

St Luke's Church (Wellington Road) Parkstone

CHRISTMAS 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbours,



As we come towards the end of this difficult year, may we know love in our hearts and the hope of better days to come. On behalf of the church and community, thank you for all the care and acts of kindness you have shown over these past months. We trust you will be able to celebrate Christmas and keep well in 2021.

The first lockdown was hard, but since October it has been very testing – the initial relief of a less busy diary, walks each day, good weather, new opportunities and capacity to support neighbours has been replaced by more negative experiences – ill-health and loss, anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, loneliness, separation, anger and despair. It has been demanding and we need to own our pain and grief. 2020 has been hugely disorientating.

And yet in the Christian Faith we can find a realism and strength. God actually entered into the darkness and pain of this world in Jesus Christ; he was born and raised in lowly Bethlehem and Nazareth by a poor family under Roman rule. Christ's life reveals and his teaching embraces our suffering, and yet always points through it to the light and life God's eternal Kingdom. There is hope.

God pushes back on darkness and despair. "God is with us" and through Jesus Christ (meaning "Saviour King") He brings comfort, peace and joy to humanity. This is the Good News which tells a far bigger and more wonderful story than the one we may have been led to believe, or ignore or reject!

Do join us for us for our planned services in person, if you consider it wise, or by Zoom. We have our Risk Assessment but the decision to attend has to be personal. Masks and social distancing are necessary. More important than attending may we desire a deeper engagement with God and allow His Good News to transform the whole of life - our work, relationships, recreation, economy, environment etc. God invites us to seek, as did humble shepherds and discerning wise men, and find the One who is the key to life. He assures us that we are loved, known and safe for ever. The sufferings of this year are real and have been hard to bear, but God is with us, and holds us for ever. **In this lies hope!**



Proposed Christmas Services in the building + by Zoom

The Zoom Link Is One Click on Our Web Site stlukesparkstone.org.uk

Sunday 20th	10.30	Christingle Service
	17.00	Simple Carol Service
Monday 21st	18.00	Carol Singing outside St Luke's
Tuesday 22nd	18.00	Carol Singing starting at Hall
CHRISTMAS DAY	10.30	Christmas Praise + Communion



The church will be open from 10 - 12 from 21st – 24th for visiting /prayer

See also our web site for other services and to check. Thanks. Should we get too full we may have to say, "No room at the Inn," but we hope it will all be fine! You might consider making your own Christingle at home (you can google how to do it) & join us by Zoom!



This year we have been delighted to have **Anna Counsell** as our Children's and Families' Minister. She is doing a great job and running some fun things. She is organising a **virtual Nativity** (open to all). Anna would love hear from you. She and her Ben even managed to get married in September! Contact Anna at annastainer.stlukes@gmail.com

We do hope that Parents & Toddlers, Coffee Mornings, Youth Club and Hall events will start as soon as is safe.

ALPHA FILM SERIES - Have these past months made you think more about the meaning of life and faith? Then do join a Churches Together in Poole **ONLINE ALPHA**. It starts on Monday 25th January and will run for eight weeks 7.30 – 9.00pm from the comfort of your home! Go to www.alpha.org/try-alpha/ Contact me or info@poolealpha.co.uk



Poole Food Bank: Dried & tinned food items etc can be taken to church when open for us to deliver to the Food Bank at St James.

We do hope you can meet with others over Christmas and pray the Christmas message will bring hope and comfort. With love,

Chris Strain Vicar

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stlukesparkstone.org.uk

