

KEEP IN TOUCH

Newsletter

New Year 2021



**...BUT THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW
THEIR STRENGTH. THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE
EAGLES; THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY,
THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT.**

- ISAIAH 40:31 -

January 2021

JEREMY writes...

W- When
A- All seems
L- Lost...
K- Keep the faith!

I'm sure we are all relieved to hear that "there's light at the end of the tunnel."

But how close is the light?

It's good news that the vaccination programme is speeding up, and we are all hoping that it is capable of overcoming mutant strains of the virus. But, after a year of lockdown and restrictions, some of us may well be thinking, that the light is still a long way off.

It has been a long dark tunnel, hasn't it! And I shouldn't be at all surprised if some of us are now finding ourselves a bit jaded, to say the least. And I could also understand those who might be fearing that the light at the end of the tunnel is, in fact, the light of an oncoming train.

I don't know much about tunnels - I have never really been stuck in one, although I do suffer rather badly from claustrophobia (as some of you will remember from my horror in a Welsh slate mine when some clever-clogs switched off the light!). But what I do know is that when you're in a tunnel, you have to keep moving forward. And you have to have hope that you'll reach the end.

The idea of being released from some of our current restrictions is truly encouraging isn't it! And I, for one, am really looking forward to it. In the words of the author and painter Anna Asche, this is how I think it will be:

"I am bursting with a new found feeling of my own existence.

Strong and powerful frequencies.

*My mind is wandering to wide open fields and long-forgotten lands
with limitless possibilities. I am not quite there yet.*

Holding still in anticipation,

I don't want to miss hearing my inner voice – soft and deep.

With me are friendly skies on rainy days and my life is getting warmer."

True, we aren't yet enjoying the full light of freedom and it is probably a few months away. It's hard in the middle of winter, I know, but I want to encourage you that whilst the light at the end of the tunnel may still be some way off, we can enjoy light while we are still in the tunnel!

Look at 1 Peter 5: 10, for example: "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."



And Isaiah 40:31: "Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

And as if that were not enough, take a look at Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

God knows, every one of us struggles at times with finding - and holding onto - hope. It is sometimes hard to bounce back after being hit. But be encouraged, friends, during these dark days.

Here's something we can all do: Take a pen and paper, and go through the Bible writing down all the verses you can find that give hope and encouragement. You'll be amazed at how many there are! And just to show you've done it, send me a copy of your findings, to grmbj@aol.com!

The hymn-writer, William Cowper, got it right when he penned this well known hymn:

God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform:
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour:
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own Interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

MARTIN writes...



2021: WAITING, LOOKING FORWARD and GETTING ON WITH LIFE

We are beginning 2021 by having to endure the restrictions of COVID, and waiting till we can get back to a normal life again. We are waiting for our turn to have the vaccine and looking forward to meeting up again with family, friends and church. Waiting does not mean doing nothing, and we still need to look forward, and get on with the life God has given us. This is of course a difficult time, and it's not always easy to keep a positive attitude, but we need to have hope; and hope requires perseverance.

It is encouraging to Emma and myself to see how our three children are getting on. In December, our younger son applied for a better job and had an interview. He had to wait over three weeks to hear from the company, but he is very pleased that he has in fact got the job. He earlier spent time putting his bike in good order so he can cycle to his current workplace. To start with, the journey took 40 minutes; he's now got it down to 35. He has also set himself the challenge of reading a book each week in 2021. Last week it was Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men".

Our older son, near Cambridge, works for a company that provides admin support for Examination Boards. He too is looking for a more fulfilling job. In the meantime, he continues as volunteer leader / coordinator of the worship at a fairly large New Frontiers church. Since last March, all their worship has been online, a mixture of pre-recorded and livestreamed. His wife has her PhD and is now applying for further research jobs. Their longer-term goal is to save for a deposit on a house.

Our daughter had a promotion in the autumn, and is now responsible for a new team. She has a lot on her plate, with annual reviews coming up for each team member, and the COVID risk-assessments for those who have to work in the laboratories. When not working, she's trying to settle into her new home, having bought a house at the end of 2020. She has put boarding in the loft, and decorated throughout. Because of the virus, we have not been able to visit and see where she lives.

