

Epiphany News

The magazine of Holy Epiphany Church

December 2019/January 2020



Special Services for Christmas

22 nd	Festival of Readings & Carols	4.00pm
24 th	Christingle	3.30pm
	Carols by Candlelight	5.30pm
	Midnight Communion	11.00pm
25 th	Family Communion	10.00am

May God's peace and Jesus' love fill your hearts and homes this Christmas and in 2020

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Who we are: more information on our website www.epiphanychurch.co.uk

Churchwardens

Following the retirement of Rev. David Thompson, the parish is in interregnum. Please contact the churchwardens for any issues relating to the parish, services or occasional offices. Alternatively, please phone or e-mail the Parish Office (see front cover for details)



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There is a loop system available in church.
Please adjust your hearing aid to the relevant setting





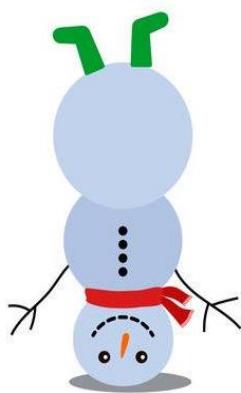
FaithTime by Jan Farrow

I had such a lovely holiday this September, usual place - Cumbria, usual people – Rosie and Mopsy the dog, usual weather – OH NO!

The weather was . . . well, I hadn't realised the sun could shine up north, usually we experience a lot of rain, mist and cold no matter what time of the year we go. This year was definitely different; the sun shone so much that Rosie had to go and buy a tee shirt as we had of course packed all our winter clothes!!

We stayed for our usual month and it was lovely to see the trees just beginning to dress themselves in beautiful autumnal colours.

What's more we saw the snow arrive. Well, not actual real snow you understand, but Windermere Garden Centre had the opening of its Christmas department with Father Christmas, elves and reindeer. I was beginning to feel a little topsy-turvy; this was starting to feel like an example of putting the cart before the horse.



Christmas is coming (in case you hadn't noticed). The build-up seems to get larger every year and much of it gives me a topsy-turvy feeling.

Isaiah the prophet foretold the birth of Jesus over 700 years before it happened. Isaiah prophesied about a royal King, but there would be no palace, no jewelled crown; He would be a poor man, a servant who would suffer and die but then come back to life. In so doing, Jesus, God's own Son, would destroy death for ever and open up the way to everlasting life for those who believed in Him.

You really can't have Christmas without the Easter message. Jesus was a topsy-turvy sort of man and for me, He continues to turn much of our materialistic and worldly thinking upside down.

Recently I was rather struck by a true story - An anthropologist proposed a game to the kids in an African tribe. He put a basket of fruit near a tree and told them whoever got there first won the sweet fruits. When he gave them the signal to run, they all took each other's hands and ran together, then sat in a circle enjoying their treats. When he asked them why they chose to run as a group when they could have had more fruit individually, one child spoke up and said, 'UBUNTU, how can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?'

What a powerful message we could present to the world if only we could join hands one with another, to share not only those earthly fruits but the fruits of the Christian gospel with our friends and neighbours at all times of the year.



If you would like to know more about Jesus this Christmas then



12 days of reflections
with a picture, a short Bible
passage, a simple prayer and
a challenge to think about.

You can find out more at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/followthestar>

or download the app from



or pick up a booklet in church

Special Events for Christmas and into the New Year



Christmas Lunch Club



Wednesday 18 December

Carol Singing at 12, followed by Lunch at 1pm

Please remember to pre-order your lunch

Christmas Tea Cosy

Monday 23 December

Coffee and chat
with carol singing

**From 9.45 - 11.30am
In the Jubilee Room - all welcome**

Patronal Festival

12 January

Holy Communion at 10am

Followed by a
bring and share lunch
All are welcome

Men's Big Breakfast

The Big Breakfast is an opportunity to hear a high-profile guest speaker and is an ideal time to invite someone who has not been to a Men's Breakfast before.

