



St John the
Baptist

St Barnabas

St Luke

St Mark

**'Good News Letter' for the People of
Catford (Southend) and Downham**



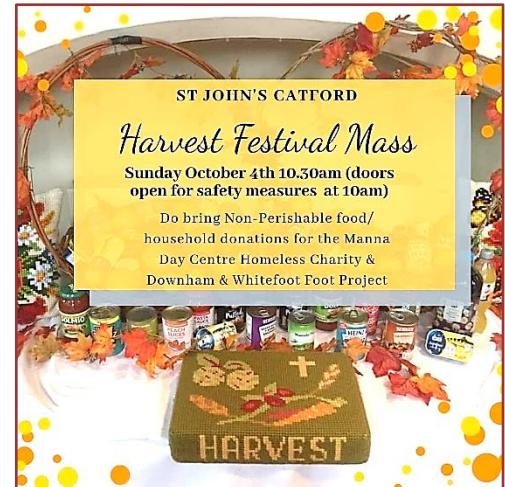
Good News from St Johns

We were pleased to reopen church on Sunday 28th June after a huge amount of work done by our wardens and Remi. The service felt very special even though the congregation was small.



We continued to stay open for three services a week until the current lockdown; Sundays 10.30am, Wednesdays 10am with music and our choir, and Thursdays Said Mass at 7.30pm, all of which were and still are streamed live, then put on Facebook, Youtube and our Website. Fr Christopher also streams morning and evening prayer everyday apart from Saturdays.

Our Harvest Festival was lovely. Thank you to Gillian for the beautiful flowers, and to our school and congregation for their generous gifts collected initially for the Whitefoot Food Project and Manna, although as our donations were much smaller than usual, Manna kindly agreed for us to keep all donations for our food project.



All Saints was celebrated at our Sunday Service on 1st November, and for our All Souls Service this year we had a Requiem Mass (Fauré). It was very popular with nearly every seat pre booked. The service was extremely moving with live musicians and singers all organised and directed by Jack Stone our Director of Music, and Fr Christopher and Revd Margaret taking the service.

Remembrance Sunday was streamed due to the current lockdown although, we were blessed again with 'The Last Post' being played on clarinet by Alex (a member of our choir) and singing from Jack, Alex and Frankie.

We are pleased to be able to say that although St John's is currently going through an interregnum, the DCC has continued to meet over 'Zoom' and work together with the wardens and Fr Christopher to continue business as usual.

As well as all the above happening we have also: Baptised two children and had the pleasure of holding a small but beautiful Wedding in the church; held three Mothers' Union services; supported families within our school with food parcels; and decorated and reopened the hall for Breakfast and After-school Clubs.

We are also pleased to announce that we are now going to be a distribution centre for the Food Project, taking some of the workload of referral families from the Whitefoot Lane project.

St John's is now focusing its thoughts on Advent and Christmas; how to provide both joy and comfort during this period.



Sandy Mawford

GOOD NEWS FROM ST. BARNABAS

Amidst the challenges of the pandemic and lockdown there have been good things happening within our community here at St. Barnabas.

At Easter we installed 3 crosses in the quadrant to provide a visible sign to the community of the power of the Easter story and the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour.



We placed lights in our windows to remind the world that the light will overcome the darkness.



And to mark Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day we placed two symbols of remembrance in the grounds of the Church and decorated the fences and trees with poppies. We also held an outside Act of Remembrance to observe the 2 minutes silence and remember.



Wedding bells also rang out for Raymond and Susan as we were able to hastily rearrange their wedding prior to the latest lockdown commencing which would otherwise have meant a postponement of their special day.



It was a joyous occasion and the sun even shone for the photos!

Revd Stuart Leck

GOOD NEWS FROM ST LUKE'S – NOVEMBER 2020

Even though our normal life and our plans for this year have been thrown up in the air by Coronavirus, God is still at work and good things are happening at St Luke's! We have seen God's blessing and provision in so many ways with so many opportunities to work for his Kingdom and bring the good news of Jesus to our community through our words and actions.

Our Community Work:

Throughout the whole of the first lock-down and beyond our team has worked hard to stay connected to the local community and to respond to local needs. From March to July we provided an emergency food bank, providing food and activities to Front Room members and to people referred to us for support.

Once we were able to re-open the Front Room for limited services in July, we started to welcome people in face to face, and it was wonderful and essential to start interacting with people in this way. The presence of our Parish Nurse, Becky, was vital and a wonderful blessing, as she helped us to work safely and provided advice and reassurance to anxious members of the group and community. Becky is due to go on maternity leave in December and God has provided us with a wonderful second nurse, Ali Cliff, who is joining the team just before Becky finishes, allowing a good handover.



As a support group we are permitted to remain open during the November lock-down and other community groups have been looking to our example. We have also been offered funding from several sources to support and develop our work, including providing hampers and activities for people over Christmas.

Children and Youth Work:

In April we were joined by Kirstyn Oliver, our full time Children and Family Outreach Worker. Kirstyn has been hard at work connecting with families in the church and community and providing some excellent resources for them to organize Sunday School at Home. Kirstyn has also partnered with Friends of Forster Park to run two Nature Days with the first involving over 50 families, and the second getting over 100 people, requesting packs. *We are really excited about how this might develop into a Forest Church project!*



We have also started partnering with XLP, a youth charity, who are running a Thursday afternoon youth session in Shroffold Road Park. Three members of St Luke's have been going along to these sessions on a regular basis to support the youth workers and to get to know the young people. It has been exciting to see this work developing.

