

THE EPIPHANY

The Church has a custom of blessing homes on the Feast of the Epiphany. Family and friends gather to ask God's blessing on their homes and those who live in or visit the home. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk blessed during the Epiphany liturgy and write above the home's entryway, 20 + C + M + B + 26. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house." The "+" signs represent the cross and 2026 is the year.

Blessing the Chalk

V. Our help is the name of the Lord: **R. The maker of heaven and earth.**

V. The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in: **R. From this time forth for evermore.**

V. The Lord be with you. **R. And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Loving God, bless this chalk which you have created, that it may be helpful to your people; and grant that through the invocation of your most Holy Name all who use it in faith to write upon the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, may receive health of body and protection of soul for all who dwell in or visit their home through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Instructions for Blessing your home

Using the blessed chalk mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch step) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 26 while saying:

The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and twenty years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year.

Amen.

Then offer the following prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. **Amen.**

At times God has commanded his people to mark their doors. The Israelites marked their doors with the lamb's blood on the night of the passover. A similar command was given with the [Shema Yisrael](#):

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart ... and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6.4)

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May God Bless you and your families richly this coming year and may you know his strength and comfort throughout all that you do.

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Please join us after the service for coffee and fellowship (both churches)

Welcome to the United Benefice of Holy Innocents and St. Mark, South Norwood

United together in Christ, shining Christ's light in our community



4th January 2026

Vicar: Vacant

Priest (PTO): Revd. Mother Susan Wheeler-Kiley, TSSF, SCP

Reader (PTO): Mrs. Cicelyn Hinds,

EPIPHANY

8.00am BCP Mass (St Mark)

We welcome Fr Tom Hurcombe as President

10.00am Christingle St Mark, Mass for the Epiphany at Holy Innocents

1.00pm Imprint Contemporary Church (Holy Innocents)

Isaiah 60.1-6 * Psalm 72.1-9, 10-15 * Ephesians 3.1-12 * Matthew 2.1-12

Access online worship via
www.youtube.com/c/StMarksSouthNorwood

CHURCH NOTICES

Pastoral Care: for enquiries regarding Holy Innocents, please contact Mother Susan 07890780572 fs.kiley@btinternet.com and please contact Cicelyn Hinds (both churches) 02086562474 cahinds@btinternet.com

The Benefice is in vacancy. For Parish matters, please contact in the first instance, the respective church wardens, St Mark – Norma McKnight (ndwillis12@outlook.com) and Cicelyn Hinds (cahinds@btinternet.com) Holy Innocents – Church.warden@holyinnocentschurch.co.uk

We pray: for the Archbishop of Canterbury elect, Sarah Mullally, Archbishop Stephen; for the Bishops in this diocese, Christopher, Rosemarie, Alastair and Martin, and for our new Vicar, The Revd Jessie Daniels-White as she prepares to take up her new ministry in South Norwood.

For the Bishops, priests, deacons and people in our link Dioceses of Zimbabwe and The Church of the Province of Central Africa,

St John the Evangelist, East Dulwich Gill O'Neil (Vicar) Alistair McCulloch (PTO) Rosemary Shaw (PTO) and St John's & St Clement's CofE Primary School. solutions to problems of housing and homelessness.

For the sick – Richard, Barbara, Emma, Rona, John, Leonard, Reiss, Malik, Simon, Fred, Ethel, Terri-Ann, Marcia, Caroline, Revd Barbara, Shirley, Luke, Beverley, Rowena, Susan, Joyce, Jean, Nicholas and Orlando.

The bereaved the Penn and the Hines families, Christopher, Stephen and James. **The recently departed** – Anne Penn **and those whose Years Mind falls at this time.**