

**DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY**  
**Changed lives - Changing lives**

St. Laurence Parish Church  
Hawkhurst, Parish Eucharist  
Service.  
7.1.2023 - The Feast of the  
Epiphany

**THE ZOOM DETAILS FOR THIS SERVICE ARE:**

Meeting ID: 457 244 0784  
Passcode: 5i1UCa

The Sidesmen today are Diana Hunt and Kate Lagden

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**Hymn:** Angels from the realms of glory (Carol 18)

**Welcome:** Today we hear again the story of the wise men who followed a star and came to visit Jesus. In our act of worship today, we will reflect more about how we follow God in our daily lives.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe!

From the rising of the sun to its setting your name is proclaimed in all the world.

The Lord of glory be with you.

**And also with you**

**We confess our sins**

As we kneel with the Magi before the new-born Christ child, we

open our hearts in penitence and faith.

*Silence is kept*

Christ came in humility to share our lives: forgive our pride.

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ came with Good News for all people: forgive our silence.

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Christ came in love to a world of suffering: forgive our self-centredness.

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

My friends in Christ, Epiphany is good news! The Light comes not to blind us but to save us. Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners. In his name we declare: Our sins are forgiven! **Amen.**

**Thanks be to God!**

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

***Glory to God, Glory to God,  
Glory to God in the highest.***

Glory to God in the highest  
And peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,

we praise you for your glory.

***Glory to God .....***

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.

***Glory to God .....***

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.

***Glory to God ....***

**Opening prayer:** 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.**

***Prayer before receiving the Word of God — Before we read, we pray together***

Eternal God, in the reading of the Scriptures, may your Word be heard;

In the meditations of our hearts, may your Word be known; and

In the faithfulness of our lives, may your Word be shown.

**Amen.**

**First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6**  
**read by Claire Roberts**

Rise up in splendour, Jerusalem!  
Your light has come,  
the glory of the Lord shines upon you.

See, darkness covers the earth,  
and thick clouds cover the peoples;  
but upon you the LORD shines,  
and over you appears his glory.  
Nations shall walk by your light,  
and kings by your shining radiance.

Raise your eyes and look about;  
they all gather and come to you:  
your sons come from afar,  
and your daughters in the arms of their nurses.

Then you shall be radiant at what you see,  
your heart shall throb and overflow,  
for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you,  
the wealth of nations shall be brought to you.

Caravans of camels shall fill you,  
dromedaries from Midian and Ephah;  
all from Sheba shall come  
bearing gold and frankincense,  
and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

This is the Word of the Lord

## **Thanks be to God**

### **Gradual Hymn**

O little town of Bethlehem ( Carol 1)

The Lord be with you

### **And Also with you**

Listen to the good news proclaimed in the Gospel according to Matthew

### **Glory to Christ our Lord**

### **Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

This is the gospel of the Lord  
**Praise to Christ our Lord**

**Hymn:** We three kings of Orient are (Carol 21) - during which the wise men are carried to the crib

### **Gospel reflection**

**Father, we adore you,  
Lay our lives before you,  
How we love you!**

**Jesus, we adore you,  
Lay our lives before you,**

**How we love you!**

**Spirit, we adore you,  
Lay our lives before you,  
How we love you!**

**Intercessions led by Sandra Dreyer**

God guides us and shows the right way to live our lives, and so as the family of God gathered here today, we pray to God together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may shine like the star, leading people to Jesus, and spread God's message of justice, peace and love. Lord, in your mercy... **Hear our prayer**

We pray for all the leaders in the world: that they may be moved not to think of their own power and wealth but to rule wisely and do what is right for all their people. Lord, in your mercy... **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those people around the world who may be undertaking long journeys, or who are in need of guidance: that they may find their way to a place of safety, welcome and peace. Lord, in your mercy... **Hear our prayer**

We pray for our parish, our family and friends: that we may always be open to following God in our lives, in both our actions and our

words. Lord, in your mercy...

**Hear our prayer**

We pray for the sick and the suffering, that they may know God's healing touch and love in their lives - Robbie Robinson, Eleanor Ash, David Winstone, Jan Edwards, Jill Fitzpatrick, Nigel Lemon, Ray Wicks, John Tanner, Hilary Deller, Georgie Whitaker, Helen Whitaker, Brian Elliott. Lord, in your mercy.. **Hear our prayer**

We pray for those who have died in the faith and fear of God, those recently departed John Hunt, Christian Jervis-Read, Raymond George Collins and those whose years' minds occur at this month: Jack Travers, Evelyn Waghorn, Eletheria Corfield, William Butler, Hilary Wood, Cecille Mallinson, Lily Collins, Malcolm Dreyer, Richard Dyke, Jane Barker, Olaf Phillips, Doris Bird, Gilbert French, Rosaline Beeny, William Fawcett, Stephen Barker, Isoline Vaughan, Hylda Reynolds, Kathleen Wood, Sheila Maugham, Sylvia Smith, Prudence Bilsby... Lord, in your mercy.... **Hear our prayer**

Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the

greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of gift-giving.  
**Amen.**

**The Peace** Christ is our peace. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old has passed away: behold, everything has become new.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**And also with you.**

**Offertory Hymn**

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;  
star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;  
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;  
angels adore him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
odours of Edom, and offerings divine,

gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,  
myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
vainly with gifts would his favour secure:

richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;  
star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

**THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT**

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,  
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;  
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

**All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us

the bread of life. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the cup of salvation. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you**

Lift up your hearts  
**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**It is right to give him thanks and praise**

Why do we give thanks and praise at this table?

