arthur Sidney Joblin Sylvia Anne Fowler Frank William John Heasman	16 th	Jean Hopson Hill Herbert Clement Scutts John Ernest Henry Parkinson
2 nd	'Betty' [Elizabeth] Steer, 'Kelly' (Robert Hilton) Bradish	20 th	Dorothy Alice Southward Robert Bolton
3 rd	Gladys Millgate	21 st	Jocelyn Howard James <u>Gordon</u> Aspin
5 th	Sybil Batchelor John Etherton	22 nd	Winifred May Penney
6 th	Nora Hotter Winifred Beatrice Avery	24 th	Leonard Chapman Robert Beard
7 th	George Glendenning	26 th	Mary Southward Florence Rose Oake Caroline Ann Grix
9 th	Frederick Albert Edward Watson Margaret Kidney	29 th	<i>The deceased clergy, Communicant members and benefactors of S.John's</i>
10 th	Isobel Clatworthy Peggy Rosemary Last	30 th	Edward Stuart Talbot <i>BISHOP</i> Doreen Rose Taylor
11 th	Valerie Elsie Howard	31 st	Marie Romula Jenkins Duncan Graham
12 th	Katherine Elliott Ann Grain		
14 th	<u>Albert</u> William Haselden		
15 th	Percy John Dams <i>PRIEST</i> * Jack Berry		

*PLEASE NOTE: The names of those who have been deceased more than 20 years have been removed (except for * previous Incumbents/Bishops)
They will be remembered IF someone attends this requiem mass
AND requests their inclusion in the prayers.*

LORD, BY YOUR CROSS AND RESURRECTION,
YOU HAVE SET US FREE.
YOU ARE THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

** = This priest was a former Vicar of Higham*

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES A DAY following the readings used at Daily Mass
in Church - even if you can't be there. Choose one or both readings.
There are three readings for Sundays and special holy days.

FRI - MARY, MOTHER OF GOD JAN. 1ST
Numbers 6.22-27 Galatians 4.4-7
Luke 2.16-21

S 1 John 2.22-28 John 1.19-28

2ND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS JAN 3RD
Eccl'ticus 24.1,2,8-12 Eph 1.3-6,15-18
John 1.1-18

M 1 John 3.7-10 John 1.35-42

T 1 John 3.11-21 John 1.43-51

WED - THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD JAN 6TH
Isaiah 60.1-6
Ephesians 3.2-3,5-6
Matthew 2.1-12

Th 1 John 3.22-4.6 Matt. 4.12-17,23-25

F 1 John 4.7-10 Mark 6.34-44

S 1 John 4.11-18 Mark 6.45-52

SUN - THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JAN 10TH
Isaiah 55.1-11 1 John 5.1-9
Mark 1.7-11

Christmastide ends / Ordinary Time Week 1

M M Hebrews 1.1-6 Mark 1.14-20

T Hebrews 2.5-12 Mark 1.21-28

W Hebrews 2.14-18 Mark 1.29-39

Th Hebrews 3.7-14 Mark 1.40-45

F Hebrews 4.1-5,11 Mark 2.1-12

S Hebrews 4.12-16 Mark 2.13-17

2ND ORDINARY SUNDAY JAN 17TH
1 Sam 3.3-10,19 1 Cor 6.13-15,17-20
John 1.35-42

M Hebrews 5.1-10 Mark 2.18-22

T Hebrews 6.10-20 Mark 2.23-28

W Hebrews 7.1-3,15-17 Mark 3.1-6

Th Hebrews 7.25-8.6 Mark 3.7-12

F Hebrews 8.6-13 Mark 3.13-19

S Hebrews 9.2-3,11-14 Mark 3.20-21

3RD ORDINARY SUNDAY JAN 24TH
Jonah 3.1-5,10 1 Corinthians 7.29-31
Mark 1.14-20

M **CONVERSION OF S. PAUL JAN. 25TH**
Acts 9.1-22 or Acts 22.3-16
Mark 16.15-18

T *Ss Timothy & Titus Jan 26th*
2 Tim. 1.1-8 or Titus 1.1-5 Luke 10.1-9

W Hebrews 10.11-18 Mark 4.1-20

Th Hebrews 10.19-25 Mark 4.21-25

F Hebrews 10.32-39 Mark 4.26-34

S Hebrews 11.1-2,8-19 Mark 4.35-41

SUNDAY DEDICATION FEAST JAN. 31ST
of the Parish Church of S. John

29th January 1862

Ezekiel 47.1-2,8-9,12

1 Corinthians 3.9-11,16-17

John 2.13-22

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Opening Prayer' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy scripture to be written for our learning: help us
so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience,
and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast
the hope of everlasting life which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

February 2021 at S.John's, Higham

Calendar and Mass Intentions

MASS) SUNDAYS WEEK) Mon., Wed, Fri. & Sat. 9.30am.
 TIMES) 9.30am; 11am [on zoom] DAYS) Tu. & Th., 6.30pm;

