

# NEWSLETTER

For the week beginning 10th January 2021.



## **Welcome to this issue of the Newsletter.**

Today is the **First Sunday of Epiphany**, **the Baptism of Christ** and Plough Sunday.

### **FROM THE RECTOR:**

Dear All,

Little did I realise that 12 months on from seeing an advert in the Church Times during the first week of January, I would be sitting writing to you all in the first week of January 2021 as the Rector of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw having gone through one of the most momentous years in history.

Who would have thought that in early January last year, when coronavirus was briefly mentioned in a news item and we were all looking forward to what 2020 held for us all, we would be where we are today. Even after the discernment days on the 20/21<sup>st</sup> February none of us had any inkling what the next 4 weeks would bring and yet here we are 12 months later.

As I am writing this, I am looking out of the office window and I get a real sense that in many respects, that, while so much has changed or been changed, there is a comfort knowing that God is at work in our community and our world and that many things haven't changed. The grass is beginning to grow (note to self – sort mower out), the snowdrops are appearing, the birds are starting to look for nesting sites and the days, albeit slowly, are starting to

draw out. It is the rhythm of the seasons, a rhythm that sometimes only a rural parish such as ours understands. This Sunday is not only dedicated to the Baptism of Christ but is also Plough Sunday, when the ploughs and seeds were blessed for the coming season (a tradition we will uphold this year). The prayers and blessings for this can be found in the Church of England's "Times and Seasons;" under the agricultural year. Farmers and those who work the land understand fully the importance of the correct time to sow and reap and when to wait. As we begin this year, we continue to find ourselves in a season of waiting. The whole of the last 12 months seems to have been about waiting for things: - a new Rector, an announcement, to move, to get back to our buildings, for something to change, for Christmas, for a hug and yet we continue to wait. Waiting by its very nature is difficult, we are impatient and in the modern world even more so, but waiting is very biblical, from Psalm 37 "Wait for the LORD, and keep to his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land".

As we wait, I would encourage you to be resolute over the coming weeks. It is going to be difficult, but the scientist in me is very optimistic as we have come so far in such a short space of time. I can only draw one conclusion and that is that what we are seeing is God at work to help humanity. I know some would question that, but the number of people who keep saying "I am praying for a vaccine" surely says something about where people are ultimately putting their trust. I have been blown away by what has been achieved so let us just hold on to the hope we have, and I am sure we will soon be able to meet people again in person. So yes, there is a sense of loss and waiting at the moment but there is also hope and expectation that things are going to get better. That, I believe, is where God is speaking directly to us at this time. That is God at work in this world. God has not abandoned creation, shown by sending Jesus Christ to redeem this world, and I believe we are beginning to see what God wants to do in our Parish at this time by building community and giving us a vision to look out into the world to see what we as a church can do for others.

With my love and prayers

**Noel**

**Church during lockdown** . The Rector has consulted with the Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council and has decided, reluctantly,

that our churches must close again until at least up to and including 14<sup>th</sup> February. So our services will continue online each Sunday at 11.00am. We hope that everyone who can will join us. Up to 100 people can attend, so there really isn't a problem of accommodation! You can click on the link printed below using your computer, tablet or smartphone. If you do not have access to the internet, you can join by phone using the number given below, and the numbers following when prompted. Don't forget the hashes ##!

There are actually advantages to joining the online service. You don't have to leave the comfort and warmth of your own home and you can see people without masks and have a chat after the service, with or without a cup of coffee, if you wish! More importantly, although online worship cannot ever replace live in-church services, this is a way of worshipping *together* and, as you know, the Christian faith is one which thrives on community, even a virtual one.

**Our service this Sunday is online at 11.00am.** Rev Roy Allen will be leading the service, with Rev Canon Frank Longbottom preaching and the Rector leading the intercessions.

**Please join us via the link below. We would love to see you.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84233355603?pwd=bmxQMHpCT3RIM28ybFBHRzBSeG9Gdz09> **Meeting ID: 842 3335 5603 Passcode: 746923**

**You can join us on the phone by dialling 0203 481 5237**

**Then Entering: 842 3335 5603##**

**Then: 746923#**

**Next Sunday** is 17<sup>th</sup> January, **the Second Sunday of Epiphany.** The service will be online at 11.00am. Link as above.



