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| **PLEASE NOTE** **MOBILE ‘PHONES** should be switched to **silent** during Services, please.**HEARING AIDS** should be switched to the ‘T’ setting to pick up from the ‘loop’.**EMERGENCY EVACUATION** – In the unlikely event that this becomes necessary listen for instructions. There are 3 exits – the main door (through which you came in); the Powerhouse exit door (at the rear of the building, accessible through the door near the kitchen serving hatch then through the double doors on the left) and the Vicar’s Vestry (in front and to the left of the pipe organ – there are some steps on this route). The assembly point is outside on the grass in front of the Hall. **MINISTRY TEAM** - If you would like a visit from one of the team, please contact **vicar.staidans@gmail.com** or telephone 352500.**SAFEGUARDING-** The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is very important to us. Any safeguarding matters may be shared with the Vicar or with the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Janet Trevor 01474 352230 janet.trevor@blueyonder.co.uk. Further contact details are on the blue poster in the entrance vestibule.**OUR PRAYERS** are asked this week for the people and parish of **Holy Family Church****DONATIONS-**you can donate to us in church in cash, by using the card reader, or online at <https://www.staidangravesend.org.uk/donate-to-us>.**BIRTHDAYS / CELEBRATIONS** – To the usual tune, we sing -  ‘Happy Birthday/Celebration to you; to Jesus be true. May God’s richest blessings, be showered on you.’ |
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| **CURRENT INFECTION PRECAUTIONS****1. There are no restrictions on where to sit – but you may maintain some social distancing if you feel happier doing this.****2. You may exchange the Peace with those in your immediate vicinity by saying ‘Peace be with you’ but not by handshake or touch.****3. If you do not wish to receive from the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion, simply leave the altar rail after receiving the consecrated wafer. (Please do not dip your wafer into the chalice). Return to your seat via the one way system using the side aisle.**  |
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| **WHO’s WHO AT ST AIDAN’S** [Area code (if required) for Gravesend is **01474**]**Vicar -** The Revd Michael Payne352500 or e-mail: **vicar.staidans@gmail.com****Churchwardens** – Dennis Ashurst 567300 - Robert Hollands 07970 208403 or e-mail: **rholljan@aol.com****Anna Chaplain (ministry with the elderly, also community links)**  **-** Sylvia Munns 356941**Lay Reader (Preaching, Study and Faith)** - Dr Peter Harris  **pjharris7869@hotmail.com****Reader** **Emeritus** – Mavis Prater 812330**Sunday School** - Ann Ashurst 567300; Amy Payne - **amychaili@hotmail.com****Parish Safeguarding** **Officer** – Janet Trevor 352230 – **Janet.trevor@blueyonder.co.uk****PCC Secretary &** **Powerhouse Manager** – Mike Welch 567722**Church Hall Lettings** – Barbara Potter 746702 (for regular bookings **only**)**Nursery School Manager** –  mobile 077 1533 7816 or e-mail:  - **gayle\_st\_aidans@yahoo.com**  |
| **StAidansLogo-slogan** |
| **OUR CORE VALUES** - We are a **Committed**, **Compassionate**, **Respectful**, **Confident** Church.**Find us online:** [www.staidangravesend.org.uk](http://www.staidangravesend.org.uk) **Find us Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/StAidansChurchGravesend](http://www.facebook.com/StAidansChurchGravesend) **Follow us on Twitter:** @AidansGravesend |
| See the source image | WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP TODAY | See the source image |
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| **SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER 2023 – 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10.00am Sung Parish Communion with Sunday School** |  |
| *OT Reading**Psalm**NT Reading**Gospel* | **Isaiah 40**: 1-11 (OT page 612)**85, verses 8-end****2 Peter 3**: 8-15 (NT page 226) **Mark 1**: 1-6 (NT page 13) |
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| **ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK** |
| **Wed 13th**  | **ST LUCY, Martyr** |
|  | **8.30am** | **Morning Prayer** |
|  | **9.30am** | **Eucharist (said)** *Reading****:* Isaiah 60**: 19-20 (OT page 633)*Gospel:***Luke 11**: 33-38 (NT page 70) |
|  | **1.00pm** | **Little Rainbows** – Hall (for pre-schoolers & carers) |
| **Thu 14th**  | **7.30pm** | **MARLOWE SINGERS CONCERT** in Church (pay on the door) |
| **Sat 16th**  | **11.00am** | (to 11.30am) **Carols at the St George’s Centre *for Christian Aid* – all welcome to join in** |
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| **SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 2023 – 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10.00am Sung Parish Communion with Sunday School** |  |
| *OT Reading**Psalm**NT Reading**Gospel* |  **Isaiah 61**: 1-4, 8-end (OT page 633) **126** **1 Thessalonians 5**: 16-24 (NT page 195)  **John 1**: 6-8, 19-28 (NT page 87) |
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| **A Prayer as Children leave for Sunday School****May God guide each of us, whatever our age or experience, in the way of Christ. The love of God be with us all. Amen.** | **MC900128551[1]** |
| **CURRENT PATTERN OF SERVICES****(for any variations to this, please see the front page or refer to ‘What’s On’, below)** |
| **Sunday** | **10.00 am Sung Parish Eucharist -** Live-streamed on Facebook (see note **#)** ([www.facebook.com/StAidansChurchGravesend](http://www.facebook.com/StAidansChurchGravesend)) ***(Note # - Apologies - live-streaming has been temporarily halted pending acquisition of equipment which will provide a better quality of streaming)***(1st Sunday in the month – All Age format)(2nd & 3rd Sundays in the month - with Sunday School)(5th Sunday in the month – Healing & Wholeness (with laying on of hands & anointing) |
| **Wednesday** |  **8.30 am Morning Prayer (said)**  **9.30 am Eucharist (said)** (from BCP on last Wednesday in the month) |
| **Friday** |  **9.00 am Holy Rosary** (on the First Friday in the month) |
| **Sunday, Monday, Wednesday (on line)** **8.00 pm** **Night Prayer** - on Facebook (address above)  |
| **Please complete a Consent Form (at the back of the church, or on-line) to indicate that you consent to the Service being filmed/live-streamed where you could be identified** |