EXCEPT TIMES ON : ASH WEDNESDAY 17th Feb. -7.30pm evening Sung Mass

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>CELEBRATION</i>	<i>INTENTION</i>
Mon	1st	Feria (Ord. Week 4)	The 'disturbed'
TUE	2ND	THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE	(F) Personal evangelism
Wed	3rd	S.Lawrence <i>Archbishop</i>	(m) Archbishop of Canterbury
Th.	4th	Feria	Feb. General Synod
Fri.	5th	S.Agatha; <i>Virgin Martyr</i>	(m) Our bellringers
Sat	6th	The Japanese Martyrs <i>Accession Day 1952</i>	(m) H.M. the Queen
SUN	7TH	5TH ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	8th	S.Josephine Bakhita, <i>Religious</i>	(m) Victims of slavery
Tue	9th	Feria (Ord. Week 5)	The lapsed & indifferent
Wed	10th	S.Scholastica <i>Religious</i>	(m) SSM Sisters <i>Walsingham</i>
Th.	11th	Our Lady of Lourdes	(m) The sick & handicapped
Fri	12th	Feria	Age Concern (Higham)
Sat	13th	Feria <i>Mass of Our Lady</i>	(v) Walsingham
SUN	14TH	6TH ORDINARY SUNDAY	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	15th	Feria (Ord. Week 6) <i>Mass of Requiem</i>	(v) +RIP's & Anniversaries
Tue	16th	Feria (Shrove Tuesday)	Penitents & Confessors
WED	17th	ASH WEDNESDAY	9.30am for Lenten Grace
First Day of Lent- Day of Fast and Abstinence			7.30pm The Parish
Th.	18th	Lent Feria (aft. Ash Wed.)	Lent groups/meetings
Fri	19th	Lent Feria (after Ash Wed.)	The hungry & needy
Sat	20th	Lent Feria (after Ash Wed.)	Catechumens/Confirmands
SUN	21ST	1ST SUNDAY OF LENT	(+) THE PARISH
Mon	22nd	The Chair of S.Peter	(m) Pope Francis
Tue	23rd	Lent Feria / S.Polycarp <i>Martyr, Bishop</i>	(c) Forward-in-Faith
Wed	24th	Lent Feria	* Orthodox vocations
Th.	25th	Lent Feria	Vacant parishes
Fri	26th	Lent Feria	* Orthodox seminarians
Sat	27th	Lent Feria	* Orthodox ordinands
SUN	28TH	2ND SUNDAY OF LENT	(+) THE PARISH

KEY: (+) *Day of Obligation*; (f) *Feast*; (m) *Memoria*; (c) *commemoration*; (v) *Votive mass*

THE FEBRUARY REQUIEM

is on Monday 15th FEBRUARY 2021 at 11.30am

The recently departed, and those named below will be prayed for at this mass of requiem intention; and are remembered on the Sunday before and the actual date itself.

2 nd	Ena Mary Choules	22 nd	Richard Henry Holland
7 th	Kenneth Asper		Jessie Elizabeth Creamer
8 th	Reginald Norman Barrow		Violet Frances Elsie Welham
9 th	Brenda Mary Shackleton	23 rd	Neil Andrew Haselden
11 th	Joan Beatrice Clark		George Edward Avery
13 th	Florence Evelyn Austen	24 th	Kevin Dwane Moore
	Roy Edward Whyman		Gladys Mary Christmas
	Bryan John Jones		Alice May (Betty) Heasman
16 th	Mabel Dorothy Lambkin	25 th	Joyce Haskins
	Peggy Margaret Phoebe Williamson		Selina <u>Mary</u> Jarrett
	David Philip Jenkins	26 th	May Helena Roberts
17 th	Eric Shipman		Kathleen Alice Rolfe
	James Douglas Abernethy		May Tetley
	'Bill' Dingle	27 th	Ellen Carruthers
18 th	Reginald William Rootes		Gladys 'Jean' Richardson
19 th	Cecil Newman <i>PRIEST</i>		Peter Francis Cook
21 st	Michael Peter Beek <i>PRIEST*</i>	29 th	Alice Buttery

*PLEASE NOTE: The names of those who have been deceased more than 20 years have been removed (except for * previous Incumbents/Bishops)*

They will be remembered IF someone attends this requiem mass

AND requests their inclusion in the prayers.

DYING YOU DESTROYED OUR DEATH.
RISING YOU RESTORED OUR LIFE.
LORD JESUS, COME IN GLORY!

~ DAILY BIBLE READINGS ~

ONLY A FEW MINUTES A DAY following the readings used at Daily Mass
in Church - even if you can't be there. Choose one or both readings.
There are three readings for Sundays and special holy days.