**Morning and Evening Prayer during the week.....**

**Morning Prayer** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 9.15am.

**Evening Prayer** Tuesday at 7.45pm. **Compline** Thursday at 7.45pm.

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**INTRODUCING: Two new courses available for all in the Aston and Sutton Coldfield Deanery – us!**

**The Way of Discipleship**, starting with Module 1, Being with God. This Diocesan developed 7 session course looks at how we grow in our relationship of love with God each day. This module explores what is a disciple, why it's important to actively engage in following Jesus, and how we develop this relationship in our life and worship. More details can be found about the course on the Diocesan website.

**Women's Theology Group**: Associated with the Women's Theology Network this group is for women, looking at women in the Bible and discovering what their lives teach us about God both then and now. These first sessions are looking at some of the women in Jesus story including Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba, Ruth, The Virgin Mary and Elizabeth. These are passages that rarely make it to the lectionary and are revealing and interesting to study together.

Each group will run *fortnightly on alternate weeks*; there are *two* sessions for each group. *Tuesday 10.00 - 11.30am and Wednesday 7.30 - 9.00pm*

The groups will start with **Way of Discipleship Tuesday 12th January 2021 and Wednesday 13th January 2021**, and the following week will be **The Women's Theology Study starting Tuesday 19th January 2021 and Wednesday 20th January 2021**.

**Finance** – Despite the fact that the churches are closed for public worship, there are still ongoing expenses which have to be paid. Please consider if you can support by setting up a regular standing order or by giving a donation. Your support is very much appreciated.

Here are the bank details for each church for your reference:

St Nicholas': 30-92-75 00610273

St John's: 05-09-42 57896460

St Chad's: 30-98-37 00152981



### **Online Silent Auction.**

The date for the Online Silent Auction hasn't yet been fixed, so continue to watch this space, but items are beginning to accumulate. All money raised will be for church funds.

Please keep the offers coming in. A list of the lots will be published in this Newsletter, but there is still plenty of time to send more offers. If you can offer a skill, such as.....baking, decorating, gardening for example.....or if you would like to learn to tap dance, have some ironing or gardening done for you, you'll need to bid in the auction.....

**During the current lockdown, the Newsletter** will continue to be a primary means of communication across the Parish and will be most effective if the maximum number of people possible receive it, either via email or on paper. There are still members of our congregations who do not receive it because we do not have an email address for them. Please do check with others that they receive the Newsletter and let us know of anyone who would like to be added to the mailing list. It does go to members of all three communities and helps us all to keep in touch.

*If you would like anything added to this sheet in future weeks, please send it by email, text or by hand.*

[margaret\\_allen69@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:margaret_allen69@yahoo.co.uk) 07778 458 789 or [n.w.phillips@live.com](mailto:n.w.phillips@live.com) 07498 202262

### **PRAYERS**

In your prayers this week, please pray for those who are sick, including:

Alison	Pat Bird	Shirley Bolton
George Bullivant	Joe Cartnell	Diane Craven
Lesley Cox	Claire Eldridge	Pat Harris
Stacey Hobbs	Paul Hollis	

Will McFarland and all children and adults with autism

Isabella Murphy	Beatrice Nelson	Philip O'Halloran
Brian Pearson	Lucinda Shelley	Sue Shelley

Cathy Smith

Tim and Imogen Swingler

Marie Sylvester

Barbara Thomas

Rhoda Thornicroft

Jenny Tillson

Pat Turner

Paul Wilson

If you would like anyone added to this list, please let us know.

Remember those who have died and those who mourn them, remembering especially

Hector Wilfred Bailey

Christopher 'Ken' Cook

Mark Tillson

Nigel Ward

*Those who know Pat Bird will be pleased to hear that she is now back at home. We will remember her in our prayers as she continues to recover.*

## **Collect and Readings for Sunday 10th January 2021**

### **The Collect**

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;  
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.**

### **The First Reading**

*is from Genesis chapter 1*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day", and the darkness he called "night". And there was evening, and there was morning – the first day.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

## **The Second Reading**

*is from The Acts of the Apostles chapter 19*

<sup>1</sup>While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. <sup>2</sup>He said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?' They replied, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' <sup>3</sup>Then he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' They answered, 'Into John's baptism.' <sup>4</sup>Paul said, 'John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.' <sup>5</sup>On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied – <sup>7</sup>altogether there were about twelve of them.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

## **The Gospel**

*Here is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke chapter 1*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**PARISH OF CURDWORTH, MIDDLETON AND WISHAW**

**ONLINE SILENT AUCTION**

I am interested in:

- Taking part in the Online Auction /
- Donating an item(s) to be auctioned /

Item(s) for Auction: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to 16 Orchard Close, Curdworth.*

*Many thanks.*

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