We are looking forward to welcoming our new Bishop of Southampton Debbie Sellin.



Holdenhurst Village Hall - Saturday 27 January 8am

Bishop Debbie Sellin

Please book with Andy on 07484 203076 or andy.renton56@gmail.com



Hymns and Cake – Joanne Davis



We have been holding this meeting for nearly a year now.

The idea for it came from a book given to me in my teens, which told the stories behind many hymns. We have had seven Hymns and Cake meetings this year and themes included the Shepherd, Easter, Creation, Prayer, Jesus and Harvest. We meet in the Jubilee Room at 2.30, usually on the 4th Friday afternoon of the month, for a time of hymn singing and short talks about the hymns. Then we enjoy tea, cake and fellowship together. The afternoons are open to anyone of any age and are good for people who have dementia or who cannot attend a Sunday morning service. Lifts can always be arranged for anyone who would like to attend – do speak to me.

Next year's themes include: Hope, the Bible, the Holy Spirit and Pentecost.



'Diary' of an LLM trainee by Julie Renton

This first term, on my Licensed Lay Minister's course, we have been studying a module called 'Introduction to the Bible' and looking at God's big picture - how the Old and New Testaments fit together.

The course book was '**The Drama of Scripture**' and now I have finished the unit, if anyone would like to borrow it, do please ask. It is a very readable overview of the big story told in the Bible and I found it very helpful in understanding some of the events of Jewish history and their relevance to our faith.

We have also learned how to study the Bible using a technique called 'exegesis'. It's a detailed way of reading the Bible, studying a part of it almost word for word, looking for the significance and meaning of (literally) each phrase. You also look at the events which happened before and after that section, so that you read it in context. As you read, you make a note of questions that occur to you, things you're not sure of and then you go away and look up answers. You then use this detailed study to prepare a sermon or a Bible study, so it's a very useful tool. You might like to try reading this way just once for yourself, maybe using the Christmas story at the beginning of Luke or Matthew's Gospel. You will be surprised at what you notice that you haven't seen before, even in a familiar passage.

I have to admit that as the course began, I felt totally unprepared for what God was calling me to do, but He is gracious and I am beginning to grow in confidence as I see Him at work in me.

Studying is very time-consuming, however, and I have had to think carefully about what I can and can't continue to do at home and at Holy Epiphany. Regretfully, on the advice of my tutors, I have had to step down as a deputy churchwarden as my work as part of the ministry team increases.

Please continue to pray for me, especially for my safety as I travel to Winchester each Thursday night during the winter months when it's dark and cold. Please pray for Andy (my husband) too as he takes on many of the jobs at home that I would previously have done and as he supports me in my studies.

Thank you very much.

Toy Service
1 December

*Coffee served from 9.45am
followed by Family Service*

Please bring new toys (unwrapped)
for the Salvation Army to give to
children who otherwise would not
receive a gift this Christmas

Advent Carol Service
1 December
4.00pm



Come and join us as we celebrate the
Advent season with carols from the
choir and others for all to sing

From the editors

This magazine is free; a donation of at least £1.20 a copy helps to offset the costs of printing.
Contributions by **10 January** please, for the next edition, to be published on 26 January.

*Disclaimer: Views expressed in Epiphany News are those of contributors, not the editors or the ministry team.
Editors reserve the right to edit or shorten articles or hold them for a later edition. Mary Hogg and Julie Renton*

What's happening at Epiphany in December and January?