ORDINARY TIME - WEEK 4

M Hebrews 11.32-40 Mk 5.1-20

TUE - CANDLEMASS FEB.2nd

Presentation of the Lord in the Temple

Malachi 3.1-4

Hebrews 2.14-18

Luke 2.22-40

W Hebrews 12.4-7,11-15 Mark 6.1-6

Th Hebrews 12.18-24 Mark 6.7-13

F Hebrews 13.1-8 Mark 6.14-29

S Hebrews 13.15-21 Mark 6.30-34

5TH ORDINARY SUNDAY FEB 7TH

Job 7.1-7

1 Corinthians 9.16-23

Mark 1.29-39

M Genesis 1.1-19 Mark 6.53-56

T Genesis 1.20-2.4a Mark 7.1-13

W Genesis 2.4b-9,15-17 Mark 7.14-23

T Genesis 2.18-25 Mark 7.24-30

F Genesis 3.1-8 Mark 7.31-37

S Genesis 3.9-24 Mark 8.1-10

6TH ORDINARY SUNDAY FEB 14TH

Leviticus 13.1-2,44-46

1 Corinthians 10.31-11.1

Mark 1.40-45

M Genesis 4.1-15,25 Mark 8.11-13

T Genesis 6.5-8, 7.1-5,10 Mark 8.14-21

ASH WEDNESDAY FEB 26TH

Joel 2.12-18

2 Corinthians 5.20-6.2

Matthew 6.1-6,16-18

Weekdays after Ash Wednesday

Th Deuteronomy 30.15-20 Luke 9.22-25

F Isaiah 58.1-9 Matt. 9.14-15

S Isaiah 58.9-14 Luke 5.27-32

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT FEB 21ST

Genesis 9.8-15

1 Peter 3.18-22

Mark 1.12-15

M CHAIR OF S.PETER FEB.22nd

1 Peter 5.1-4

Matthew 16.13-19

T Isaiah 55.10-11 Matthew 6.7-15

W Jonah 3.1-10 Luke 11.29-32

Th Esther 4.17 Matthew 7.7-12

F Ezekiel 18.21-28 Matthew 5.20-26

S Deuteron. 26.16-19 Matt. 5.43-48

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT FEB 28TH

Genesis 22.1-2, 9-18

Romans 8.31-34

Mark 9.2-10

*Not all Bibles contain the additional
canonical texts eg. Esther above -
unless your Bible says 'with Apocrypha'.*

End by using the Sunday Bulletin 'Opening Prayer' or this 'Prayer after Reading Scripture'

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of your holy word.

May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and a strength in our lives.

Take us and use us to love and serve everyone in the power of the Holy Spirit,

and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NEWS FROM THE EDITOR



Many thanks to you all for subscribing to the Bridge for 2021. There has been a fantastic response for our appeal for payment of the subscriptions for 2020 and I am pleased to say that very few people have opted to no longer continue receiving the magazine. Whilst it was not possible for local groups to meet since March the contributions from the few were very much appreciated.

A new year but unfortunately little change in sight. I received three offers of help with producing and delivering the Bridge but owing to Kent being in Tier 3 the current team have continued to do the bulk of the production in their support “bubble”. Let’s hope that more people can assist for the March issue.

Volunteers are still desperately needed so please if you can spare the time please do let me know. Photocopying, collating and distributors still needed plus someone who would take over the liaison with the advertisers. Kate and Dorne have been undertaking these tasks for many years and it is now time for them to pass on the baton!

Please contact me if you would like to know more: mobile 07811 028803 or email bridge@highamparishchurch.org.uk.

A Happy New Year to you all.

Liz Croker
Editor

LOVE IN A BOX 2020

Thank you to everyone who filled a shoebox with Christmas gifts for a deprived child in Moldova. We managed to send 49 boxes, which is less than usual, but understandable in the present circumstances. Especial thanks for a local National Childbirth Trust (NCT) group from Rochester who kindly filled 8 boxes.

Wendy Hance

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL 2020

A **big thank you** to everyone who contributed to this year's Poppy Appeal.

The village of Higham raised £1,22.54 in total.

Although this is less than the last few years it is a marvellous result as we were not allowed to do house to house collections and all of our pubs, the Village Club and Haircare were shut for lockdown thereby missing a full week of the Appeal.

Well don and many thanks to everyone who helped.



Ken Aldous
Poppy Appeal Organiser



THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

The Feast of the Visitation of the Wise Men



Wednesday, 6th January 2021

**A Holy Day of Obligation for the faithful in thanksgiving
for the revelation of the Messiah to all nations.**

Morning Prayer – 8.45am

Said Mass - 9.30am

Evening Prayer – 6.45pm

Parish Mass - 7.30pm

*Holy Communion may be brought to the sick and housebound
upon request to Fr James.*

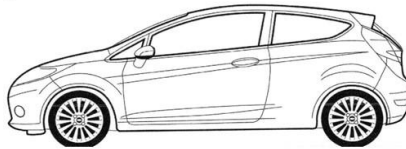


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HiARA NOVEMBER 2020 NEWS REPORT

Here we are again in the midst of another lockdown. Hopefully as you read this, we will be emerging from it, but the figures may show it needs to stay in place in some form or other. It is nearly Christmas time and no doubt for a lot of you it will be a Christmas like no other. Meanwhile, we hope you are all keeping well and managing to fill in your spare time within the limits of what is currently allowed especially now the arrival of Autumn and onset of the winter months, the garden won't be such a welcoming space to sit and ponder in until the warmth of a spring day comes along. Keeping in touch is going to keep us together and the club going. We don't know how long this situation is going to go on for but we should try and stay positive however difficult that is.

