

Gabriel's Annunciation

For a moment
I hesitated
on the threshold.
For the space
of a breath
I paused,
unwilling to disturb
her last ordinary moment,
knowing that the next step
would cleave her life:
that this day
would slice her story
in two,
dividing all the days before
from all the ones
to come...

...Yet I tell you
it was I who was dazzled,
I who found myself agape
when I came upon her—
reading, at the loom, in the kitchen,
I cannot now recall;
only that the woman before me—
blessed and full of grace
long before I called her so—
shimmered with how completely
she inhabited herself,
inhabited the space around her,
inhabited the moment
that hung between us.
I wanted to save her
from what I had been sent
to say.

Jan Richardson (edited)

This poem speaks of the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary from the angel's point of view. It speaks of the angel's wonder and tenderness towards Mary, whose life his words will change for ever.

Revd Sarah

Happy
New Year

NEXT SUNDAY 08.01.2023 Epiphany

SERVICES: 10.30am Sung Eucharist in the Hall.

READINGS: OT Isaiah 60: 1-6
NT Ephesians 3: 1-12
GOSPEL Matthew 2: 1-12



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St Thomas, Exeter

1st January 2023

Mary, Mother of God

10.30am in the Hall

Today

10.30am Sung Eucharist.

Hymn Numbers

395 Of the Father's love begotten.

554 While shepherds watched their flocks.

467 Tell out, my soul.

Wednesday 4th January

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 5th January

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots.

No Knit & Natter. See notices.

Friday 6th January

9.30am Morning Prayer.

10am Staff Meeting.



Collect

God our Father may we always have the prayers of the Virgin Mother Mary, that you bring us life and salvation through Jesus Christ her son who lives and reigns with you and the holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

Numbers 6: 22-27

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Galatians 4: 4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 2: 15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child

lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Post Communion

Father, as we proclaim the Virgin Mary to be the mother of Christ and the mother of the Church, may our communion with her son bring us to salvation. We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ our 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 receiving donations on Tuesdays from 10-11am. 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.

St Thomas Tots Group will resume on Thursday 5th January between 9.30 and 11am. The first session is free, then £1 per family including refreshments.

January Craft Hub

Advance notice that the January Craft Hub will be held in the church hall on January 14th between 3 and 5pm.

Simon James, social prescriber at St Thomas Medical Centre, is asking for volunteers on behalf of the **ExwickTwo's Company Befriending Service**. For more information see

<https://linkinglives.uk/project/exwick/>

Our Christmas Services are:

8th January Epiphany 10.30am Sung Eucharist with a Baptism at 12.30pm

