



Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Olney

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021**

**Christmas 2  
Church Closed**



**Welcome and notices**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 31: 7-14

**Gospel:** John 1: 1-9, 10-18

**Wed 6<sup>th</sup>** Isaiah 60: 1-6

**Epiphany:** Matthew 2: 1-12

**Collect:** God our Father, in love you sent your Son that the world may have life: lead us to seek him among the outcast and to find him in those in need, for Jesus Christ's sake.

**Amen**

**Reflection:** As this is a special edition, the words here come from Archbishop Stephen Cottrell for News Year's Day. They are taken from the Comfort and Joy booklet, we used for Advent. The section is called "The hopes and fears of all the years" Stephen's reflection says..... *"My English teacher at school seemed to have her eyes in the back of her head. She always saw what I was up to. Every New Year's Day I acquire the same skill. I look backwards as well as forwards. I remember what has gone, as well as looking forward to what will be. This year, more than most, I look back with sadness at the hurts and challenges of 2020, but with great hope that 2021 might be different. And I do it with the God who, in Christ, gives light to those who dwell in darkness, even those in the shadow of death. God's eyes and heart behold the hopes and fears of yesterday, today and tomorrow.*

*Christ is always the light in the darkness. In him we make sense of our place in the journey of the passing years. He holds out to us a lantern, lighting our path through whatever lies ahead.*

**We pray blessing and healing for those who are sick:** *Toby O'Grady, Kevin, Keith, Cyril, Rene Tourle, Pat Major, Gail, Martin, Hannah, Rena Partridge, Phill Stocking, Eliza, Bar, Georgina, Michael Seabrook, Debbie, Lorraine and Rachel Lintern.*

**We remember the recently departed and pray for comfort for families and friends:** *Christopher Mann, Brenda Chennells, Pat Aitken and Stuart Briggs.*

**We remember and give thanks for those whose Yearsmind is now. Amen.**

**Eucharistic Prayer:** All praise to you, almighty God and heavenly king, who sent your Son into the world to take our nature upon him and to be born of a pure virgin: grant that, as we are born again in him, so he may continually dwell in us and reign on earth as he reigns in heaven, now and for ever. **Amen**

**Listening Ear.** Please email [prayer@olney.church](mailto:prayer@olney.church) for prayers.

Some material included is  
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**Funerals.** None

**CHURCH CLOSURE**

At lunchtime on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December, I was advised that three members of one of the families that attended the 10.00am service of Holy Communion on the 20<sup>th</sup> December and then the recording of the service that afternoon, had tested positive with COVID-19. Over the following 24 hours, I was in telephone contact with over 35 people who also attended one or both events and advised them that they should self-isolate for 10 days from that point of contact on the 20<sup>th</sup>. On the 28<sup>th</sup> December I was advised of another person who had tested positive, who also attended both events on the 20<sup>th</sup>. I can confirm that none of the four people who have tested positive attended church after the 20<sup>th</sup> December.

You will also be aware that the latest infection rates in Milton Keynes and Olney continue to worsen. Our first priority in all of this is the safety of our clergy, congregation and church family and that is why, with the agreement of the Archdeacon, the PCC standing committee has taken the difficult decision to close the church to all activities with immediate effect. We will continue to monitor this situation on a weekly basis at the standing committee meetings which are due to recommence on the 5<sup>th</sup> January. We will look to reopen the church once and as soon as it is considered safe to do so.

January is normally a very quiet month attendance wise and with an increasing number of people self-isolating, it was felt that this was the correct decision to take at the time. There is an online service of Holy Communion being planned for Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January at 09.30am via Zoom and access details are available below. Morning prayers will continue online every Wednesday from 13<sup>th</sup> January at 09.30am via Zoom. Additionally there are online services available every Sunday morning at 10.00am from the Diocese [Livestream \(anglican.org\)](http://Livestream.anglican.org) and previous services from Oxford are available at [On demand \(anglican.org\)](http://On-demand.anglican.org) Please all stay safe and healthy and let us look forward to the time in 2021 when we can all meet again in safety.

Best wishes and God bless

David, Church Warden and Chairman of the PCC

**Hymns 3rd Jan 2021:** 'While shepherds watched' and 'Hark, the herald angels sing' (John's Gospel) Enjoy it via this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICt1s44cfMM>

**Booklet** If you would like a copy of the materials for "Comfort and Joy" course, please let us know through the office.

**Epiphany** Holy Communion service. On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, Thelma will conduct this service on Zoom. Go to <http://olney.church/zoom/>, where you will also find the service sheet.

Katie, Office Administrator and Susan Bailey, Churchwarden

Social Media reminders:

Twitter (new!) [@olneychurch](https://twitter.com/olneychurch)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/stpeterandstpaulchurcholney>

Church office: 01234 241721 email: [office@olney.church](mailto:office@olney.church)