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| **WHAT’S ON IN DECEMBER 2023(other than the usual services for which please see above)**  | **See the source image** |
| **Thu 21st**  | **2.00pm** | **Funeral in Church of the late Ron Whitnell** |
| **Sat 23rd**  | **2.00pm** | (to 3.00pm) **Carol Singing outside Tesco, Valley Drive for *Ellenor Hospice* – all welcome to join in**  |
| **Sunday 24th**  | **CHRISTMAS EVE** |  **MCj00981130000[1]** |
| **10.00am** | **Nine Lessons & Carols with Eucharist**  |
| **4.00pm** | **Christingle & Crib Service** |  |
| **11.30pm** | **Midnight Mass** |
| **Monday 25th**  | **CHRISTMAS DAY** |
| **10.00am** | **Christmas Day Eucharist** |
| **Wed 27th**  |  | **No Morning Prayer or Eucharist** |
| **Sun 31st**  | **10.00am** | **Eucharist with Anointing for Healing & Wholeness** |
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| **SUNDAYS IN ADVENT**Instead of the Taizé Gloria, we sing ‘Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy’ in Greek, as follows: **Kyrie Eleison (x3), Christe Eleison (x3), Kyrie Eleison (x3)** |
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| **From the Vicar**From the VicarWelcome to our worship today.Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s… In our recent gospel readings we have been travelling through a few parables in which Jesus speaks out against the religious authorities of his own day and indeed anyone from inside his own religious group who ‘should know better’, to coin a phrase. Jesus is rather fed up with the chief priests, temple elders and such like because he keeps seeing time and again a kind of religious arrogance mixed with apathy. It’s as if they think they don’t need to do anything outside of what tradition dictates because they are God’s ‘chosen ones’. Jesus is very clear that the scriptures he knew (what we call the Old Testament) record clearly the ways in which God’s chosen people Israel had repeatedly failed to make good on their side of the covenant God made with them in the desert. Jesus is astounded and angry that in his own day, centuries after the events of the time of Moses, the heirs of this covenant still ‘don’t get it’. His parables are a way to teach his hearers about how to live by giving examples of what not to do-once the elders realise that he is using them as an example of wrongness they respond not with humility but with plots and plans to have Jesus destroyed; it is a profoundly depressing response by these men and alas we see this kind of response still alive and well in our own time: the desire of the powerful to hang on to that power and privilege at almost any cost.The elders try to trick Jesus into worshipping the Roman Emperor, which would be blasphemy (only God should be worshipped). They do this by trying to get him to encourage people to pay their taxes (thus helping the hated Roman occupiers) but Jesus as ever is ahead of the game. ‘Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s’ is his reply. In other words, do what you have to do in this world to get by and obey the worldly laws, but remember where your duty really lies; i.e with God. His enemies have no reply to this, but a steady determination to finish Jesus burns brighter within them.For us, we too must do what we have to do in our own society, but be sure to give the best of our efforts over to the worship of God, and the living out of that worship in the things we know we should do.Blessings,Fr MFrom the VicarWelcome to our worship today.Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s… In our recent gospel readings we have been travelling through a few parables in which Jesus speaks out against the religious authorities of his own day and indeed anyone from inside his own religious group who ‘should know better’, to coin a phrase. Jesus is rather fed up with the chief priests, temple elders and such like because he keeps seeing time and again a kind of religious arrogance mixed with apathy. 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His enemies have no reply to this, but a steady determination to finish Jesus burns brighter within them.For us, we too must do what we have to do in our own society, but be sure to give the best of our efforts over to the worship of God, and the living out of that worship in the things we know we should do.Blessings,Welcome to our worship today, which includes Sunday School-children gather after the first hymn and make their way into the Lounge where they may still be seen through the glass partition. Parents are welcome to accompany their children if they wish. ***Advent Themes***This time of year brings a rich platter of images and themes from the Bible, designed to kindle a spirit of reflection in us as we wait expectantly for Christ’s coming. This week for instance, we see in Isaiah powerful imagery around comfort after trauma, preparation for a new beginning and a sense of the timeless presence of God within and above all things. In our Gospel reading from Mark we are introduced to Jesus as the ‘Son of God’, whose arrival is ‘Good News’.In our cynical age in which the barrage of ‘bad news’ stories surrounds us it’s easy to become jaded and to question what ‘Good News’ really means- we won’t get an easy or quick answer in Advent (it’s all about waiting after all!) but if we are willing to wait and *listen* inwardly, we will discover the unstoppable unfolding of God’s love. Yes, there is a lot of bad news about, but all that evaporates before the love of God; we need to have the courage and confidence to trust that this is so.A good Biblical book to read which explores all this is the Book of Isaiah itself. Settle in ,because it is a long book, some sixty-six chapters-but it rewards time spent on it.In essence, we move through three sections: disaster, consolation, and establishment after exile. The great sweep of the book takes in the story of the Israelites; how they were invaded and exiled, how God promised that all would be well, and how they finally made it home and began the slow process of re-establishing themselves. We can easily trace our own life experience across this pattern, both as individuals and as a society, and we will discover that the return ‘home’ is not easy, it brings challenge and difficulty, but to our home we come, and to a God who had never left us.Please pray for those who are modern-day exiles, from places like Gaza, Syria, Ukraine and other disputed territories.May you be blessed on your own Advent journey,*Fr Michael* |
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