 <p>Church Services</p> <p>For details of our special services to celebrate Christmas please see the front cover</p>	<p>1st Sunday</p> <p>9.00am Breakfast @ 9 – Especially for families with young children</p> <p>10.00am Coffee followed by a short, informal Family Service</p> <p>4.00pm Advent Carols</p> <p>1st Sunday</p> <p>9.00am Breakfast @ 9 – Especially for families with young children</p> <p>10.00am Coffee followed by a short, informal Family Service</p> <p>2nd Sunday</p> <p>10.00am Holy Communion (sung) with Roots for Children and Crèche</p> <p>3rd Sunday</p> <p>9.45am Café 46</p> <p>3.00pm Messy Church in the Church</p> <p>4th Sunday</p> <p>10.00am Holy Communion (sung) with Roots for Children and Crèche</p> <p>4.00pm Festival of Readings & Carols (22 December)</p> <p>5th Sunday</p> <p>10.00am 29 December Informal All Age Service</p> <p>Wednesday</p> <p>12.15pm 15 January Holy Communion (said) led by Rev Paul Harris</p>
	<p>Home Groups – friendly groups who meet fortnightly to share fellowship, study God's word and pray. New members welcome.</p> <p>Please talk to Jan Farrow for dates and venues.</p>
	<p>Prayer Meetings in the Jubilee Room – all are welcome.</p> <p>Saturday evenings 6 – 7pm – Coffee and prayer on 30 November and 4 January</p> <p>Tuesday afternoons 2 – 3pm on 10 December; 14 and 28 January</p>
	<p>Epiphany Bright Stars – parent/carer and toddler group on Tuesday mornings in term-time at 9.30am in the church and Jubilee Room. Last session this term is on 17 December, restarting 7 January.</p> <p>Contact Jodie Burge on 01202 776270</p>
	<p>Messy Church – family fun for parents and children followed by a shared meal. Lots of craft activities, biscuit or cake decorating, Bible stories and buffet tea.</p> <p>3rd Sunday of the month. Next meetings are on 15 December (Messy Nativity) and 19 January 3.00 – 5.00pm in the church.</p> <p>Contact Andy on 07484 203076 or andy.renton56@gmail.com</p>
	<p>Men's Breakfast – No meeting in December. The next meeting is the 'Big Breakfast' on 27 January at Holdenhurst Village Hall when the speaker will be Bishop Debbie, the new Bishop of Southampton. All men welcome, so why not come and join us? Full English breakfast served at 8.00am.</p> <p>For catering purposes please let Andy Renton know if you plan to attend.</p> <p>Contact Andy on 07484 203076 or andy.renton56@gmail.com</p>

	Muscliff Care Home: – monthly on Mondays at 2.30pm 9 December (Carols and readings for Christmas) 13 January		
	Epiphany Pre school meets Monday - Friday in the church hall during term-time from 9.00am to 3.00pm. Please check dates with the pre-school staff. Phone 01202 612337 for more information		
	Tea Cosy – tea, coffee and chat from 9.45 - 11.30am. Carols on 23 December. Meetings continue through the Christmas holiday.		Choir practice - please contact Susan Bright for up to date information. No choir practice on 27 December or 3 January
	Lunch Club – coffee at 10.30am followed by games and social time. Carol singing and Christmas lunch on 18 December. Lunch is served at 1.00pm and is prepared by 'Crumbs'. A 2-course meal costs £4 and (pre-booked) menu choices are available. No Lunch Club on 25 December or 1 January. Enquiries to 01202 516712		
	Pie and a Pint – an opportunity for men to chat and 'put the world to rights'. 7.00pm Wetherspoon's in Winton. No meeting in December; next meeting is on 29 January. Contact Alan Hogg on 07963 706907. All men welcome, no need to book.		
	Hymns and Cake – Join in with some favourite hymns, learn a little about them and afterwards enjoy tea and cake. No Hymns and Cake in December. The theme of the next meeting is Hope - 24 January at 2.30pm in the Jubilee Room. A dementia friendly event. Contact Joanne Davis on 07906355271.		
	Beavers Jacqui Elena jacqui.elena15@gmail.com Cubs Jan Kingsland 01202 517627 Scouts Simon Blake 07500 901 561		Brownies Sam Pattimore 07930 581851 Guides and Rainbows Sandra Coomber 07712 129445

Communion Services in December 2019 and January 2020

During December we have Communion services led by Paul Harris.
Robin Harger will be with us for Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve.
Roy Matthews is leading the Family Celebration Holy Communion Service on Christmas Day.
Paul Harris will be back with us for our Communion services in January.