Baptism:

Theresa discovered faith in Jesus during lock-down and contacted local churches looking for one to join; she lives near St Luke's and we invited her to join us and she loved it here. It was such a boost to our faith to be able to baptise her on Sunday 18th October, the feast of St Luke, by full immersion. We loved welcoming her guests and seeing the church packed (at least as packed as physical distancing allows!).

Finances:

When lock-down began we were quite anxious about our finances and what impact the closure would have on them. God has really blessed us in this area though – many members of our congregation stepped up to give by standing order or to save their offerings and provide them when we came together; the nursery based in the hall committed to paying their full rent throughout the lock-down; and we have received several grants to support our work.

Revd Nick Walsh

The Good News of St Mark's during Coronavirus

As with many organisations, the Church of England has faced many problems this year, not least being unable to meet and worship in person for much of it. However, Revd Nick and members of the congregation have risen to the challenge. Every week since the first 'Lockdown' Revd Nick has issued a 'Stay Connected' Newsletter with a Homily, as well as News and Prayer requests. I have been Emailing this out with the Sunday Reading Sheet, any other news, and other items of possible interest including the occasional cartoon – also the links to the online Holy



Communion Service which Revd Nick has led again every week for St Mark's and St Luke (these links are also advertised on St Mark's Facebook page which is useful for those not on our list. Using the link, to my knowledge, one ex-member of St Mark's who now lives in the West Country, has been able to participate). The Service has been very helpful especially for those who have had to shield. During both Lockdowns, there has been a Zoom get together for both Churches after the Service. This has been a great way to chat to fellow members of St Mark's and also to get to know some of St Luke's congregation. Janet has been delivering the Newsletter etc to those few members not on Email. *Once the first Lockdown was over, St Mark's was open once a week for private prayer.*

In September a public Holy Communion was reinstated on a Thursday morning. Full safety measures were put in place including a one-way system, social distancing, hand gel and mask wearing. On 4th October, Harvest Festival Sunday, we were allowed to worship in St Mark's on a Sunday for the first time since 15th March, and it was lovely to see various members of the congregation again, even under restrictions. We have a 'new' second-hand piano which belonged to a friend of Rosemary's who used to sing at St Mark's some years ago when we had the occasional concert and although we weren't able to sing, Rosemary was able to play – she loves the new piano! Also Janet Hurst took round Harvest packs to children connected with St Mark's and she is planning to do the same for Christmas.

Now we are back in 'Lockdown' and don't know about what will happen at Christmas, but I'm sure even if we have to have an online Service, it will be very uplifting, knowing that other members are joining in.

One piece of news for the future: for some years St Mark's DCC has been in contact with the Church architect about building a new front porch as the current one is in a very bad state, and not very welcoming. The architect has finally come up with what looks like a very promising design, so we are hoping that after this pandemic is over, we may have a new porch!!

As well as activities connected to the Church building during this time, the Hall has been in use. The Legendary Community Club used it during the Summer holidays and are continuing to do so. The Club provides food parcels for young people and their families for Torridon and Greenvale Schools currently both in term time and holiday. There is more information about the LCC online.

Lucie Walsh has sent the following about her 'Pathways' Charity which is based at St Mark's:

"Pathways may be closed to visitors but we are still as busy as ever. We have supported the community with fundraising campaigns over the summer and have been very successful with our fundraising efforts. We have plans to do more to support the Legendary Community Club with their food providing service for local people and look forward to opening groups when it is safe to do so. We hope to have a jumble sale soon too as we all love a bargain!"



CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE CHURCHES IN THE PARISH

St John's:

Team Rector - Vacant

Curate: Revd Christopher Rogers – 020 8461 5632. Email: frchristopherrogers@outlook.com

St John's web-site: https://stjohnscatford.co.uk/ Also on Facebook

St Barnabas:

Team Vicar of St Barnabas - Revd Stuart Leck – 020 8698 0283

Email: revdstuartleck@btinternet.com

St Barnabas' web-site: https://stbarnabasdownham.co.uk/ Also on Facebook

St Luke's:

Team Vicar of St Luke's - Revd Nick Walsh – 07774516204

Email: revnickwalsh@gmail.com

St Luke's web-site: http://stlukesdownham.org.uk/ Also on Facebook

St Mark's:

Team Vicar St Mark's (see St Luke's)

St Mark's is also on Facebook



The story of the Christmas Pudding.

Traditionally the Christmas Pudding is supposed to be made with thirteen ingredients which represent Christ and his disciples. It should be stirred (on Stir up Sunday, the Sunday next before Advent)* from east to west in honour of the Three Kings. The flames that light the pudding are said to represent Christ's passion as well as having connections to the winter solstice, in which bonfires would be lit and prayers said to welcome back the sun. Finally the holly garnish represents the crown of thorns.



* The name "Stir Up Sunday" comes from the opening words of the collect for the day first used in the Book of Common Prayer of 1549. That same prayer, adapted into more modern language, is now the Church of England's prayer after communion for this Sunday now known as 'Christ the King':

*'Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that richly bearing the fruit of good works,
they may by you be richly rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.'*

The Collect that was formerly used on that Sunday - now it is used as the Post-Communion Prayer.



Christmas crackers.....oh dear!

What happened to the man who shoplifted a calendar at Christmas?

He got 12 months

What happens if you cross a bell with a skunk?

Jingle Smells

What is the best Christmas present?

A broken drum, you can't beat it