



The Parish Churches of St Mary the Virgin, Gillingham,
St Simon & St Jude, Milton on Stour and St Nicholas, Silton



Open to God, Open to all

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Sunday 30 November The First Sunday of Advent Common Worship Year A Begins

CW Lectionary Romans 13.11–end; Matthew 24.36–44

10:30am **BENEFICE Holy Communion** St Simon & St Jude, Milton on Stour

Hymns: 162, 30, 24, 28

This is the only service in the benefice this Sunday morning and everyone from the three parishes is encouraged to attend to demonstrate our unity, fellowship and love for one another in Christ as a single benefice.



6:30pm Advent Sunday St Mary's Church, Gillingham

Being prepared... Words & music for Advent Sunday

Collect

Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns, turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Post Communion

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For your thoughts and prayers

Norma Morris, Adam Cooke, Steve & Mary Rae, Roberta Wyatt, Rita Burns, Allen & Pauline Bryant, Carol Hebden, Mary Andrews, Diane Whitford, Ann Lockyer, Jean Harding, Anne Clarke, Michael Giddings, Shirley Lynch, Sandra Harwood and Carol Foster.

We commend to God's care all those who have died, especially Barry Wren and Joan Hisscock, and we pray for those who mourn the loss of loved ones.

READING Romans 13. 11 – end

Brothers and sisters, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

GOSPEL Matthew 24. 36 – 44

Jesus spoke to his disciples: 'About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.'

House of Opportunity Christmas Boxes Annual Appeal

Many thanks to all who supported the appeal again this year. As well as individual gifts, we especially appreciated that so many completed boxes were donated. Forty-five shoe boxes have been transported to Salisbury for onward travel to Eastern Europe – a splendid result! *Wendy and Margaret*

Wednesday 3 December

10.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's Church, Gillingham

10:30am – 12noon The Gillingham Men's Group at Rawson Court

2:00pm – 3:30pm Dementia Friendly Gillingham 'Singing Together' at Rawson Court, admission £2.

2:00pm – 4:30pm Christmas at Eden Café and TerraCycle recycling in the Vicarage School Room

Everyone is invited to join us for an afternoon of tea, cake, mince pies, Christmas 'sing-a-long' and a quiz.

Admission £5 on the door. A warm welcome awaits you! There will also be an opportunity to purchase a variety of handmade craft items by J K Hall including cards, notelets and bags.

Commissions also taken. A donation from each item sold will go towards St Mary's Funds.



Thursday 4 December

10:00am – 12noon Eden Café and TerraCycle recycling in the Vicarage School Room

2:30pm – 4:00pm Dementia Friendly Gillingham 'Sing-a-Song of Praise' (with optional Christmas Communion) at The Malthouse Care Home

Friday 5 December

9.30am – 10am Informal Prayer Group at St Mary's Church, Gillingham

7:00pm Reindeer Drive at St Simon & St Jude, Milton on Stour

Come and join us for a reindeer drive! It's just like a beetle drive but we'll be drawing reindeer instead.

Doors open at 6:45pm, for the first game at 7:00pm, with refreshments and raffle. Admission – adult £5, child £2, proceeds to St Simon & St Jude Church Funds. Everyone welcome!



Saturday 6 December

10:00am – 12noon Meditation in the Vicarage School Room

5.00pm – 8.00pm ✨ Gillingham Christmas Spectacular! ✨ at The Town Meadow

There will be a Festive Parade of illuminated tractors through the High Street, plus activities on the Town Meadow including live music, food & drink, Father Christmas and more.

Sunday 7 December The Second Sunday of Advent

CW Lectionary Rom. 15. 4-13; Matt. 3.1-12

8:00am Holy Communion St Mary's Church, Gillingham

10:00am Holy Communion St Mary's Church, Gillingham

10:30am BCP Holy Communion St Nicholas Church, Silton

10:30am Morning Worship St Simon & St Jude, Milton on Stour

6:00pm Carol Service St George's, Langham

Sunday 7 December, 11:00am – 12noon, Exhibition in the Vicarage School Room

Come and look at the work done this year in the stitching workshops held in the VSR. There is usually a drop-in monthly session on a Wednesday afternoon at Eden Café, as well as themed workshops which raise money to support St Mary's Church and local charities (Gillingham Food Bank; Shaftesbury Refugee Group; North Dorset Women's Refuge.)

Share the light wherever you are!

Christingle is about sharing light and hope with others, especially those in need.

Join us by sharing the light this year...

Sunday 14 December 3:30pm – 5:00pm at St Mary's Church, Gillingham
Christingle Service with Messy Church activities and refreshments



St Mary's Advent Appeal

This year we are supporting **Christian Aid's Appeal for the Democratic Republic of Congo** in Africa.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been repeatedly devastated by centuries of violence, leaving homes destroyed, livelihoods lost and families displaced. Today, the DRC faces one of the largest global hunger crises, with over 27 million people in urgent need of food. Christian Aid is working with trusted local partners to deliver a financial assistance programme, which offers immediate emergency aid to families who've fled their homes – supporting mothers to protect their children from hunger, malnutrition, disease and pain. Specially labelled contributions may be left at the Parish Office or in the Sunday collection, or you can give via Christian Aid's website: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christmas-appeal>