Mustard Seed Relief Mission – showing love in action



Thank you for supporting the work Mustard Seed Relief Mission does in sending Christmas gifts in shoeboxes to children's orphanages and hospitals in Moldova and the Ukraine. Thanks to all at Epiphany Church and School and to Mark Vincent for co-ordinating the collection.



Bishop's Commission for Mission

Along with about 85 others who had completed Bishop's Commission for Mission courses during 2018/19, Andy and Julie Renton received their commission certificates and badges from Bishop Tim at Winchester Cathedral on October 12 October.

(BCM Children's, Families and Youth – Andy; BCM Worship – Julie)



Christmas Fayre

Thank you to all who supported us in any way

Latest figures show we raised £2314 for church projects



Obituaries

THELMA VIOLET CUMMINGS



Thelma was born in 1933 in Bournemouth. She was the first of three daughters who spent their early years in West London before returning to Bournemouth just after the end of WW II.

Thelma worked with the Mass X-Ray mobile unit, and at the Town Hall until her marriage in 1959 to Peter Du Lieu. She had two sons, Paul and Russell, and throughout the 1960's & 70's was a regular member of the congregation at Holy Epiphany.

Thelma re-married and left Bournemouth, returning in 2001 when she re-joined Holy Epiphany Church. She was an active member, a sidesman and a co-ordinator of the Love in a Box appeals, as well as enjoying the social life of the church family

Thelma died on 13th September 2019, having been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Her funeral was a fitting tribute to a much-loved sister, mother and grandmother, as well as a great friend to many.

EVA 'JOAN' CLAYTON



The family moved to Muscliff in 1995 and Joan began attending Holy Epiphany Church and the Women's Open Group. After she had a stroke in 2007 the vicar, Ken Batt and afterwards, Lynley Wilkes from the ministry team would bring her home communion. For the last three years Joan was able to come back to Epiphany Church and Tea Cosy, brought in her wheelchair by her daughter Joanne.

Joan loved the choir and singing along to hymns she knew by heart. She had a great faith in Jesus after she nearly died when expecting her daughter. It was very special that she was able to spend her last days at home with Joanne and her family by her side as they read the Bible to her and listened to music together. She will be greatly missed.

Parish Registers from October and November

Funerals – we extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:

2 October Sigrid Seymour-Spicer (Lutheran Church)

8 October Eva Joan Clayton



A Christmas Poem

"And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night ..."
(Luke 2 verse 18)

They did not know that the dark night
Would any different be
To numerous other shepherd-nights
Outside the walled city.
But then, Heav'n broke through darkened skies
And hills blazoned with light
And myriad angels came
In glorious splendour bright,
They heard the sweetest ever song,
The sweetest message too –
The Saviour of the World was born,
For them, for me, for you.

They did not know He so loved them,
Weak, sinful, lonely, poor.
But when they heard the angels sing
They knew, they knew, for sure.

I may not view a glorious host Ablaze with glory bright,
Singing songs of Heaven, At a time of darkest night.
I may not see deliverance By an angelic guide
And gaze upon his beauty As he walks close by my side.

BUT I've felt his peace and presence
When the fears of night take hold,
I've known weak cowardice replaced
By strength that's good and bold.
I've watched loved ones protected
And covered by his shield,
I've seen strong obstacles removed
And grace and truth revealed.
Oh yes, my God has promised (Although my eyes are dim)
He puts His ministering angels Round those who follow Him.
The mighty hosts of heaven Aid his saints to endure,
I do not need to see because I know, I know, for sure.

by Margaret Kearley



Pray around the Psalms - Psalm 72 verses 10 -13



A Christmas Psalm

**"May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him.
For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death."**

This is a Psalm that was probably first written as a prayer for the coronation of a King in ancient Israel – maybe David's son Solomon. So, what does it have to say to us today? When we look at it, we can see that the prayer for the king goes far beyond anything that a human king could achieve.

