

Reflection Christmas Day

The Oxen by Thomas Hardy

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel,

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

Happy Christmas to you and yours, and a
blessing for the New Year from the whole
staff team at St Thomas Parish Church.

Fr David



NEXT SUNDAY 01.01.2023 Mary, Mother of God

SERVICES: 10.30am Sung Eucharist in the Hall.

READINGS: OT Numbers 6: 22-27
NT Galatians 4: 4-7
GOSPEL Luke 2: 15-20



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St Thomas, Exeter

25th December 2022

Christmas Day

9.30am in the Hall

Today

9.30am Sung Eucharist.

Bethlehem Carol Sheet

10 Hark, the herald angels sing.

1 O little town of Bethlehem.

51 Away in a manger.

Wednesday 28th December

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 29th December

No St Thomas Tots.

No Knit & Natter. See notices.

Friday 30th December

9.30am Morning Prayer.

10am Staff Meeting.



Collect

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; 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 9: 2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Titus 3: 4-7

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Luke 2: 1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Post Communion

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord.

Amen

NOTICES

For our services, **mask wearing** is not now compulsory but we would still advise it while infection numbers remain high.

Knit and Natter. On Thursdays 29th December and Thursday 5th January 2023 there are no meetings. Thursday 12th January 2023 onwards at 19 Maple Road as usual. Details from Jenny on 01392 498725.

Community Larder is closed until Tuesday 3rd January 2023. On Sundays there will also be an opportunity to bring donations to the 10.30 service. Thanks to everyone who has contributed this year.

House Group Starts again on 10th January 2023 continuing with looking at the songs sung by Zechariah, the Angels, Mary and Simeon. New people are always welcome; see Ian for zoom details.

Our proposal is to stay in the Hall until Palm Sunday.

In the interests of safety we suggest that people should **not work alone in the Church.**

Food Fight (Food for Sundays) are looking for donations of warm clothing, such as hats, gloves, jackets and socks. They are also happy to receive individual-serving bottles/tetra packs of water or juices. **Volunteers are outside Nat West bank on Sunday mornings from 11am-1pm** so any donations can be dropped off there.

Our Christmas Services are:

1st January Mary, Mother of God. 10.30am Sung Eucharist.

8th January Epiphany 10.30am Sung Eucharist.

