

COLLECT

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING Isaiah 35.1–10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, 2 and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. 3 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6 then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; 7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8 A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the word of the Lord. **THANKS BE TO GOD**

PSALM 146:4–9

Response: The Lord shall reign for ever

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! Whose hope is in the Lord their God; 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps his promise for ever; 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and bread to those who hunger. **R** The Lord looses those that are bound; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous; **R** The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow; but the way of the wicked he turns upside down. The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Alleluia. **R**



The Lord shall reign for ever.

SECOND READING James 5.7–10

A reading from the letter of James.

7 Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! 10 As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord **THANKS BE TO GOD**

GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

GLORY TO YOU O LORD

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples 3 and said to Jesus, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' 4 Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6 And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' 7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." 11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

This is the gospel of the Lord **PRAISE TO YOU O CHRIST**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever. **Amen.**



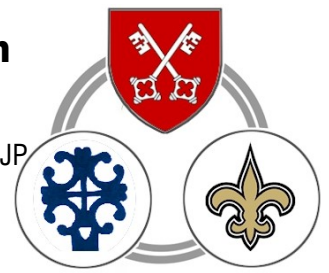
THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The United Benefice of Sharnbrook, Felmersham and Knotting with Souldrop

St Peter's Church, Sharnbrook MK44 1HU, St Mary's Church, Felmersham MK43 7JP

All Saints Church, Souldrop MK44 1EX

www.sharnbrookcofechurches.org



Welcome to Gaudate Sunday....

Please TAKE THIS SHEET HOME with you!

Worship in the Benefice today—ADVENT 3

0830 Souldrop Holy Communion BCP

0930 Sharnbrook All Age Communion

1100 Felmersham All Age Communion and Rise n Shine

1800 Benefice Evensong at Sharnbrook

Monday—feria

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

1145 Messy Church at Sharnbrook in SPR

2000 Compline by candlelight at Sharnbrook

Tuesday—Lucy 304AD & Samuel Johnson 1784AD

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

0930 Holy Communion (CW) at Felmersham

1030 Felmersham Pinchmill School Christmas production

1900 Souldrop Churchwarden meeting with Rector

2000 Compline by candlelight at Felmersham

Wednesday—John of the Cross 1591AD

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

0930 Holy Communion CW in SPR if no heating

1400 Felmersham Pinchmill School Christmas production

1845 prompt Advent Study Course in St Peter's Room

2000 Compline by candlelight at Sharnbrook

Thursday—feria

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

1830 Felmersham Pinchmill School Christmas production

2000 Compline by candlelight at Felmersham

Friday—feria

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

2000 Compline by candlelight at Sharnbrook

Saturday—O Sapientia—O Wisdom

0800 Morning Prayer at Sharnbrook

1300 Active clergy Christmas celebration at the Rectory

Worship Next Sunday—18 Dec Advent 4

0930 Sharnbrook Parish Communion and Rise n Shine

1100 Felmersham Parish Communion & Baptism

1600 Felmersham 9 Lessons & Carols

1800 Souldrop 9 Lessons & Carols

Items for inclusion in this sheet should be sent to sharnbrookbenefice@gmail.com by 0900 on Wednesdays.

In this Advent Season to make your confession, or talk about what you can gain from making your confession, please contact the Rector for a chat and discussion.

Please look at our parishes websites for the new **ONLINE Diary** of everything that is happening in the Benefice.



Compline by candlelight for Advent continues throughout Advent



Helping our friends in Calpino—A Christmas Appeal

In a Skype call with our Benefice friends in Italy Andrea reports...“we were speaking to Francesco on skype: He and Don Fabio are working with the Red Cross directly in the regions affected by the earthquakes. *There are many little ones who have lost everything including family all crowded into makeshift shelters and neighbouring community buildings. They are trying to bring some treats for Christmas for them.* Can we help? If we sent money directly to Don Fabio and Francesco they could get some sweets and bits and pieces to take around. It seems a good way to contribute to our twinning with Calpino. They are very grateful for Colin's super contribution so far with another £309 to send over. “ Let's see if we can make it £500 for their Christmas work with the children—can we raise **£191 futher?**



There will be retiring collections at the end of services until Christmas—tell others and let us help in a very direct way our brothers and sisters in Italy. Let's aim for a total of £500 from across our benefice to offer something of goodwill and Christ's generosity

Volunteer post—we need someone to put this sheet together each week using Publisher. It takes about 2 hours on a Wednesday. Please talk to the rector if you are able to do this for the Benefice and for the mission of Christ.



Advent Study Course—Sharnbrook Churches Together. The Advent course is 'Living in the Light' and is an easy to access course for churches. Prompt start at 6:45pm in St Peter's Room each Wednesday in Advent to end with Compline in church.

In the Advent Litany several people have asked what **Maranatha** means. It is generally translated as **Come Lord Jesus**. It appears often in chants and Taize songs to express something of the yearning for Christ's return.

Intercessions

The Sick and in need: Don Gough, Neil, Martin

The Departed: Robert Frost, Daphne Smith

Send the names of people who have asked to be remembered in our parish intercessions to the Rector

Pray for Andrea's work in establishing the Pastoral Group across the Benefice.

Pray for a good response to the Christmas appeal for our Benefice friends in Italy.

Church Contacts

The Rector: Reuben Preston, The Rectory, 81 High Street, Sharnbrook MK44 1PE 01234 782000 07971 895897
rectorofsharnbrook@rjpmmedia.co.uk

Lay Leaders of Worship: Rosemary Drewery 01234 783598, Jane Templeman, Andrea Maffie 07881 046255

Churchwardens:-

St Peter's Church: Roger Gaunt 01234 782183 &

Andrea Maffei 07881 046255

St Mary's Church: Jane Wells 01234 782462 &

Sue Whitehouse 01234 781300

All Saints Church: Nick Wells 07841 759497

To make arrangements for Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms/Christenings, Confessions, House Blessings etc. please contact the Rector

This Pew Sheet was sponsored this week... **there is no sponsorship this week**

If you would like to sponsor this sheet please send you £5 donation to The Rectory along with details of the sponsorship (even if anonymous)