At Holy Epiphany we know well the account of the wise men from distant lands who brought gifts to the baby Jesus. This Psalm looks forward to Him, a many-times grandson of King David, a saviour King whose everlasting Kingdom grows with each person who puts their trust in Him. There's a hymn based on this Psalm, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed, Great David's greater Son! Hail, in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!" – let's echo its prayer of praise to Him this Christmas.

You can pray by yourself or you might like to join us when we pray together.
(For dates and times, please see the centre pages of the magazine)
Don't worry, you don't have to pray out loud if you don't want to.



Christmas – the incarnation of Jesus by Lynley Wilkes

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9: verse 6

At the heart of the Christian faith is our belief that God has become man, that Jesus Christ is divine.

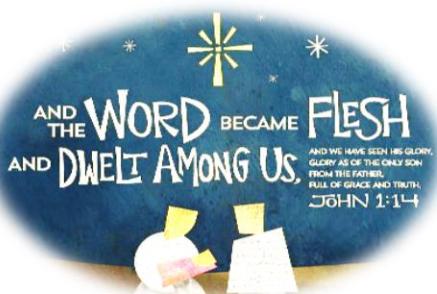
"Christ Himself was like God in everything. He was equal with God but He did not think that being equal with God was something to be held on to. He gave up His place with God and made Himself nothing...He obeyed even when that caused His death - death on a cross. So, God raised Christ to the highest place. God made the name of Christ greater than every other name".

(Philippians 2: v 6-9)

The word 'Incarnation' expresses the fact that Jesus Christ is not merely a man, a perfect man or even a saint, but God Himself who became a man to save us and bring us back into a relationship with Him.

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life". (John 3: v 16)

Jesus Christ was conceived miraculously through the power of God. ***"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."*** (Isaiah 7: v 14)



He was born through the consent of His mother (Luke 1). As foretold in the Old Testament, Jesus was born in King David's city of Bethlehem. The divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ were progressively revealed throughout His life. Elizabeth hailed Mary as 'mother of my Lord'.

John's Gospel tells us:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made." (John 1 v 1 & 3)

The Bible says explicitly that Jesus is God. We can see this when Thomas, one of the disciples, says to the risen Jesus, "***My Lord and my God.***" (John 20: v 28). The Bible also records instances in which Jesus confirmed His divinity in response to statements or questions about His identity asked by others. When asked this question directly by the high priest, ***"Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus responded, "I am".*** (Mark 14: verse 61-62 and Matthew 26: verses 63-64)

Many of us enjoy the whole nativity scene; schools and children act it out, families look on in wonder at their children and the parts they are playing, but the truth that lies behind it is so often overlooked.



Let's pray that over this Christmas period more and more of us will come to realise the overwhelming truth that Jesus has been there since creation, that GOD is LOVE and He is there for all. Let's help others to recognise Him through our witness and make it our new year's resolution to make a difference to the lives of those around us and whoever we may meet each day.
God bless you all.

Rev Paul Harris - (*interviewed by Jan Farrow*)

Hello Paul. It's been lovely to welcome you at church and I know you will be returning to help us during our interregnum; we look forward to your ministry amongst us. Thank you for agreeing to this little interview, no doubt we will all soon get to know each other a lot better. As you said to me giving people the confidence and permission to tell their stories is something close to your own heart, so here goes...Could you tell us about your family background and roots?

I am a Londoner by birth, the eldest of five children. My father worked in the family firm (theatrical costumiers) and even designed a dress for Marilyn Monroe before being ordained when I was eight years old. I cannot pretend I enjoyed being a vicar's son. I was bullied until I learned to look after myself (euphemism for fighting) - I became a bit rebellious - but looking back I realise what a great foundation my parents gave me. I think I inherited their passion for communities.

What about your own family?

I am married to Cathy; we met in the hot summer of 1976 - I had broken my arm playing cricket and she signed my plaster and put her phone number on it. We married two years later and the rest as they say is history. We have four adult sons and ten grandchildren. Cathy is a speech therapist and currently is managing a national project for improved access for people with communication difficulties. We live in Southbourne with our cockerpoo called Hope.



