

## Reflection Epiphany

Some thoughts from the Exeter diocesan project [Growing the Rural Church](#), and a prayer from Roots, who provide worship and learning resources: [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com)

This year why not worship...

outdoors like the shepherds, under a beautiful starry

night sky. 🌌

This year why not worship...

outdoors like the angels, singing carols of Good News

up to heaven. 🙌

This year why not worship...

like the Wise Men, on a new outdoor adventure ready

to discover the unexpected. ☀️

This year, Christmas is much like the first; messy, unpredictable, & full of uncertainty. But just like the first Christmas, God is in the middle of the mess, Emmanuel shining brightly in the darkness, bringing the certainty of

Love & Hope. 🕯️

This year look after your flock, & all the angels & wise folk in your community by wearing masks, socially distancing, keeping buildings well ventilated with doors &

windows open, & where you can, meet outside.

Lord God,

you are light in our darkness.

You are purpose in our wandering.

You are revealed in the angel's greeting.

You are known in the acceptance of Mary.

You are felt in the care of Joseph.

You are received in the following of the shepherds.

You are given in the gifts of the magi.

What a blessing you are, Lord God. Amen.

*Fr David*

## Codes for Zoom Evening Prayer, details tbc

**Meeting ID:** 861 6577 7243

**Passcode:** 202677

**Telephone numbers:** 0203 481 5237,  
0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

## NEXT SUNDAY 02.01.2022 Baptism of Christ

**SERVICES:** 10.30am in Church.

**READINGS:** OT Isaiah 43: 1-7  
NT Acts 8: 14-17  
GOSPEL Luke 3: 15-17, 21, 22



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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 2nd January 2022**

## Epiphany

**10.30am in Church**

I hope you survived the week, and therefore not simply to say **Happy Epiphany**, but **Happy New Year**. Let's hope we make progress on a number of fronts in 2022.

I am writing this in advance with no knowledge of any further **Covid restrictions** which may have come into force—and just to say that shows the extent to which we living with uncertainty. We will of course take full cognizance of these, but to note now **my gratitude** that we have a staff team which pulls together, debates openly, and supports our conclusions. And also to add that living with uncertainty over this long period is very draining. So in the spirit of the gifts of Epiphany, one gift you could give yourselves is self-care, and generosity in how we treat ourselves. It is highly likely that this will also spill over into how we treat others.

Please note there will be **no 5pm Zoom service** this evening while we review what we do online.

*Fr David*



## 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. 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.

## Ephesians 3.1–12

This is the reason that 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 to 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 to 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.

## 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, 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.

## Post 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. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

For our services in Church, **mask wearing** is now compulsory. On most Sundays you can also be seated with some social distancing if you wish. Please don't be embarrassed to be safe. If you are coming to coffee, we also recommend wearing a mask until you are seated in the Hall.

**Coffee and tea** will be offered after the 10.30am Mass. It will be served in the Hall. **Volunteers are still required. See Judith.**

**Knit and Natter January 2022** We shall be meeting every Thursday from 10.30 to midday at 19 Maple Road. Details from Jenny on 01392 498725.

**House Group. Begins again on Tuesday 11th January 2022.** We will be comparing other religions with Christianity, new people very welcome!

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will next be receiving donations on **Tuesday 4th January 2022** from 10am-12noon. Thanks to everyone for their generosity in 2021.

**Volunteers are needed to clean the Church nave.** The nave is divided up into small blocks for people to take on and clean about fortnightly. Please see Judith for details.