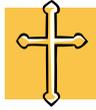


Tyndale Benefice



Wotton-under-Edge with Ozleworth
North Nibley, Alderley (including Tresham)

Sunday, 3rd January 2021
2nd Sunday of Christmas
Epiphany

There are no services of worship in the Benefice Churches until further notice.

Collect:

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Principal Readings:

1st Reading: *Isaiah 60: 1-6*

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,

the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

2nd Reading: *Ephesians 3: 1-12*

I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles - for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of

which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Gospel: *2: 1-12*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Reflection from Sue

There is so much we don't know about the visit of the kings to Jesus. However, there are important points to be drawn from Matthew's account. The sign of the star shining out over the world was an invitation to everyone. The kings divined what this sign meant and decided to follow it. And when they found Jesus we see

that symbol of their being changed because they travelled home by a different route.

Epiphany comes at the end of twelve days of Christmas. In the past this was a really important break from work, coming as it did in the depths of midwinter, darkness and dormancy. For us it can never be like that. In December we can still buy summer fruits and salad, central heating keeps us warm and electricity has all but banished darkness.

However, Epiphany still stands as a milestone that Christmas proper is over – back to the everyday. The festival coincides with the beginning of the calendar year when we sometimes embark on a process of reflection and New Year resolutions. Epiphany in a wider sense than the Christian festival can mean a *sudden important realisation*. It has been a hard year for us to reflect upon. I hope part of our reflection might be the realisation that we, like the kings, have been drawn to this compelling person, Jesus, along with many other people. Hopefully, as a result of this encounter, we will all grow a little more wise, learn a little from one another and definitely return home by a different way.

**To you, Lord Jesus, I open my heart.
Trusting in you, I begin again.
Ready for a better year, I make a fresh start.
Ready to live life anew, I leave my past to your mercy.
Ready for each new day, I leave my present to your care.
Ready for life's challenges, I leave my future in your hands.
Renewed in your love I begin again. Amen.**
Slightly adapted from The Prayer Trust's Happy NewYear

May this be a good year for all of us.
Love and God bless, Sue

For your prayers:

For those who have died and their families:
Ruth Rowe who died on 22nd December

A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us to love our neighbour,
and to care for those in need
as if we were caring for you.
In this time of anxiety, give us strength
to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick,
and to assure the isolated
of our love, and your love,
for your name's sake.

Amen.

Daily Prayer continues to be said at 9.00 every morning in individual homes.

We pray for:

- The World and its needs

- The Church and her life
- Those who are ill in body, mind or spirit
- Ourselves

If you wish to join us, you will find a choice of three services on the website - Midweek Prayer (from the Church of England), Morning Prayer, and Reflective Service. <http://wottonparishchurch.org.uk/resources-for-prayers-services-at-home/>

Year of Mind – where we remember those that have died during this week in previous years.

Wotton, Alderley & Tresham

4th: Jennifer Green (2013 – h: Neil)
Violet Clews (2018)

6th: Dorothy Vera Butcher (2008)
Joan Constance Spencer (2014)
Sandra Diane Corfield (2016)

9th: Geraldine Cooke (2015)

Nibley

2nd: Jean Marguerite (Jenny) Cox (2008)

In January we remember in our prayers the congregation of the United Church.

In 'normal' times, the pew sheet has a list of people who are ill. These people are included in prayer at Sunday services & at Morning Prayer every day. To continue this prayer - please email the Parish Office or leave a message on the Parish mobile if you would like prayer for yourself or a family member. There is a group of people who will pray.

Spiritual Crisis? Prayer Ministry?

Has this time of isolation raised concerns or fears of a spiritual nature & you want to talk about them? Would you like prayer ministry, such as has been offered after Eucharist & at Healing and Wholeness Services? There is a small group of people who are trained & who are able to listen to you and offer help. Please ring the Parish mobile on 07483 146531, with your name and phone number, to request a phone call. This offer is for those who live in the Parishes of Wotton under Edge, North Nibley, Alderley and Tresham.

*******Notices*******

Latest Reopening Update -

Tier 4's Effect on St Mary's

On 31st December, David Russell, our Dean, informed us that Rachel Cook's Licensing & Installation service on 10th January would not now take place as we Churchwardens have organised it. There will be a virtual service of licensing and no congregation of 30; its actual form is, as yet, to be determined.

Given that the Diocese (in consultation with Rachel) has taken this decision, we feel that we therefore must, as Bishop Robert tells us, *do all we can to keep ourselves and others safe*.

For this reason, we are suspending ALL services of worship until further notice.

St Mary's will remain open for individual prayer on Wednesdays from 10-4.

St. Martin's – All services and ramblings will be available online even when there is a service in the church.

The weekly recorded services will continue - available on the church website www.northnibleychurch.uk

This week: Ramblings on line.

The churchyard, is open and provides a place for quiet reflection & prayer – with benches. Please do make use of it.

The Chapel of Ease, Tresham - The Church will be open for Private Prayer on Mondays between 10am and 3pm. There is no service at Tresham on 3rd January

St. Kenelm's is open on Fridays from 10am to 3pm for private prayer.

Know someone without online access or prefers not to use the internet? Daily Hope Phone Lines – The Church of England have a FREE OF CHARGE phone line available 24 hours a day offering comforting hymns, reflections and prayers. **Ring 0800 804 8044**

Diocese of Gloucester Podcasts – an ongoing fortnightly audio series finding out about different projects, organisations and inspirational stories. The seventeenth and eighteenth podcasts from Bishop Rachel is a series of two podcasts on human sexuality. Bishop Rachel speaks with a number of people about the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith resources. You can play the podcast by going to: <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2020/podcast-human-sexuality/>

On here are also sermons for the upcoming Sunday, and a short video for children and families based on the upcoming Gospel reading – all worth a look and listen!

Prayer and digital resources available – if you would like any sent to you email wotvicsec@btconnect.com or visit the website wottonparishchurch.org.uk

Services from the BBC

- Daily service on Radio 4 at 9.45am LW or DAB
- Live on Sunday streamed at 8.10am each Sun.
- Songs of Praise airs on BBC1, Sunday - 1.15pm
- Choral Evensong on Radio 3 on Wednesdays at 3.30pm and Sundays at 3pm

Services from the Church of England

Available to watch on the Church of England website, Facebook page and YouTube! channel

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>

- **3 January 9:00am** - Worship at Home for Epiphany with Embrace the Middle East.

A prayer for the Vacancy
Lord God,

Thank you for the appointment of the Reverend Rachel Cook as our Vicar (designate). We pray for her and her family as she brings her ministry as Chaplain at RAF Waddington to a close and prepares to move to this Benefice.

We pray for the peoples in the parishes of the Tyndale Benefice as we prepare for Rachel's arrival. Help us to grow in love and care for all as we face changes in society and work patterns due to COVID19.

We continue to pray for our clergy, reader and church wardens in their work for the parishes in these unusual times. Show us all how to grow in faith and in our relationship with you through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Clergy:

Revd Peter Marsh – 01453 547 521 (not after 6.00pm)
Revd Morag Langley – 01453 845 147

Licensed Reader:

Sue Plant - 01453 845 157

Wotton Churchwardens:

Jackie Excell – 07863 121613
Douglas Hinton – 07415 541359
(Assistant) Lynda Durrant – 01453 521873

North Nibley Churchwarden:

Wynne Holcombe - 01453 542 091

Alderley Churchwarden:

Kay Pettifer - 01453 843838

Tresham Churchwarden:

Susan Whitfield – 01666 890338

Benefice/Parish Office:

01453 842175 / 07483 146531

wotvicsec@btconnect.com