

The Parish of St Nicholas, Sandhurst

Our Mission: "To know and love Jesus and make his love known to all"

Our Worship: Sunday 29th November The First Sunday of Advent

Collect: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Sunday 29th November – The First Sunday of Advent

Readings: 1 Corinthians 1.3-9, Mark 13.24-end

10.00am **ON LINE HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE**
followed by coffee and chat on Zoom

Links to all Sunday services and Zoom meetings are posted on the church website, Facebook and A Church Near You pages shortly before the service.

Website: <https://stnicholassandhurst.org/>
Facebook Page: [@StNicholasSandhurst](https://www.facebook.com/StNicholasSandhurst)
A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 30th **8am** **Morning Prayer at St George's (closed service)**

Tuesday 1st **8am** **Morning Prayer at the Mission Church (closed service)**

Wednesday 2nd **8am** **Morning Prayer at St George's**

Friday 4th **8am** **Morning Prayer at St George's**

Sunday Next: Sunday 6th December – The Second Sunday of Advent

Readings: 2 Peter 3.8-15a, Mark 1.1-8

8 am **BCP HOLY COMMUNION PATRONAL SERVICE AT ST NICHOLAS**
led by Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie & Revd David Commander

10am **HOLY COMMUNION AT ST GEORGE'S, BENENDEN**
led by Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie & Revd David Commander

5pm **ADVENT SERVICE OF LIGHT AT ST GEORGE'S, BENENDEN**
led by Revd David Commander

Readings: Sunday 29th November

1 Corinthians 1.3-9

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Mark 13.24-end

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁴ 'But in those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,

²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁸ 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

³² 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN SANDHURST

We hope to hold the following services:

- Advent "Service of Light" on Sun 6th Dec at 5pm at St George's.
- Benefice Carol Service [streamed on-line](#) on Mon 21st December at 7.30pm
- Nativity Crib Service - Christmas Eve on Church Field at 3pm.
- First Communion of Christmas - Christmas Eve [at 8pm](#) at St Nicholas.
- Christmas Day: 8.30am Communion. 10am Family Worship. Both at St Nicholas.

A Different Christmas

We will be coming out of lockdown on 2nd December and able to start thinking what Christmas might be like this year and how we will celebrate it together and with family. Over the last month or so I have been trying to re-imagine how we are going to conduct services under the Covid restrictions. The planned schedule of services will be publicised.....but may, of course, be subject to change!

Advent Sunday (29th Nov) occurs during lockdown. There will be an Advent "Service of Light" at St George's Church Benenden, but just delayed by one week to the 6th December – starting at 5pm, and slightly adapted. *The church* (we who gather) will be surrounded by candlelight rather than holding individual candles; we will have a service of readings, prayers and the choir singing five Advent carols. At the end of the service everyone will be invited to take an Advent candle and a prayer-card home for use each day through Advent.

The Parish Carol Service usually gathers more than can safely come together in church under Covid restrictions. This year, therefore, the service will be recorded – as a benefice service – in advance and then streamed on-line at 7:30pm on Monday 21st December. A copy of the carol service sheet will be distributed around the village and available in church. If you wish to print off more copies it will be available to download from the church website. Please consider a neighbour who may be alone that evening and, if we are allowed, and you and they feel safe – then why not invite them to join you.....socially distanced to sing the carols from your home.

The Crib Service is another that would exceed the safe Covid-capacity of St Nicholas Church. This year we are doing something different: a Nativity Service in the church field. Please gather – with chairs, warm clothes, and keeping socially distanced – for a short service starting at 3pm. (And pray for a dry afternoon!) Lyn Hayes requires help, in advance, with the nativity characters; please see her notice below. Contact Lyn on 01580 850201 or 07792 332904

The service to mark the First Communion of Christmas will go ahead at St. Nicholas – but will commence at 8pm on Christmas Eve. Regrettably, there is likely to still be no congregational singing. Also: please maintain social distancing, hand sanitise, and wear a face covering. The Christmas morning services should go ahead as normal, just with both services at the parish church. There will be a Communion service starting at 8:30am; this will be followed by a short family Morning Worship service at 10:00am.

It is a shame that we have the necessity for these changes but – providing the rules on gatherings do not change after lockdown – we can still worship together, praise God, and give thanks for the birth of His Son on earth. Doing it differently may just make us appreciate this great gift even more. God bless you and your families this Christmas time. **Revd David**

CHRISTMAS EVE CRIB SERVICE... Calling all "CRAFTY" people & families.

Our CRIB SERVICE this year will be a little different and for Covid safe reasons we will be holding it outside St Nicholas Church on the church field where we will build the nativity scene with life-size figures.

This is where YOU come in – we need to construct a Mary, Joseph, Three Wise Men, Shepherds, Angels & Animals etc. to make up the scene – each one being made in the style of a "scarecrow"

You know the type – a pair of old trousers or pyjamas for the legs, an old jumper or shirt for the torso etc. , all stuffed with whatever you can find to create the figures. You can let your imagination go – especially when it comes to dressing the figures!!

If you are up for the challenge please first of all contact me – Lyn Hayes on 01580 850201 or 07792 332904 to discuss which figure you would like to make!

ADVENT SERVICE OF LIGHT

Sunday 6th December 5pm

at St George's



Comfort and Joy is the Church of England's Christmas campaign for 2020.

It holds together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be the Church's role, both nationally and locally, to provide consolation, rather than assume everyone will be ready to join in jubilation. We also have to anticipate there may be further spikes.

This Christmas the Church will need, in the words of St Paul in Romans 12.15, to 'Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep'. We will aim to celebrate where we can together in one place – but also embrace a wider community that wants to join in the celebration but may not be physically able – or emotionally ready – to do so. We hope that Comfort and Joy will enable us to build a campaign that both enables us to reconnect with the rich and joyous traditions of the past and to offer God's consoling love in the present.

Daily Scripture and Reflection is posted on the St Nicholas Church website and Facebook page every day of the week. PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION REGARDING OUR CHURCH SERVICES.

Website: <https://stnicholassandhurst.org/>
 Facebook Page: [@StNicholasSandhurst](https://www.facebook.com/StNicholasSandhurst)
 A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

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Priests	Revd David Commander, Rector. The Rectory, The Green, Benenden, TN17 4DL Tel: 01580 240 658 E-mail: revdavidcommander@gmail.com (NB The Rector's day off is Thursday) Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie, Curate Tel: 01233 820100 Mobile: 07766 711957 Email: rev.ylva@gmail.com Revd Dr Rosemary Kobus van Wengen Tel: 01580 764 857 Email: rosemaryvanwengen@gmail.com