**We give thanks for all that God has done for us.**

God the Father created the heavens, the earth and everything in them; and created us in his own image.

**Let us give thanks and praise**

Christ our Lord became human like us, and died to save us.

**Let us give thanks and praise**

God sent the Holy Spirit to gather us together as the people of God

**Let us give thanks and praise**

So come let us join together to worship this God who loves

*We sing:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of  
your glory.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna  
in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in  
the highest.**

*Please sit/kneel*

We praise you Father that before Jesus our Saviour suffered and died, he gave us this holy meal to share and told us to continue it until he comes again.

**Why do we eat bread together at this table?**

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

### **Why do we drink from the cup together at this table?**

In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup, saying. "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me"

### **What do we remember at this table?**

We remember the Father's gracious love for us, Christ's death and resurrection for us, and the Spirit's tender care for us.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

*We sing:*

**Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

Merciful Father, pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. In eating and drinking together may we be made one with Christ and with one another. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**As Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:**

**Our Father, Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name.**

**Thy Kingdom come.**

**Thy Will be done,  
on earth as it is in Heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil**

**For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **The Fraction**

We break this Bread to share in the body of Christ

**Though we are many we are one body because we all share in one Bread**

### **The Agnus Dei**

We sing together

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.**

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, blessed are those who are called to his supper

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

### **The Prayer of Humble Access**

**We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and**

great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

**A Prayer for those joining us on Zoom who are making their Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

*For a Personal Blessing and/or a Special Prayer only, please also go to the High Altar Rail.*

The Chalice Bearers are: Ali Jones and Peter Hodges

**Communion Hymn** The First Nowell ( Carol 5 )

**Post-Communion Prayer:**

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. **Amen.**

**The Dismissal**

Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary

Revealed in his glory

Worshipped by angels and the wise men:

Proclaimed among the nations;

Raised to the highest heavens:

Believed in throughout the world.

Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation:

Now and for ever. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord **In the name of Christ.**

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

May God the Father keep you in all your days.

May God the Son shield you in all your ways.

May God the Spirit bring you healing and peace.

May God the Holy Trinity drive all darkness from you



and pour upon you blessing and light, now and always. **Amen**

**Hymn:** As with gladness men of old (Carol 4)

The Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

Let us bless the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

May the divine assistance remain with us always.

**And with all our brothers and sisters in Christ.**

May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

**And rise in glory. Amen.**

**We sit to listen to the Organ Voluntary**

13 Kentigern (Mungo), Missionary Bishop in Strathclyde and Cumbria, 603

13 George Fox, Founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers)

## **NOTICES**

**WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST** at Bowles Lodge ~ 10.00 am.  
Please do join us.

**FATHER RODNEY & SANDRA** wish to thank everybody for their Christmas gifts and cards. It is much appreciated.

## **Calendar for the 6th to the 13th January**

6 The Epiphany

10 William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1645

11 Mary Slessor, Missionary in West Africa, 1915

12 Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx, 1167

12 Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, Scholar, 689

13 Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, Teacher of the Faith, 367

## Happy New Year - Some thoughts

I begin this brief reflection with a funny story: Two caterpillars were crawling across the grass when a butterfly flew over them. They looked up, and one nudged the other and said, "you could not get me up in one of the those things for a a million pounds." Friends in Christ, we stand again on the threshold of a New Year of grace, with all its promises and possibilities. As this funny story reveals, we often fail to become what what we are, to fulfil or true potential as the children of God.

So how many times have you said "A Happy New Year?" in these last few days? For one thing, New Years do not produce new people. Changing the calendar does not necessarily alter our attitudes one scrap, and that is why New Year resolutions do not normally last out the first week of the New Year. There is nothing new about them, nothing is changed, it is the same old world and the same old me and the same old you!

I am reminded of my rather absent-minded headmaster of many

many years ago, in relation to New Year. He got his words mixed up when greeting a fellow student on the first day of term. His greeting was: 'A happy new boy year.' This was a happy fault. That is where our greeting could begin to make sense, namely if it were a new *me*, a *new you* going into the future.

All of us seek to be happy. But is that all? Are we sure? Is that what we really want? Is that what we really want, is that what life is really for, to die happy? It is only fairy tales that end with "they all lived happily ever after." In the real world people are not fulfilled in just being happy, though that is a good start. It is cows and not people who live for contentment to lie down and chew the cud. Real people need to reach beyond their grasp, they need a cause, no, *they need a Master!*

So I wish you all a blessed and happy New Year of spiritual growth. I do not only wish you to be happy and contented but also to be *obedient* to God. So therefore, my brothers and sisters in Christ I wish you all both a contented year and a year committed to Christ,

who is the secret of real joy. With God's grace may we in the days and months ahead of this year of grace become what we are created and called to be. A blessed New Year to you,

Many blessings

Canon Rodney

