

### Diary dates

7<sup>th</sup> January 2-5pm Bromsgrove and Redditch refugee clothes collection  
11<sup>th</sup> January 7.30pm Pilgrim Course at St Peter's starts  
18<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> January - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
28<sup>th</sup> January - Messy Church 10am Woodrow Community Hall

### **Please pray for:**

Garth and Jenny, Richard and Wendy, Ian and Judy.  
Our Licensed Lay Ministers Maureen, Rosie and Vicki.  
Ann Ball and family.  
The family of Mary Sabin.  
Those attending the Pilgrim Course  
Those suffering with ill health.  
The Kigezi Water and Sanitation project we are supporting.  
Those looking for work.  
Refugees settling in this country and Town.  
Refugee children in camps across the world.  
Children waiting for adoption  
Charities reaching out to the lost, lonely and hungry.

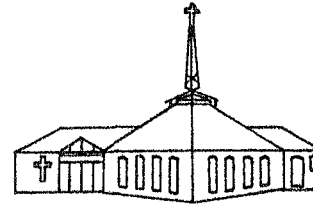
### **Keep praying for**

Ann Ball. Nancy Borthwick Jane Smith  
Sylvia Czink Peggy Snellgrove

### Contacts

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## St. John The Evangelist

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### Christmas and New Year notices

Dear All

Christmas celebrates the dawn of the Light of the World. The powers of darkness are overcome by His coming to share our life. The long reign of sin is ended and grace has been poured out upon the earth. The Sun of Justice has arisen, and evil is vanquished."

In celebrating Christmas we celebrate the incarnation, not just the nativity. The incarnation is an on-going process of salvation, while the nativity is the once-for-all-historical event of Bethlehem. We do not really celebrate Christ's 'birthday,' remembering something that happened long ago. We celebrate the amazing fact of the incarnation, God entering our world so thoroughly that nothing has been the same since. And God continues to take flesh in our midst, in the men and women and children who form his body today. And the birth we celebrate is not just the past historical event but Christ's continuing birth in his members, accomplished by the power of the Spirit through the waters of baptism.

What we are celebrating is our redemption in Christ and the transformation of all creation by the presence of the divine in our midst.

Seasons Blessings

Canon Garth Nathaniel

### Collect for today

Almighty God,  
you have given us your only-begotten Son  
to take our nature upon him  
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin;  
grant that we, who have been born again  
and made your children by adoption and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

### In 2017, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from 18 - 25 January.

In 2016 the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation will be commemorated across Europe. This provides the backdrop for the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which runs from 18 - 25 January.

Prepared by the Council of Churches in Germany, the theme under the heading Crossing Barriers is 'Reconciliation - the love of Christ compels us,' based on the Biblical text 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.

A prayer for the week:

Almighty God,  
you sent your son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself.  
We praise you because through your Gospel, in all parts of the earth  
a community of love has been gathered together,  
and that in every place your servants call upon your name.  
May your Spirit awaken in every community a hunger and thirst  
for unity.  
Amen

### Clothing for refugee's

Another shipping container with warm clothes will be leaving for Calais and onward travel to refugee camps in France, if you have any adult warm clothes particularly coats, please either drop them off at The Bridge Church Hall in Headless Cross on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2-5pm or bring in next Sunday for Sharon to drop off.



### Today - Christmas Day

10.30am Christmas Day, Holy Communion with Rob Quarton and Rev. Garth Nathaniel 'Word made flesh, hope made real'

6.30pm No evening service at St John's.

### Next week - New Years Day

10.30am Worship For Everyone with Rob Quarton 'Discovery'  
Isaiah 60.1-6 and Matthew 2.1-12.

6.30pm No evening service at St John's.

### Pilgrim Course

The next discipleship course will begin on Wednesday 11th January 7.30pm in the Huband Room St Peter's.

#### The Eucharist

The Pilgrim Course, published by the Church of England, offers an approach of "participation, not persuasion" and is written to help people explore what it means to be a Christian. This next session is based on 'The Eucharist' - one of four books in the 'Grow' stage of Pilgrim in preparation for Easter.

Across six sessions, The Eucharist explores why Holy Communion stands at the very heart of Christian worship and invites us to consider the place of worship in our own lives.

The Bishop of Exeter Robert Atwell, one of the authors of the course, said:

"The disciples Jesus met on the road on the first Easter Sunday recognized him in the breaking of bread. This Lent as we journey towards Holy Week and Easter, this course offers us a unique opportunity to explore how Christians encounter God in worship and above all in Holy Communion."