Waiting is hard for all of us, but it is important that we continue to look forward and get on with life. Let's guard against giving in to a kind of lethargy. Waiting does not mean doing nothing. So, what can we be doing? Here's a brief list, and you will think of more things you could add:

Keeping in touch with friends and family via video / zoom / phone / letter-writing.

Reading – 'real books' or Kindle.

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."

Walking – getting exercise and fresh air.
Gardening / pursuing indoor hobbies...

I know that many of you reading this are Christians, so may I suggest that we also give time to praying and building up our knowledge of God? Praying is a crucially vital part of 'getting on with life'. Remember that the disciples of Jesus came to him and asked, 'Lord, teach us to pray'. However long we have been Christians, we can always learn more about God and prayer! Here are my suggestions:

Set aside some time, regularly, each day if possible, to be quiet with God

Read a passage from the Bible. There are a great many Bible aids available; many are free online. Ask me or Jeremy if you would like some help. For example, you could read the Psalms and watch the video sermons as part of our series. Use the notes to help.

Pray. It can help to think of praying as "C – A – T".

Confessing. Being honest with God and asking for forgiveness.

Asking. Bringing requests to God for yourself and for those you know. Pray for the government, the nation and any needs that concern you.

Thanking. Telling God what you are grateful for; and also listening to what God might have to say.

Yes, life is hard, and we are looking forward to a more normal existence; but here's a promise from God to encourage us as we pray, hope, and spend time waiting on him:

The Lord gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak...

*"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary;
they will walk and not be faint."*

[Isaiah 40:31]

With my prayers,

Martin

Rector of All Saints
Sanderstead,

Tel: 020 8657 1366



Congratulations...to Elaine Leck on becoming a grandmother.

With grateful thanks to God for the safe arrival of Martha Joy on Christmas Eve and congratulations to her son James and daughter-in-law Sarah.



A Covid Christmas Song to the tune of 'It Came Upon The Midnight Clear' (Carol Willis)

It has come now to evening time
Let's sing a song of old
As singers huddle round their zoom
To talk of winter cold.
Of Covid rampant near and far,
They news and rumours bring.
The world in Lockdown languishes
How can they cheerful sing?

All ye beneath life's crushing load
Who toil for NHS
Who struggle daily on the bus
Or wait in loneliness,
Look now for Christmas time is near
Angels come on the wing
Oh stop and listen, marvel now
To hear the news they bring.

Of neighbours helping all around
Of foodbanks full of cheer,
Of restaurants donating food
To hungry children here;
For so the love of Christ is spread
Through local things and small
Now let us sing with joy tonight
And heed the angels' call.

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Shared by Sally Nicholas

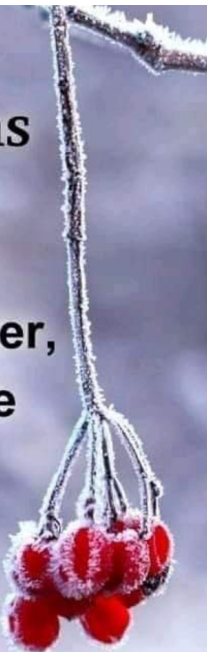
Unfortunately this didn't arrive in time for our Christmas Newsletter but it is, for the most part, still relevant.

WI POEM FOR THE END OF 2020!

Thank heavens! Phew!!!!

