

WELLINGTON & DISTRICT TEAM MINISTRY

17th January 2021: 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

Welcome to our newsletter. Please note, if you need a larger version of the newsletter please let Sharon Chorley know. She can post a special version to you.

This Monday, 18th January, the Church throughout the world starts a week of prayer for Christian Unity. (N.B. Unity, not uniformity.) Material for this year's Week of Prayer is based on the theme 'Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit'. The material has been prepared by the Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland, a monastic community of sisters from different churches and various countries, committed to the path of reconciliation among Christians and within the human family, and to respect the whole of creation. You can access worship material on <https://www.oikoumene.org/events/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity>

Worship this Sunday 17th January

- St John's is not live streaming this Sunday but offering a short audio service, which can be listened to either via the link on the website, or by dialling 01174 288175 on your phone
- 7.00 p.m. John Young's Sunday evening hymns, with reflections 7.00 p.m. Click on the Team Facebook page and from there on John Young's page. This can be picked up later as well.
- 10 a.m. 'The Home Service' bringing church worship to your front room from around the Tone Deanery. 10Radio 105.3 FM

Worship next Sunday 24th January

- 9.45 a.m. St John's – live streamed communion service – no congregation
- 6.00 p.m. Thorne St Margaret Evensong on line. Joining details, by internet and by telephone will be given next week. If you would like an order of service, hymns and psalm posted to you, contact Maria.

Weekday worship: Morning Office 8.30 a.m. via Zoom. If you wish to join this small group (currently 4-9 people) who pray regularly together please contact Tim for details.

Compline: Wednesdays, 8 p.m. led by Selina and Richard on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81555085560>

The Daily Podcast from the internet or by phone: 01174 288175 (local rate)

Lectionary Readings for this Sunday. 1 Samuel 3: 1-10. The Lord calls the boy Samuel, but he does not recognise the voice as the Lord's. *Do we recognise when God is calling us? 'Hineni' – 'Here I am' Samuel answers when the Lord calls him, mistaking the Lord's voice for that of the priest Eli. 'Hineni' – is that something we readily answer when God calls us? Perhaps we might be reluctant to believe that God should want anything of us? After all, it seems that others are better qualified or more spiritual or.... Or perhaps we are too tied up with our own priorities, or others' demands on us. Let's take time to listen, to be aware, and to respond to the call of God.* Revelation 5: 1-10 John's vision, which draws on the imagery found in Ezekiel, is of a scroll whose contents are so foreboding that no heavenly being will assume responsibility for opening it. John is distraught. But the messianic figure of the Lamb, the crucified Christ, is able to open the scroll. John 1: 43-end Philip and Nathanael are called to follow Jesus – in spite of Nathanael 's scorn about Jesus' origins, once he meets Jesus he has no doubts, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God'. [*Are we ever scornful about people's origins?*]

Collect

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature by the
riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
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.

Post Communion

God of glory,
you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life:
fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I don't normally include a bit about the collect but I want to today: 'in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory' On my office wall is the quotation used by Nelson Mandela at his inauguration 'We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fears, our presence automatically liberates others.' May we allow ourselves to be renewed this year in our life in Christ and so become beacons of light in a sometimes dark world.

Giles Godber recommends: 'Candles in the Dark: Faith, Hope and Love in a Time of Pandemic' by Rowan Williams. A summary of the book: 'As we contemplate the coming months, not knowing when we can breathe again, it's worth thinking about how already the foundations have been laid for whatever new opportunities God has for us on the far side of this crisis.' This book brings together the 26 weekly Christian meditations originally posted online from March to September 2020, during lockdown in the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, for the congregation of his local parish church. Written with warmth and compassion, these meditations offer us hope and encouragement as we continue to endure the most devastating and disturbing world crisis for over a generation. They will leave you spiritually uplifted and with a strengthened faith to guide you through whatever may come'.

From the Diocese

Let's 'Talk Jesus' If your new year's resolution is to be more confident in sharing your faith, sign up for our online Talking Jesus course. It's a great way to help you to learn how to become a natural faith sharer. Find out more at: www.bathandwells.org.uk/talking-jesus. This 6 week course started on 13th January but there is still time to join.

Bishop Ruth's New Year Message – sorry this is a bit late, but we wanted to find space for Bishop Peter last week.

This time last year as we stood at the beginning of a new decade, we were full of hope. Messages from the East were suggesting that there was a new virus emerging but none of us thought it would travel so far and have such a world-wide impact.

This past year has seen us move from imagining all that might be, to coping with unimaginable loss...

The loss of life... some of us have grieved the loss of a life cut short, a loved one for whom the usual patterns of mourning could not be shared

The loss of livelihoods... some of us have lost jobs, careers, prospects for the future, hopes and dreams which have been savagely squashed

The loss of lifestyle... many of us have struggled with the loss of social interaction, sports we enjoy, festivals, theatre, gigs, feasts, company we keep, family and friends we can no longer meet through lockdown

So much loss... and yet for some, new possibilities have been glimpsed... a world where value is placed on care rather than cost, where the beauty of a world free from harmful emissions has been glimpsed.

And here we now are at the beginning of 2021 at the moment when the Church remembers the messengers from the East who came, not with dire warnings but with hope for the future. They had seen a star, a light in the darkness, which inspired them with promise.

And we too, have a hope and promise held out to us in the shape of the vaccine as we look into this new year. But of course, there's still a long way to go...! That was true for the Magi too. In following that star, they had no idea where it would take them, what they would find, but hope drove them on.

It was a journey that probably took them well over a year, just as our Covid journey seems to lengthen, they must have at times felt like giving up. They took some wrong turns, visiting Herod in the Palace, but eventually found the hoped-for Prince. Not as expected, in a palace of plenty but rather in a place of poverty.

I can't predict the twists and turns of this year for any of us. I don't know what the future might hold for you, but I do know who holds that future. The Magi discovered a God who didn't distance Himself but chose to share in our world with us, born as a baby, vulnerable, poor, dependent on others, and yet with the power to bring healing, hope and a future for each of us. Forgiveness for our failures and the prospect of a new start when all seems lost.

The journey we take to discover that Christ child will last a lifetime. Knowing God's presence with us won't prevent future calamities but we will have the grace and spirit to face them and to discover new possibilities of joy.

Churchwarden Training Day Thursday 21st January. a 'must' for new churchwardens, but good for experienced ones too, I gather. Taunton Archdeaconry with Archdeacon Simon – to register please e-mail: julia.gratton@bathwells.anglican.org

Church contacts

Do ring the parish office number: 01823 665254 and leave a message. Or email stjohns.wellington@googlemail.com. Or phone any of the clergy directly: Tim Treanor: 01823662248, Alan Ellacott: 01823 669824, Martin Beaumont: 01823 400127, Selina Garner: 01823 662227, Richard Kelley 07970 346544, Maria Hearl: 01884 256380 mariahearl@btinternet.com [Editor].