As you probably all know, two members, Ted Martin and Roy Foster, passed away in late October, both will be fondly remembered and missed. Should you wish to make a donation to Ted's charity it is Crossroads Care Kent or the Dogs Trust, for Roy it is to Battersea Dogs Home. Please remember, our nominated charity, the Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services.

Also, in late October, vandals caused considerable damage to the windows at Higham Memorial Hall, smashing the kitchen window and some of the higher ones as well. Such a shame that a much-appreciated community venue is desecrated in this way. It is closed during lockdown.

Ian, our Treasurer has confirmed that the 2019/20 accounts have now been verified by the Auditor and are available to view at the end of this newsletter. Jenny is kindly updating our website (www.hiARA.org.uk) with an "archive" of past newsletters, so if you've missed a month of news you will be able to go back and search for it via a link. Thank you, Jenny.

During the year Higham residents have been taking photographs in the village and surrounding area. This has finally been compiled into a 2021

calendar. The photographs were judged by local historian, Andrew Rootes, he has chosen 12 to represent the village together with the seasons. All entries were worthy winners. Copies can be obtained at a cost of £7.50p each from the village Post Office or Greengrocers and other shops. These would make a splendid gift for those family members or friends abroad as a memento of the village and this unusual year.

For those of you who enjoy the annual Pantomime visit with your family, The Woodville – at this time of writing has a socially distanced production of Rapunzel. Regular favourite stars are in the cast and it promises to be a very good show. All the Covid 19 safeguards are in place but, you will need to wear your mask throughout. Well worth supporting. See local press and The Woodville website for booking details, it runs from December 11 to Jan 2nd. I am booked with a friend to go to Potters Leisure Resort in Suffolk, with Jewels Tours in early December. Something we are both looking forward to. But it may get cancelled – who knows? everything is so uncertain these days. More news on that later.

My thanks to Ian, Vice Chair for his advice and support during the year and to the other committee members for their help, ideas and enthusiasm to keep the club “active” over this year. The “Lindor” moment will have to wait!

From us all on the committee, we wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and New Year. Stay safe.

To all members, **John Wheatley** sends his best wishes for a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year, stay Covid free. Hope to see you all very soon. **Percy** sends a big thank you to all HiARA members for the help and support you have shown him and he wishes you all a Very Happy Christmas and a better and brighter New Year.

Liz Jeffery

Bags 2 Church Need to declutter?



Have you been meaning to clear some space in your wardrobe and drawers?

Well now is the chance to do it:-

However due to lack of storage, St John's will gladly receive your unwanted clothes, shoes, bags or soft toys - place items in a **clear** bag which will be available from the Church Porch.

**The bags should be left in the garage at the rear of
81 Oak Drive
Monday and Tuesday 25th and 26th January 9-6 pm**

These bags will be collected
Wednesday 27th January
and in return the church will receive up to £300 a tonne.

Please note we still **cannot take
DUVETS, PILLOWS, MATTRESS COVERS.
We are able to accept
TOWELS, BEDDING (Sheets, blankets or duvet covers/pillowcases) or CURTAINS.**

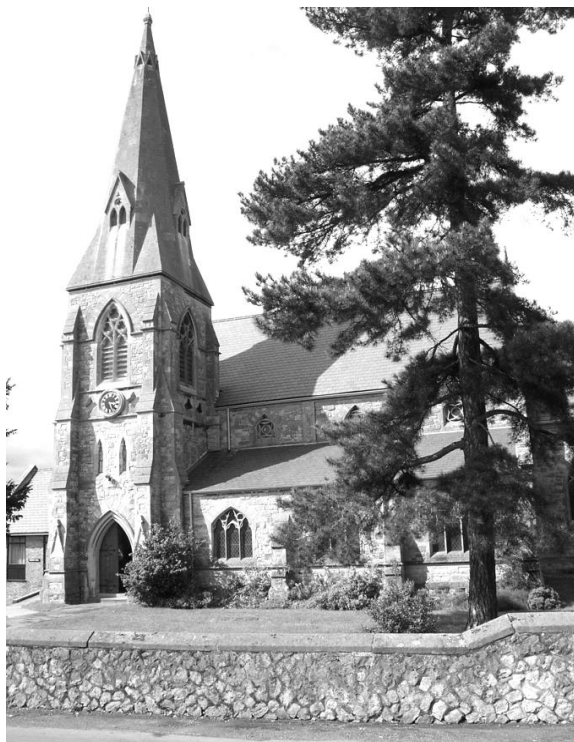
For more information contact
Cheryl Robins 01474 822461

The Solemnity of the
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Sunday, 31st January 2021

159th Anniversary of Consecration

S. John's was consecrated on 29th January 1862



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If your group or society plans an event or meeting and you want more advertising, just let me know so that it can be added to the village website to spread the word. Club and society contact details are always needed to update and extend the online list of groups. If your society has a website, then we can list this as well and link back to you.