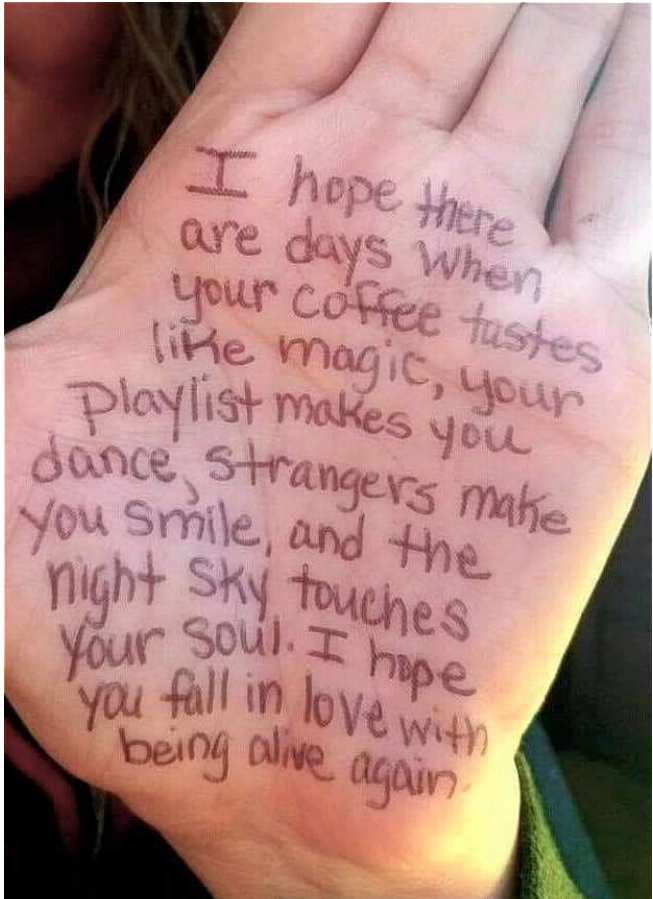
2020 was not the best
Certainly put us to the test
Lockdown was quite difficult for some
And it was definitely not much fun
No family to kiss and hug
Our heart strings were given a tug.
No Christmas Parties – just on our own
Our dog Heidi enjoyed her big bone.
The Christmas Cards remind us of friends
So we hope next year to make amends
What will 2021 bring?
More of the same - but let us hope,
We have more resilience to cope.
Very best wishes one and all
Then we can meet in the Church Hall.

Margaret Quíney



**Everything happens
for a reason
You may not see it
now, but sooner or later,
God will reveal why He
let things happen.
Always remember
that His way is better
than our ways. His
will is beyond our will. Put
your trust in Him. Amen!**

**POSITIVITY
IN LIFE**



*I hope there
are days when
your coffee tastes
like magic, your
Playlist makes you
dance, strangers make
you smile, and the
night sky touches
your soul. I hope
you fall in love with
being alive again.*

A Little Holy Land Geography

All Saints Church is fast becoming a far-away holy place for me due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have only managed to attend three 'socially distanced' services in Church since March last year, and I long to return and celebrate together again with the good folk of Sanderstead.

This puts me much in mind of a similar yearning I have to visit Jerusalem once more; a far-off holy place so special to the three Abrahamic faiths; Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

It is now some 13 years since I visited Jerusalem for the first and only time. I had travelled there with Sue and other members of the parish on a pilgrimage organised by the then rector of All Saints, Simon Butler, and the whole trip was intensely memorable.

It is a city that you cannot forget with its long history and meaning for the people of many faiths. Every ancient stone in Jerusalem seems to breathe a prayer, such as I have also felt in our church at All Saints.

Jerusalem, with its violent history (attacked 52 times, captured and recaptured 44 times, besieged 23 times, and destroyed twice) is a city still not at peace even today, and we wonder, will it ever be so? The different nations and religions, entangled by history, politics and fanaticism, continue to scrap over its stones in fear that if they lose their city, they will also lose their 'God-given heritage'.

And yet we remember Jesus' cry from the heart against the establishment of His day, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing".

The city's struggle goes on as it strives to find its real home, just as we do in our lives. Yet despite its trials and tribulations, it remains a source of spiritual comfort and refreshment for the many pilgrims that visit every year. And I too, long to return.