Tell me a little about your interests and hobbies.

I have always been a keen sportsman (football, rugby, athletics and racket sports). These days I play golf regularly. We also have a tandem bike - I can tell when Cathy isn't pedalling! I read a lot and enjoy watching comedy. I enjoy films such as 'Bridges of Madison County' and 'Dr Zhivago'. Favourite books are "I Heard the Owl Call my Name" by Margaret Craven, and most by Sebastian Faulks and Ian McEwan.

Where have you worked in the past, Paul?

I was briefly a Police Officer in Slough (I have written a novel about that) and am also a trained teacher/youth worker. It was at that time that faith became real for me personally. I was ordained in 1984 and have worked in Chelmsford, Gloucester and Winchester Dioceses - mostly as a parish priest. I spent five years as a national adviser on Mission and Evangelism and also worked for a commercial radio station in Southampton. I still broadcast regularly - mostly 'Pause for Thought' for BBC Radio 2.

You are not serving in a parish now?

No, in 2004 I was suddenly taken ill with advanced kidney cancer.

I have lived to tell the tale. I worked for another seven years as a Team Rector before it seemed like the illness had returned and I was advised to give up working full time. This was a wrench for us because we loved the people and the place where we were working. It was a big bereavement for us but we gradually adjusted. After we had been here a couple of years, I had a heart-attack but again have lived to tell the tale. I have pursued my love for writing and have been fortunate to have a number of books published. I write and perform poetry locally and further afield. My writing and performing name is Paul Canon Harris - I had no real middle name.

That's quite a lot for you and the family to deal with Paul. You have held firm to your faith?

I am grateful that someone taught me when I was young that being a Christian was not an exemption ticket from suffering. During my curacy we had a still-born son and that hit us hard - but even then, we knew that these things happen, they are part and parcel of a life in beautiful but imperfect world. Through the challenges we have faced we have always sensed God with us - there to ask for help, to thank for good stuff and to shout at when we were hurting. He has been our safety net. Through it all we have sensed Christ's love - often shown through His people.

Paul, thank you so much for talking to us in such an open way, you can be assured our love and prayers will be with you and the family.



You're invited!

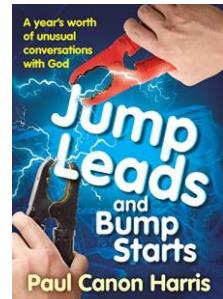
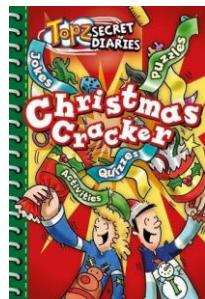
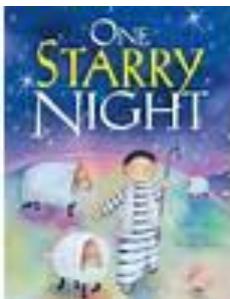
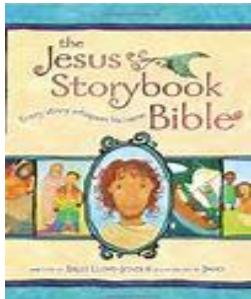
Messy Nativity in the church

15 December 3 - 5pm

Games, craft and fun

*Tea at 3.45 followed by time
to dress up for our nativity service*

All welcome to join us at 4.30



Christmas books for sale - something for everyone - come and have a look

You can see books which tell the Christmas story for children and books for adults to encourage us to read the Bible and get to know God better.

Find them displayed at the back of the church.

They will also be available at Bright Stars toddler group, at Messy Church and at Breakfast @9.

Please see Mary Hogg if you want to buy or request something and see Ann Witts to order Bible notes

Christingle Service

Christmas Eve 3.30pm

Come and join the fun and help us raise funds for the Church of England's Children's Society for their work with vulnerable children.

We look forward to welcoming friends old and new

Why not make it part of your family Christmas celebrations?

