

# THE PARISH POST

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF SANDFORD, NEW BUILDINGS AND UPTON HELLIONS CHURCHES

3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2021

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**Welcome to the first Sunday Communion of the New Year in St Swithun's Church at 9.45am but wear your warm clothes and a face mask. It's 10am if you're watching on Facebook or you can catch it any time later on the parish website.**

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES – THANK YOU**

Firstly thank you to Paul for some memorable Christmas services, we are so thankful for your creativity and Spirit filled words. Thank you to our church wardens Linda and Chris and the various stewards who have ensured that despite Covid restrictions there has always been a warm welcome as we step into church along with some wonderful Christmas spirit. Thank you to our three organists James, James and Peter who have provided us with live organ music even though we haven't been able to sing. Thanks to those who ring the bells, of course it is not possible to have six ringers in the tower at the moment but just to hear the bells ringing out is a joyful sound. Finally thanks to all those who helped make both the church and churchyard look festive, we needed winter awe and wonder and you provided it.

## **CHRISTMAS TREE**

Many thanks to Roger and Helen Lee for their gift of a particularly handsome tree for the church which was beautifully decorated by Keith and Elaine. It's always a pity when it has to be dismantled.

## **THE CHRISTMAS STAR**

The Christmas Star on top of the church tower worked well and hopefully can be used next December. But there is no room to store it at the church – does anyone have a dry shed to store it through the year please? Contact me (Jean) if you have some room.

## **CREDITON FOOD BANK – OUR RESPONSE**

The needs this week are **long life milk and jars of bolognaise sauce**. If you wish to leave donations any time the box will be in the church porch, the gates there are never locked. Thank you for your continued and generous support.

## **HOPE AND THANKFULNESS**

Many of us will be heartily glad to say goodbye to 2020 but will be stepping into 2021 with some apprehension, fear and anxiety. While our lives are and will continue to be disrupted by Covid let us be people of hope who remember to say thanks. There will always be those who want to engage in negative, complaining conversations. There will be doom and gloom and fake news in the media and online. But as Christians we are people of hope who carry hope because we know and can say thank you to the Saviour who walks with us through it all. So as we pray for those who are ill, especially with Covid, those who nurse them and all carers and medical workers, for those whose jobs are particularly stressful and are weary, for those who have lost their jobs or whose income has been reduced, let us pray with hope to a God of comfort.

## **MARANATHA – 'COME LORD JESUS' – A PRAYER FOR 2021**

Way back in the twelfth century Bernard of Clairvaux, who was the founder of the Cistercian order of monks, said that Christ comes to us in three different ways: firstly in Bethlehem at Christmas, secondly, at the end of the age and thirdly in the lives of believers every single day. So here's a prayer to remind us of all three of Christ's comings.

*Thank you Father for loving us so much that you sent your Son, born as a baby, to save us.*

**Maranatha.** *May Jesus be born again amongst us.*

*Thank you Jesus that you came before and You are coming again in glory.*

**Maranatha.** *We long for you to return and make all things new.*

*Thank you Holy Spirit for being willing to daily fill my life.*

**Maranatha.** *May the Lord Jesus Christ be born again in me today and every day.*