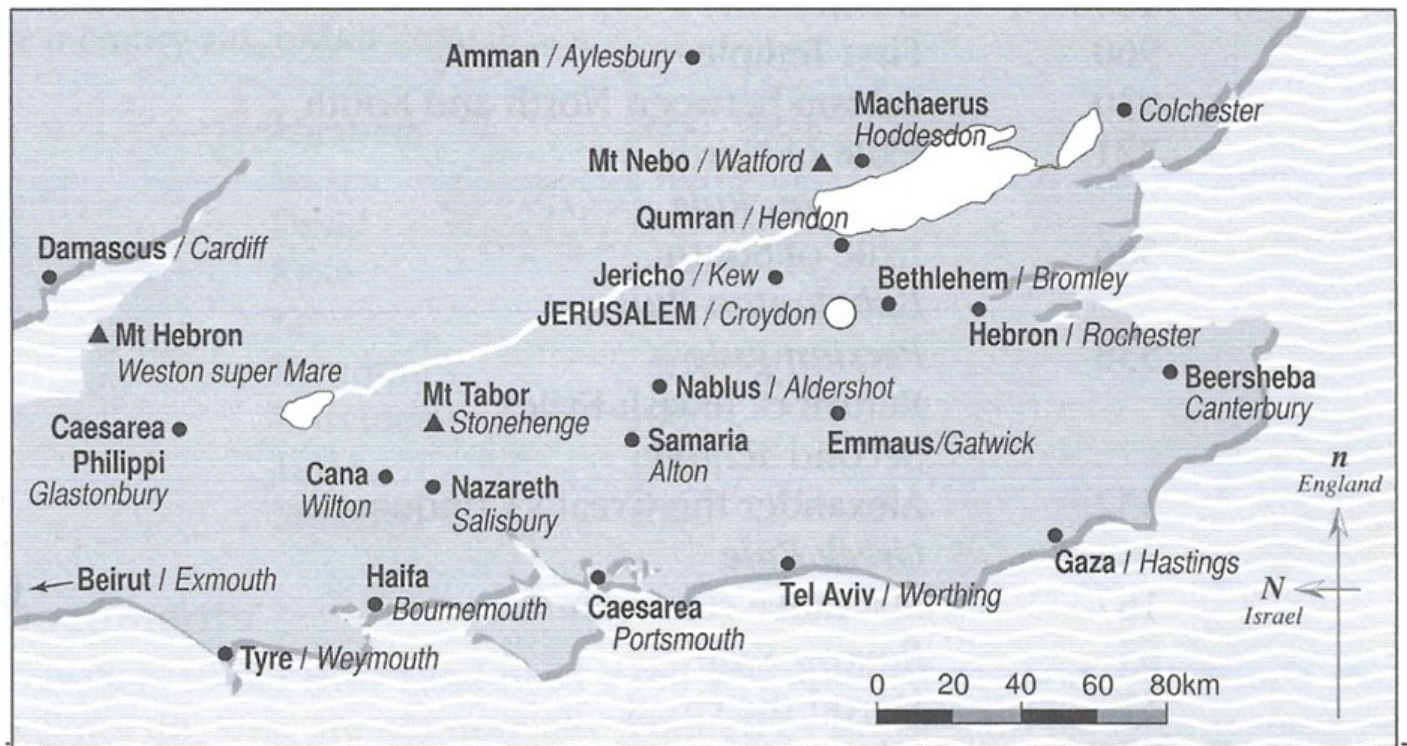
I was reflecting on how far away everything seems at present, and I remembered a rather helpful passage from a guide-book to the Holy Land:

"The city of Bethlehem is as far from Jerusalem as Wandsworth from London. Joppa is from Jerusalem as Aylesbury from London Mount Sion adjoins to Jerusalem as Southwark to London." Henry Timberlake (written in 1603)

The guide-book took up this interesting observation and produced the

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."

map you see below. The Holy Land is a small country, only 350km (218 miles) in length and less than 100km (62 miles) across at its widest point. If its coastline were superimposed sideways on the south of England, it would show Tel Aviv at Worthing, Damascus at Cardiff, and Jerusalem at Croydon.



"Jerusalem in Croydon?" I hear you exclaim, but what a marvellous thought that is. And Bethlehem, so near to us at Bromley! A walk to Emmaus at Gatwick might be a step too far for some of us these days, but here in Sanderstead we would be in the ancient settlement of Ein Karem ("Spring of the Vineyard"), the birthplace of John the Baptist, now a present-day suburb of Jerusalem.

