

THE SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT

3rd January 2021 – The Epiphany (Second Sunday of Christmas)

The Epiphany

Epiphany falls on 6th January, but is often observed on the preceding Sunday instead of the Second Sunday of Christmas. I am blessed for so many reasons to have a benefice of many churches, and at Epiphany/Christmas 2 we can have our cake and eat it, as follows:

Sunday 3rd January: Broughton at 8am and 11am; Kirkby at 9.30am – The Principal Feast of the Epiphany.

Sunday 3rd January: Ulpha at 6pm – The Second Sunday of Christmas.

Wednesday 6th January: Broughton Mills at 11.30am – The Principal Feast of the Epiphany.

Don't forget to take down Christmas decorations by Twelfth Night (sundown on Tuesday 5th January). Cribs are allowed until Candlemas, Tuesday 2nd February!

Thanks

I wanted to express my own, and our collective, thanks to all those whose work made our Christmas services special: wardens, sidespeople and welcomers; musicians and choirs; and those who decorated the churches so wonderfully. I would like to single out the churches of Holy Innocents, Holy Trinity, St Cuthbert, St John the Baptist, St John the Evangelist and St Mary Magdalene as having especially fine decorations and flowers, over which enormous care and time was so clearly taken!

Covid security created some complications of pre-booking and allocated seating. Thank you to wardens and welcomers at Seathwaite, Kirkby and Broughton who dealt with these extra challenges faultlessly.

A few services required modification and extra preparation. Thanking individuals is bound to result in omissions, but I wanted to highlight Linda Dean's herculean work in preparing two services of make-your-own Christingle kits; Judith and Nicholas Taylor for the outdoor lighting/distancing scheme at the Broughton carol service; and Louise Robinson and the OtB team for a very different nativity at Broughton Mills this year.

At Kirkby, the blessing of an established organist and choir meant that Christmas music was always on offer: special thanks to those who variously turned out for two Christingles, a midnight mass and Christmas morning: four sung services in less than 24 hours.

At Broughton, the post-lockdown pop-up choir has done amazing things to maintain music in our worship. Continuing thanks to Helen Lewis and all the choir

members, regular and occasional. We were generously supplemented at several Christmas services, which was very encouraging for regular members.

Thank you to all those who attended services. It was a privilege to worship with you. Every service had its special moments and of course there was a little organisational burden alongside the pleasure of the larger services. I found personally refreshing the well-supported and cheerful vespers services at Ulpha and Woodland, just before Christmas.

Congratulations to Kieran Jenkin and Amy Bradley, married at St Mary's on Monday 21st. To have a wedding in the Christmas season was really uplifting.

Finally, Charlotte would like to thank everyone who has expressed condolences and offered support following the sudden death of her father just before Christmas.

Tier 4 arrangements

I'm sure you are aware that we are now subject to Tier 4 restrictions. This does not make a significant *legal* difference to public worship or funerals. However, we must recognise the severity of the present Covid risk reflected in these changes. Please continue to make assiduous use of masks and observe good hand hygiene. We must redouble our efforts on the key measure of social distancing. It is easy enough to sit 2 metres apart during services, but we need to be aware of the risk of getting too close in choirs, vestries and before and after services. Please move outdoors directly from your pew after services. No-one should feel pressure to attend church at present. As many tier 4 parishes move back online, we will keep in-person services under review.

Collect

O God,
who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
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. Amen.

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
² 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.
³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
⁴ 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.
⁵ 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.
⁶ 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.

Psalm 72:10-15

¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts.
¹¹ May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.
¹² For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
¹⁴ From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.
¹⁵ Long may he live!
May gold of Sheba be given to him.
May prayer be made for him continually,
and blessings invoked for him all day long.

Ephesians 3:1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ 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: ⁶ that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the

working of his power. ⁸ 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, ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Matthew 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, ² 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.' ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ "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."

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ 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.' ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Prayer after Communion

Lord God,
the bright splendour whom the nations seek:
may we who with the wise men
have been drawn by your light
discern the glory of your presence in your Son,
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All of our Advent and Christmas service sheets
have been printed on 100% recycled paper.*