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Dear Friends

The Epiphany celebrated on 6th January is an integral part of our Christmas celebrations of the birth of Jesus. Most of our Christmas card scenes of the Nativity are not Biblical at all. The Shepherds had gone well before the Magi - Wise Men arrived. They are often pictured as crowned kings riding in splendour



across middle-eastern deserts. Nowhere in the gospel narratives does it mention them as kings. (If they were as magnificent as pictured, they would probably been robbed soon after they set out!). The idea of them being kings, which is very popular in many countries (don't dare doubt it in Spain!), probably arose because they represent worldly powers coming to pay homage and tribute to the king of kings. Another tradition saw them as the kings of the Old Testament who had destroyed Jerusalem, stolen the treasures of the temple and taken the people into exile, returning in penitence and, symbolised by the gifts, bringing back the treasures of the Temple. It's a nice idea even if we can't give any authenticity. The central point of the Epiphany is that the truth of Jesus as the Saviour is revealed to the wider world. The truth of the Gospel goes beyond the little world of first century Bethlehem. As the Wise Men, the Magi, searched for signs they followed the guiding star and found the rightful end of their search. They worshipped and presented their gifts, gifts which looked into the future. There was nothing more to say or do. They returned home satisfied in mind and heart. Their wisdom had been fulfilled.

“We returned to our places, these Kingdoms, But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, With an alien people clutching their gods.” (*T. S. Eliot – The Journey of the Magi*).

The revelation of Jesus in the Epiphany is as much to our contemporary world as to any time in the past. King Herod, fearful and jealous, failed in the Slaughter of the Innocents to prevent the truth being revealed:

“Why, impious Herod, shouldst thou fear,

Because the Christ is come so near?

He who doth heavenly kingdoms grant

Thine earthly realm can never want.” *English Hymnal no 38*

The celebration of Epiphany is often somewhat muted by the Christmas festivities and the start of a new year but it is an essential part of the Christmas cycle. In many countries this is the day when gifts are exchanged. As we listen to the story and reflect on its meaning let us be glad in rejoicing and find inward peace and satisfaction in the revelation of Jesus Christ to the world.

Here are some more extracts from ‘**Higham News**’ from the ***Chatham News*** – ninety years ago.

2 Jan 1931

“ENTER 1931 – The New Year was rung in on the bells of St John’s Church by the Higham ringers, the sound passing clear in the midnight air. The ringers had previously spent a pleasant evening in the Church Institute, commencing with a tasty supper provided by Mr V. L. Berry, and continuing with songs and other items of a social character. Shortly after midnight the Vicar celebrated Holy Communion in St John’s Church, this being the first watchnight service held in Higham for many years.”



“CHRISTMASTIDE. The holiday passed quietly in the village chiefly marked by family reunions and happy gatherings. The only social event was a concert given in the Working Men’s Hall, on Saturday by the Elite Concert Party when, needless to say, the programme was seasonable. The churches were, as usual, tastefully decorated on Christmas Day, and the number of

communicants somewhat increased (to a total of 106). The collections which were for the Christmas Coal Fund to bring cheer to fireless grates at the festive season, reached the satisfactory total of £6 8s 2d. In St John's, Christmas morning marked the first use of an excellent new lighting system which, made possible by generous donors, is another illustration of the indefatigable work of the Vicar's Warden Mr A H Wright, who hopes ere long it will be possible to improve the lighting of the parish Church by the installation of electricity."

13 Mar 1931

"CHURCH COUNCIL. ...The Vicar announced that the sixteenth century chalice of St Mary's Church had been valued at £800 and was now adequately insured. He was thanked for his efforts in securing a valuation and a member of the Council was asked to photograph the chalice for reference..."

25 Mar 1931

"DICKEN'S OLD PAGE BOY

Death of Mr Isaac Armitage in London.

"Almost the last surviving link with Charles Dicken's household was severed by the death last week-end of Mr Isaac Armitage in London. He was page boy to the great novelist at Gads-hill and owing to the absence of others in attendance at the table at which, he often related, Dickens died. He helped to carry his master to a couch, and immediately called the doctor.