Well, I hope that's something to delight and cheer you, and for you to remember that it does not matter who you are, or where you are, when you seek the Lord. As Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman at the well, "a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. Yet the time is coming, yes, and has already come, when true worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth".

So, as the All Saints' sermons continue to look at the Psalms, let me leave you with this reassurance from Psalm 125:

*As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the Lord surrounds his people
both now and for evermore*

David Chillman

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."

The Mountain.

lessonslearnedinlife.com

If the mountain seems too big today
then climb a hill instead.
If the morning brings you sadness
it's ok to stay in bed.
If the day ahead weighs heavy
and your plans feel like a curse,
there's no shame in rearranging,
don't make yourself feel worse.
If a shower stings like needles
and a bath feels like you'll drown,
if you haven't washed your hair for days,
don't throw away your crown.
A day is not a lifetime
a rest is not defeat,
don't think of it as failure,
just a quiet, kind retreat.
It's ok to take a moment
from an anxious, fractured mind,
the world will not stop turning
while you get realigned.
The mountain will still be there
when you want to try again,
you can climb it in your own time,
just love yourself til then.

— Laura Ding-Edwards

Shared by Sheila Wilkie



TRUST GOD
HE IS FIXING THE SITUATION YOU
ARE WORRIED ABOUT!

Psalm 125:2

*Just as the
mountains
surround
Jerusalem, so the
Lord surrounds
his people, both
now and forever.*

**YOUR PROBLEM
MAY BE BIG,
BUT YOUR GOD
IS MUCH BIGGER!**

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."



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24th November 2020

Dear Bovey Tracey Baptist Church

Reference: Chris & Alison Hawksbee, Asuncion, Paraguay

I am writing to first of all thank you for your generosity towards Chris and Alison Hawksbee's ministry over the years. Your contributions have made a huge difference in allowing the Hawksbee's to serve the Anglican church in Paraguay. Of note, is Chris's particular attention to the people of the Anglican Church communities in the Chaco region 6 hours north of Asuncion. Alison has made a significant impact into many pupil's education in San Andres college.

Next year, Chris and Alison have decided to retire from Easter 2021. From Christmas to Easter their plan is to reduce their work load and put in place necessary arrangements as they hand over the bulk of their present ministry duties. They will continue to live in Asuncion which has become their home over the years. They have indicated that while stepping back from frontline ministry, they will continue to play a minor role of assistance in the church background.

Since you have been a faithful supporting church, we wanted to let you know of their intentions. We realise this information will need to be processed by your mission committee and church leadership as you decide your future commitments to mission in the region.

At SAMS Ireland, we have developed many relationships with Church partners in Paraguay and other countries in South America over the years. I would be very happy to discuss how your church fellowship can continue supporting mission partnership in South America. Please contact me by email : office@samsireland.com or phone the office for an informal chat.

Yours in Christ

Rev Stephen McElhinney
SAMS Ireland Mission Director

MISSIONAL - RELATIONAL - INTENTIONAL
NI Charity Number NIC 103806

SANDERSTEAD STREET QUIZ

I had been given a Quiz of Street names where we used to live, which we enjoyed, so I have devised a Quiz for Sanderstead. Answers next time.

1. Boy's name *(First answer: Brian Avenue)*
2. Clergyman's benefice and a wooded mound
3. Two Mathematical terms
4. Route to a divine place
5. We're glad there is no Battle here
6. Surrey Village
7. Another Surrey Village
8. Sounds like 'time' in a field
9. Hill top geographical term
10. River mentioned in the Bible
11. A Lawyer's enclosure.
12. Not the route into Town
13. Associated with the cotton mills
14. Open space but not a Manse, nor a Vicarage
15. He might have made a horseshoe here
16. Not a Golf Course nor a Council
17. Difficult to walk here if your gait was affected.
18. A sharp Policeman
19. The Archers would be at home here.
20. A Peer might grow things here.

Margaret Quiney



YOU'VE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19. I
NEED A LIST OF EVERYPLACE YOU'VE BEEN.

