

# - - TEAM NOTES - -

A simple Sunday service continues to be prepared for the team website every week, for those unable to get to Church physically, including hymns and a short homily [www.swanageteam.com](http://www.swanageteam.com)

**All Saints'** 10.30 a.m. Sunday service is recorded for broadcast each week. Simply go the All Saints website at [www.allsaints-swanage.org](http://www.allsaints-swanage.org) and follow the links, at 10.30 a.m. any Sunday, and at any time after.

**St Nicholas' Studland** holds a service which any individual can join via Zoom at 10.00 a.m. and at 6.30 pm every week. To join the zoom services please email Tony to request the link for each Sunday: [revtonyhiggins@btinternet.com](mailto:revtonyhiggins@btinternet.com).

**Following the Prime Minister's announcement of a new lockdown** last Monday evening, and considering the seriousness of the current threat of infection of the Covid-19 virus, the churchwardens across the four churches have considered the options for each church for the coming weeks.

**Provision of Services from Sunday 10th January**, is to be as follows:  
In All Saints', St Mark's and St Nicholas', the church buildings will remain open for private prayer, each day, though in St Mark's is will be on Sundays and Wednesdays only, but all actual services in these three churches will be cancelled.

**All Saints'** will provide a recorded service at 10.30 a.m., thereafter continuing to be available, **St Nicholas'** will have services by zoom at 10.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. each Sunday and **St Mark's** is likely to continue to provide a YouTube service, though it will probably not be ready for this coming Sunday.

**St Mary's**, due to its size, is thought to be the safest place to continue with actual services in church, however, they will be curtailed and additional measures to underline the importance of social distancing are to be insistent and will be further monitored. Holy Communion will be celebrated each Sunday at 8.00 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. and Morning Prayer held Monday to Saturday at 8.00 a.m. The choir has been stood down and Evensong cancelled.

## **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - United Service**

After much heart searching and discussion yesterday, we have agreed that it would be better to postpone our United Service which was to have been on Sunday 24 Jan at 3pm at All Saints'. **Please be assured that we are determined to hold it at a time when we can celebrate being together again without fear of spreading the virus. - Nick Viney**

# SWANAGE & STUDLAND

## TEAM MINISTRY

**St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas'**  
**10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – Epiphany 1 - Baptism of Christ**  
**Acts 19: 1-7; Mark 1: 4-11**

In our readings from Acts and Mark today we have heard of journeys; journeys with a purpose. Paul on a missionary journey finds his way through the country around Ephesus until reaching that city, where he meets with disciples who have only received the baptism of John. In Mark's Gospel then we heard of John travelling to the Jordan and of many others journeying to see him from Jerusalem and from all Judea. Jesus himself made the long journey from Nazareth specifically for the purpose of receiving baptism at John's hand. Last week we celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany, and recalled the journey of the Wise Men to visit the new-born king, Jesus.

Travelling with a purpose is a common theme in these readings. Paul, John, Jesus, the Wise Men, and countless followers; disciples who had also felt compelled to make long, arduous, and frequently dangerous, journeys for a reason. Today we often speak of life as a journey, and of rites of passage; and, particularly from a Christian viewpoint, of pilgrimage. Today, though currently curtailed by the pandemic, more people travel physically than ever before, for business and pleasure, and also sometimes as part of their spiritual journey.

Pilgrimage, as with all the journeys mentioned in today's readings begins with a purpose. However, the strangest thing about such journeys and pilgrimages is that they frequently produce the unexpected. We have little detail of the journeys in today's readings, but what we have demonstrates this very point. Paul went to Ephesus to teach and preach. He found there some disciples who had only received the baptism of John. John, for his own part, was shattered when the unexpected happened to him: Jesus coming to him for baptism. How could this be? He was taken back entirely and utterly, yet he did as Jesus instructed. The Magi must have been consumed with wonder and awe when their following of a star led them to a stable as the birth place of the new-born king.

The lesson of the pilgrimage is often in the unexpected, in the surprise, in the meeting of the hearts and minds, where the presence and guidance of God is clearly to be seen. There is often an element of challenge, and even of emotional and spiritual disruption. The journey has been travelled, the goal has been reached, but not without its pain, not without its lessons, not without lives having been disturbed and challenged. That is true pilgrimage, isn't it; not a holiday, not rest and relaxation, though it may include these things, rather more importantly it is a journey in understanding, of spiritual growth and a chance to be drawn more deeply into the life of God. I am quite certain that the Magi returned home tired and emotionally shattered, but happy, that they like Simeon had witnessed the dawn of salvation.

John Mann