

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

The Gospel of the first Sunday of Lent always features the temptations of Jesus in the desert. It clearly links with the Lenten themes of fasting, penance and reconciliation with God and with our brothers and sisters. What does Lent mean to you? No biscuits? Giving up chocolate? Resisting cream cakes for a few weeks? Why give something up? Why do without? What is it for? What has it got to do with Lent anyway? The word Lent comes from an Anglo-Saxon word: 'lencten', meaning 'spring'. In England we are in that time of year when in Saxon times people started to appreciate the lengthening daylight. This period has traditionally led up to baptism, a period of repentance and instruction. A time when those who had formerly worshipped pagan gods could make a very definite break with the past. Just as Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days, so Christians have used this time to embark on a period of spiritual exploration and hopefully growth. You may decide to fast, pray a bit more, perhaps read a book or attend a Lent course. Whatever you do, may you find yourself closer to God over the coming weeks, so that when Easter arrives you are really ready to proclaim the risen Lord. As we journey through Lent together, may you know the love and hope of God through Jesus Christ.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

A reminder - **Today – Healing Service for Lent, 6.00pm at St Luke’s Church, Woodside.** All welcome

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United Benefice Programme for Lent.

We will be beginning our programme of Lent Study and reflections on **Wednesday 25th February, 8.00pm, St Mark’s Church.** We will be following Paula Godder’s Lent course “**Lentwise**”. Based on John’s gospel, the course takes us on our journey through Lent as a voyage of discovery. The course works best in-person, but do let me know if you would need to participate on-line.

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The Bishop’s Lent Call for 2026 is raising funds for projects that focus on the work of schools that will help benefit children and young people to flourish. We are supporting this type of work in the Diocese of Jerusalem, in our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe and here in our own diocese. You can find more information on this year’s projects and how to donate on the Diocesan website. As we spend time in prayer and contemplation this Lent, The Diocesan Bishops hope that you will feel able to generously support the projects we have chosen this year

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



22nd February 2026

Vicar: Vacant

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

Reader (PTO): Mrs. Cicelyn Hinds,

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

8.00am BCP Mass (St. Mark)

10am Parish Mass (Both Parishes)

1.00pm Imprint Contemporary Church (Holy Innocents)

*Genesis 2.15-17 and 3.1-7 * Psalm 32 * Romans 5.12-19 * Matthew 4.1-11*

Today we welcome **Mother Susan Height** who is presiding and preaching at the 10.00am Eucharist at St Mark

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 for St Mark, please contact Cicelyn Hinds 0208656 2474 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

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We pray: for our Archbishops Sarah and Stephen; for the Bishops in this diocese, Christopher, Rosemarie, Alastair and Martin.

For the Bishops, priests, deacons and people in our link Dioceses of Zimbabwe and **For the Bishops, priests, deacons and people of the Church of Ireland. For the parish of St Saviour, Eltham** and Susan Charles (Priest in Charge)

For the sick – Richard, Barbara, Emma, Rona, John, Leonard, Reiss, Malik, Simon, Fred, Ethel, Terri-Ann, Marcia, Caroline, Shirley, Luke, Beverley, Rowena, Revd Barbara, Susan, Jean, Nicholas, Orlando. **The recently departed and those whose Years Mind falls at this time.**