One of a family of eight, Mr Armitage was born on January 30th 1854, at Higham Upshire, where his father was a cobbler, and where the original cobbler's shop is still in existence. His only surviving sister, Miss Minnie Armitage, still lives in the house adjoining this shop, and has many recollections of her brother's associations with his beloved "hero-master". She relates her father's determination that his sons should not be cobblers, and the consequent entry of Isaac into the employ of Dickens who by various kindly actions showed his affection for his page.*

Following the novelist's death, he continued in the employ of his son for a time and then in turn served as butler in London to a Mr Jordan and Alderman Ellis. Thence with fewer opportunities arising for service as a butler, he went to Messrs Shoolbruda and was in their employ as head waiter for several years. His first wife died twenty-two years ago, and after being a widower six years he re-married and is now survived by his second wife after sixteen years of happiness. He leaves no children.

The funeral took place in St Mary's Higham (Dickens' "Church of the Marshes") yesterday (Thursday), the service taking place where he was christened exactly seventy-seven years ago, and the internment in the family grave with his first wife"



*Does any reader know where the cobbler's shop was?

Little did the villagers in 1931 realise that within a few years the world would be plunged into another world war and all its consequences. But, then, this time last year we had no idea about the devastating effect of the pandemic that sprang up so suddenly. We can never tell what lies ahead, good or bad.

Whatever may come, God is always present and his love is constant. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." This is what was revealed to the Magi at the Epiphany.

With best wishes and constant prayer for the New Year

fr Andrew

SMILE LINES

Sign in an old church porch to reassure any visitors:

In this church many are cold, but few are frozen.

Sign on the tomb of an atheist:

Here lies an atheist. All dressed up and sadly no place to go.

From a church magazine in Hampshire: We badly need more sinners for our choir.

Source: Parish Pump



17th February 2021 - The First Day of Lent

ASH WEDNESDAY



Said Mass & Ashing 9.30am



Solemn Mass & Ashing 7.30pm

*Ash Wednesday is also a solemn day of Fasting and Abstinence
for the faithful throughout the world.*

Confessions may be made after each Mass or by appointment.

*Upon request to the priest concerned confessions may be made
IN PRIVATE IN THE CHURCH-OFFICE*



Shrove Tuesday - 16th February 2021

Shrove Tuesday gets its name from being the traditional day for 'being shaven' before Lent starts the following day. Shaven (to be shorn) means being absolved of your sin by means of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (commonly called Confession). This may be celebrated on Shrove Tuesday by appointment with any priest. Confession is also available on Ash Wednesday by appointment or after either Mass.

Confession (The Sacrament of Reconciliation)

This sacrament may be celebrated by appointment, or just come to Church on ANY Friday evening at 6.30pm (after Evening Prayer). Anyone who is new to the sacrament, or unclear as to what the celebration of this gift of Christ to his Church involves, can have an explanation at any point, without obligation to make their confession. Please ask one of the clergy.

Ash Wednesday 17th February 2021

ASH WEDNESDAY (and Good Friday)

These are days of fasting and abstinence throughout the Universal Church (of which, the C. of E. claims to be a full part). Those aged 18-60 (and in good health) should observe fasting and abstinence. This action of discipline and penitence, on these most solemn of days, in UNION with other Christians world-wide, is offered to God on behalf of ourselves and the whole Church. Those who are sick, younger or older should participate as far as is possible.

WHAT IS FASTING AND ABSTINENCE?

The following definitions will help you to participate more fully in the day.

FASTING? This means one normal meal and, if necessary, up to two VERY light 'snacks'. Nothing else! If this is your normal diet then you'd need to adjust it accordingly. Some form of fasting may be observed on other days especially Fridays, but is forbidden on Sundays (the day of the Resurrection) and Solemnities.

ABSTINENCE? This usually means no meat. This - and other forms of abstinence (e.g. sweets, cakes, alcohol) - is encouraged also on Fridays (the day of Crucifixion) throughout the year provided they are not Solemnities. If you abstain from something like the TV which saves you time you could then DO something instead for God in worship or in the service of others. It is an ancient and laudable custom that any financial savings made from fasting or abstinence should be used for charitable purposes especially the hungry and homeless. If you wish to do this through S.John's please talk to the Treasurer

JUNIOR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC

This past year has been a trying time for most of us, but especially for our families who are juggling work, child and older parent care, and education. Some of our families have experienced sickness and even loss of loved ones. We have nothing but immense pride and respect in what they (and you!) have been doing and will continue to do as long as we face this time of coronavirus.

It's been very sad not to be meeting together for Junior Church – especially during the Advent and Christmas period, but in keeping children safe we will continue to operate virtually until it is much safer to gather in church again. We look forward to that day! We have attempted, and will continue, to support and encourage our families with regular emails and activities, as well as postings on social media, and will continue this in 2021 as long as is needed.

Last month there were crafts and activities for Christ the King, Advent and Christmas, and online worship through Facebook and Zoom. And we will have a virtual celebration of the Epiphany on 6 January, when the Wise Men (or Magi) found Jesus the Saviour by following the light of the star. The Epiphany message is one we all need: that Jesus IS the Light of the world, and the darkness (which sometimes seems very dark indeed) cannot put it out.

