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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 **Christ 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. You may exchange the Peace with those in your immediate vicinity by saying ‘Peace be with you’ but not by handshake or touch.****2. 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).**  |
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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**  |
| **Space for notes on the sermon or any questions you may wish to ask afterwards****↓ (Pencils are available at the back of the church) ↓** |
| **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 21st JANUARY 2024 – EPIPHANY 3** |
| **10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist with Sunday School** |
| *OT Reading**Psalm**NT Reading**Gospel* |  **Genesis 14**:17-20 (OT page 11) **128** **Revelation 19**: 6-19 (NT page 246)  **John 2**: 1-11 (NT page 89) |
|  **6.00pm Churches Together Evening Service at St Mary the Virgin, Chalk** ***(see next page)*** |
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| **ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK** |
| **Tue 23rd**  | **9.00am** | (to 11.30am) **Warm Space** – Lounge  |
| **Wed 24th**  | **8.30am** | **THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL****Morning Prayer** |
|  | **9.30am** | **Eucharist (said)** *Reading****:* Jeremiah** 1: 4-10 (OT page 267)*Gospel:***Matthew** 19: 27-30 (NT page 36) |
|  | **1.00pm** | **Little Rainbows** – Hall (for pre-schoolers & carers) |
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| **SUNDAY 28th JANUARY 2024 – CANDLEMAS****10.00am Sung Parish Eucharist**  |  |
| *OT Reading**Psalm**NT Reading**Gospel* |  **Malachi 3**: 1-5 (OT page 815) **24, verses 7- end** **Hebrews 2:** 14-end(NT page 208)  **Luke 2**: 22-40 (NT page 56) |
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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]** |
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| **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 FEBRUARY 2024(other than the usual services for which please see above)**  | **See the source image** |
| **Wed 7th**  | **10.15am** | (approx) **Coffee Morning** – Lounge & West Room |
| **Wed 14th**  | **9.30am** | **ASH WEDNESDAY Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes** |  |
|  | **2.00pm** | **Aidan Ladies –** West Room |
| **CHURCHES TOGETHER UNITED SERVICE**The annual united service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held at St Mary's Church, Chalk today (Sunday 21st January) at 6.00pm - all are welcome. |
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| *As a result of sickness absence amongst our regular Sunday morning tea-makers/servers we need a few more volunteers – please apply to Jenny Rawlinson. There is the possibility of permanent employment for the right people!* | MCj02508040000[1] |
| **MCj04109350000[1]** |
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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 go to the Lounge at the back of church before rejoining later. Parents and carers may accompany their children if they wish.***A New Perspective?***During the Christmas break I moved my desk to a new position; now it faces the window which looks out from the front of the house, giving a direct view of our somewhat overgrown hedge. Previously, my desk faced my bookshelves because I thought that if I wanted to check something from a book I could see it straightaway and easily get it, and that worked well. But now I have a new perspective. Now I have realised just how active the hedge is with birdlife (probably because it is overgrown!!)- birds are flying in and out, gathering the downy blooms of ‘old man’s beard’ for nests, pecking at berries, and what looks very much like playing! I am used to seeing birds around the hedge in summer, but this new view means that I see the hedge when it is bare; just twigs really. But what might at first glance seem a dreary winter scene is revealed as a habitat teeming with life. Also, the leaflessness of the hedge reveals the shape of the hawthorn trees that make the hedge:strong but twisted trunks with many limbs reaching in all directions and with the wickedly long and sharp thorns providing a natural barrier. It is as if I am seeing the hedge for the first time, or in a new way.These thoughts reinforce the growing impression I have that this is a special time of year which invites us to slow and reflect; we are used to the yearly narrative of the ‘post-Christmas slump’ when some people feel a bit down- a lot of money spent, back to work, back to school, everything looking bare; it’s easy to get drawn into this gloomy viewpoint, but the reality is that if we slow down and look at things anew, if we try to find a new perspective on life, we might find that we see the true shape of things without the ‘leaves and flowers’ of other times of the year which obscure our view of things. We might see that there is life everywhere, even when all seems a bit flat and blank.I renew my invitation to you to try and take some time here and there over these wintry days to deliberately slow down as much as you can, and look around you both at the landscape in which you live, and the inner landscape of your heart. There may be bleakness there, but there is also light, and a true shape more clearly seen.Blessings, *Fr. Michael* |
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