**I've come up with a vac
scene.**



"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."

When planting your cats make sure to space them 6 inches apart so they have room to grow.



All shared by Sheila Wilkie



First trip booked for 2021

Hopefully off to Iceland in February.

If that goes well, probably looking at Asda in March and Tesco in April.

A hug a day keeps your troubles at bay. A hug at night makes everything right. So I'm sending you these hugs to help you cope, to give you some love and to bring you some hope.



PARISH of SANDERSTEAD and HAMSEY GREEN

Our buildings may be closed but our Services of Worship continue online (pre-recorded). Join us online, if you can...

www.sanderstead-parish.org.uk

JANUARY

24th 3rd Sunday of Epiphany **PARISH EUCHARIST**
Psalm 85 — God in a time of crisis

Saturday 30th — PRAYER MEETING (on Zoom*)

31st 4th Sunday of Epiphany **SANDERSTEAD LIGHT**

FEBRUARY

7th 2nd Sunday before Lent **PARISH EUCHARIST**
Psalm 139 — Who do you think you are?

14th Sunday next before Lent **PARISH PRAISE**
Psalm 51 — Lament and Penitence

Wednesday 17th — ASH WEDNESDAY
Dust to dust, ashes to ashes



21st 1st Sunday of Lent **PARISH EUCHARIST**
Psalm 32 — Salvation and Hope

Saturday 27th — PRAYER MEETING (on Zoom*)

28th 2nd Sunday of Lent **SANDERSTEAD LIGHT**

For *Zoom details, contact admin@sanderstead-parish.org.uk

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."



A CHRISTIAN PRESENCE
IN EVERY COMMUNITY

A prayer for our Government

Lord, the leaders of our nation bear the hefty weight of office as they lead us through this pandemic. So many voices speak to steer the course of travel Yet there are many considerations. Enable our Leaders to stay on the course you have set for them. Be their wisdom and good counsel. Help them to distil the voices. Shine the light of your presence upon our Prime Minister, our Government and all who advise them. Please take their yoke and shoulder the weight of responsibility. and lead us safely through this pandemic. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A prayer for the Poorer Nations

Lord, these days of pandemic are so challenging in very many ways, Yet even so, I am mindful of the blessings I enjoy. I pray for the people of this world who this day do not have clean water, Food; Primary healthcare A safe place to lay their head.

A prayer for those with Dementia

Lord, many of our loved ones are journeying through the fog of forgetfulness. They do not know what it means to be living through a pandemic; They do not understand why we are denied access to them. An ever widening chasm separates us from them. Their loneliness and confusion increase; We are desperate to be near them, to hold them and love them. We are in turmoil. May your peace come down upon them. May your love enfold them and May your friendship sustain them. Please bless all whose cognition fails them And all who care in our absence. Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

There are times when we have no time for long prayers, but simply cry out to You...

God, please help us now. Amen. O God, make speed to save us. O Lord, make haste to help us.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, be thou our guard while troubles last and our eternal home. (*Psalms 90*)

O Lord, hear our prayer, and let our crying come before you. (*Psalms 102*)

May the Lord keep watch over us, from this time forth for evermore. (*Psalms 121*)

Good Lord, deliver us now. Good Lord, deliver us and let your light shine in the darkness.

Come to us, Lord our God: Stretch out your arm to save, strengthen our hands to love, for the sake of the world that is your own. Amen.

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength..."

Church services & updates are on the website...

www.sanderstead-parish.org.uk

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Asst Priest: Revd Jeremy Groombridge CB,
jeremy@sanderstead-parish.org.uk, 020 8668 7795, day off—Mon

Parish Office: Paul Shipley parish.office@sanderstead-parish.org.uk,
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Rector's Admin Assistant: Rosanne Morris admin@sanderstead-parish.org.uk,
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New Year greetings...

I hope this finds you well.

Thank you for all the newsletter contributions over the past year; please continue to send me your thoughts, articles & ideas so that the journey of 2021 can be shared.

With love,
Rosanne

admin@sanderstead-parish.org.uk