Christians are a people of hope and of love, and we can say confidently with our words and our actions that, whatever happens in our lives, Jesus Christ is KING, God is WITH US (“Emmanuel” in the Christmas story) and God LOVES US. Knowing this gives us comfort in the present and hope in the future.

Do keep an eye on social media and on our website for activities and announcements. And in the meantime, we offer God's blessings for you and your families.

Keep safe. Keep well. And a Happy New Year!

- Nancy Hughes

EPIPHANY

On 6th January, we celebrate the arrival of the Wise Men, or Magi, who followed the star to Jesus, and through them Jesus was revealed to the world.

Read the story in your Bible – Matthew 2: 1-12.

EPIPHANY WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

D U E C U J Q I R W I T F Y B
U S S N O S I G Q A Q X S H J
U F N S J P F S R G Y K U U V
E Z E I N H S B W N U C S Z U
U P C S C S F T A E W A E S I
H E N X T N A H F H Z M J B B
A C E Y R A P V R I A E K M R
F Z K H T I R R I R G L T D Y
X C N X P K Y M Y O B S N J G
W S A E B M A G I S U G N I K
D I R B J O U R N E Y R D R N
M J F W R G G T H G I L N C B
Y C R N L O K R G H X H G Y H
J O M K D L D L R E S Z P U X
J Q L Y L D F P C P E P T Z G

CAMELS
EPIPHANY
FRANKINCENSE
GIFTS
GOLD
JESUS
JOSEPH
JOURNEY
KING
LIGHT
MAGI
MARY
MYRRH
SAVIOUR
STAR

Submitting Articles or Items to The Bridge

Editors: Liz Croker
Chris Hanson

Email: bridge@highamparishchurch.org.uk

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HIGHAM VILLAGE CLUB (CIU)



33 Hermitage Road, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7DD
Tel 01474 822456

The Club is currently closed as we are following Government guidelines, we are hoping to open 4th July.

Please check our Club website or telephone the Club

Join our Website for up to the minute news on all events

www.highamvillageclub.co.uk

The club has a hall which can be hired out for

Private functions to members and non-members.

Ideal venue for Birthdays, Weddings, Christenings & Wakes.

All our events are usually open to non-members for a small entrance fee.

www.highamvillageclub.co.uk

<p style="font-size: small;">www.jewelstours.co.uk</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">JEWELS TOURS</h2> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">56 New Road, Gravesend Kent DA11 0AD</p>		
<p>Spring in Paignton Palace Hotel 16 March £299 Nil Single Sup 5 Days HB</p>		<p>Warner Bembridge I.O.W 30 March Sig £375 Std £335 Nil Single Sup 5 Days HB</p>
<p>Bournemouth Suncliffe Hotel 16 March £259 Nil Single Sup 5 Days All Inclusive</p>		<p>English Riviera Queens Hotel 6 April £299 Nil Single Sup 5 Days HB</p>
<p>Spring in Scotland Winnock Hotel 23 March £435 £90 Single Sup 6 Days All Inclusive</p>	<p>Vale of Evesham & Blossom Tour Stourport Manor 13 April £335 £80 Single Sup 5 Days HB</p>	<p>Theatre Trips</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tina Turner Mary Poppins Great Coral Classics Beautiful-Carol King please call for details</p>
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7th February

APRIL 2021

7th March

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HIGHAM in 1891

This was a bad year weather-wise for the village. The winter was bitterly cold and prolonged with snow laying and a fresh fall in March with drifts in School Lane causing the school to close for two days. Garden produce was ruined and people working on the land were laid off but lots of people enjoyed skating on the canal. Later there was much rain with a hailstorm in July with hailstones as big as walnuts. The hop harvest was so late that the regular school holiday was extended for a week as the children helped with the picking.

Of Church reports there were 47 baptisms including one of a child found in Rochester and put out to nurse, 26 burials, most shockingly young by today's standards and on Hospital Sunday the collections of both churches amounting to £6-8s-6d went to the hospital.

The Government inspection of the school was satisfactory with a new rule being introduced that boys must be taught drawing. The big change in education was that from 1st September that year all schooling would be free but the vicar hoped that those that could afford would still contribute to school maintenance.

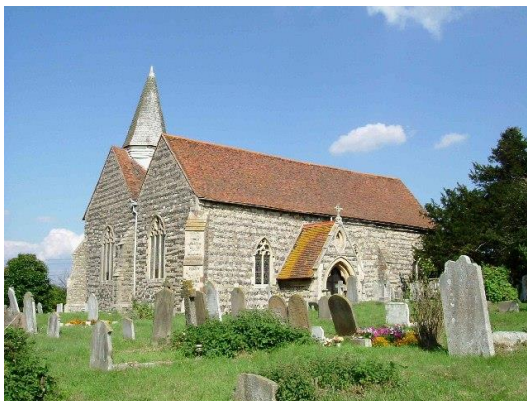
Higham had a slate club, the joining fee being one shilling, sixpence per week thereafter. If the man became sick, he got 10 shillings a week for 6 weeks and 5 shillings for a further 5 weeks. The church institute opened as a reading room 3 days a week for men only. Daily newspapers were provided, the fee of one penny giving access for a fortnight.

This was a census year, the population of Higham being 1,456, an increase of 113 since 1881 thought partly due to cement workers. Nationally the drift from country to town was noted due to the increased employment in manufacture.

Barbara Manley

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM ST MARY'S

St Mary's church is open for people to visit now. Although we sadly had to cancel our programme of events for this year, we are looking at what we can do in 2021. Hopefully we will least be able to run some outside events, and welcome back the This is My



Theatre Group who had been hoping to do the Snow Queen and the Three Musketeers. In the meantime, volunteers have been busy planting spring bulbs around the graveyard, the swing gate and the path so hopefully come Spring time there will be some lovely colour in the graveyard. To help spread some festive cheer a real Christmas tree will put up in the church in December to welcome you - please feel free to visit the church and make sure you follow government guidelines on social distancing.

Lygia Schubert

MAGAZINE EXTRACTS

“My mum always said when anyone was feeling down, “Two men looked through the prison bars, one saw mud and the other saw stars.”

“Many years ago, I sw this lovely message on a church noticeboard. “Can’t sleep, don’t count sheep, talk to the Shepherd.”

Source: Yours Magazine

Gravesham Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy

Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) is in the process of reviewing this document which guides housing and employment development in the whole Borough. It therefore has a potential impact for all of us living and working in Higham. As part of the Review GBC are required to consult with residents and other key individuals and organisations.

One of its key assumptions is that by 2036, there will be a need for an extra 10,480 houses, although the population of the Borough is only expected to increase from 106,900 to 109,500 in the same period - this is effectively 3 houses per new resident! The Consultation has started and will close on **31st December 2020** (this is later than the original closing date due to the current lock down). A large number of documents, site plans showing potential development areas and draft policies that deal with issues arising from planning applications are available on the Borough Council website.

localplan.gravesham.gov.uk/consult.ti/REG18S2/consultationHome

As we understand it paper copies of the documents are not available.

Residents can access them online or can visit the Civic Centre in Gravesend. If you, or someone you know, cannot access via either of these methods you may like to write to the Chief Planning Officer and Chief Executive and say that GBC has a legal duty to provide the information in a manner/format in which you can use it. A significant number of sites in Higham have been identified for potential development and the Parish Council are working hard to look at the implications **IF** any of these sites were to be developed.

The Parish Council will be sending a detailed response to GBC and individual residents can complete the consultation Questionnaire. If all these sites were developed, the number of dwellings in Higham would double.

The Parish Council is going to provide residents with additional information via leaflets, our website and Facebook page. We suggest you read through the documents and if you have any questions or comments please contact the Clerk to Higham Parish Council at:-

highampc@hotmail.com or telephone 01474 822642

As there are still 6 weeks before the consultation closes you may wish to wait for further guidance and information before responding. In the meantime please alert your friends and neighbours to the consultation and encourage them to view the documents and to look out for further information from the Parish Council.

*HIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
19.11.20*

Link: localplan.gravesham.gov.uk/consult.ti/REG18S2/consultationHome

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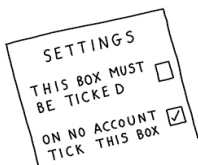
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ANIMALS RUNNING AMOK



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JANUARY 2021 Donation Guide

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30th and 31st JANUARY

PLEASE NOTE: FOR THE NEXT COLLECTIONS THEY HAVE SPECIALLY REQUESTED THAT WE GIVE PRIORITY TO THE HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS BELOW

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hot and cold meats – ham and corned beef ✓ Tinned pies ✓ Tinned fish – mackerel, salmon, pilchards NO tuna or sardines please) ✓ Tinned potatoes & smash ✓ Tinned Macaroni cheese ✓ Tinned custard ✓ Microwave Hot puddings ✓ Small bottles of squash | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Jelly Pots and evaporated milk ✓ Savoury treats - crisps, nuts, crackers |
|--|---|

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant noodles • Meat pies • UHT whole and semi skimmed milk <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tin spaghetti and sausages • Cereal bars • Instant packets of cup of soup <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juice <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot Chocolate • Tinned vegetables • Instant packets of cous
cous Spreads – jam and peanut
butter marmite <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetarian foods • Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, sugar. • Jars of pasta sauce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereals, sweet & chocolate biscuits • Tinned rice • Jars of pasta sauce • Cereals, sweet & chocolate
biscuits Tinned fruit, sponge puddings • Pasta and rice |
|--|--|

Cleaning and toiletries

- Household cleaners, spray polish
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes, bars of soap
- Ladies personal toiletries, toilet rolls
- Nappies size 4 & 5
- Shaving foam/gel, body spray
- Shampoo and toilet rolls

Thank You very much for your support

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graveshamfoodbank@gmail.com www.gravesham.foodbank.org.uk

