

needed virtue in our search for Christian unity. It calls us to a greater generosity to those in need. The people who showed unusual kindness to Paul and his companions did not yet know Christ, and yet it is through their unusual kindness that a divided people were drawn closer together. Our own Christian unity will be discovered not only through showing hospitality to one another, but also through loving encounters with those who do not share our language, culture or faith. In such tempestuous journeys and chance encounters, God's will for his Church and all people comes to fulfilment. As Paul will proclaim in Rome, this salvation of God has been sent to all peoples (see Acts 28:28).

- ◆ **Connections:** The Archbishop of Canterbury's new year message centred on connecting with people. 'Connections' offers the opportunity to grow in knowledge, understanding and faith by sharing food, fellowship, views and opinions. In the fortnightly evening sessions between now and Lent, we are reflecting on aspects of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Sessions begin with supper at **7:00pm and always end at 9:00pm** and, until the heating is restored, we are meeting in our homes. The first session called '*Spirit of Unity and Diversity*' is on **Wednesday, 22nd January** at the home of Jim and Carole Oliver. If you would like to attend, please have a word with one of them or email Jim (email address below).
- ◆ **New Year Sunday Lunches:** Sue Blore regrets that she has had to cancel the fund raising lunch arranged for 19th January. She will re-arrange the next lunch; watch this space...!



Services/Events next Week

Wednesday, (8th): 12:00 to 3:00pm—**Open Wednesday** with a service at 12:30 followed by Ploughman's Lunch; St Nicolas Church

Sunday, 12th January: Baptism of Christ

10:45: Joint Parish Communion at St Anne's Dropmore [NB: Both congregations at St Anne's; no service at St Nicolas Church, Taplow]

Further information on **St Nicolas Church Website:** <http://st-nicolas-taplow.org>

If you need to **contact the Vicar**, you can ring her on 01628 661182 or email her: janeacresswell523@gmail.com

Notices in the Pew Leaflet: If you have a notice or news for the *Pew Leaflet*, please email it to Jim Oliver (oliverjim1@sky.com) by the end of the Wednesday preceding the Sunday

We are part of

St Anne's Church, Littleworth Common

St Nicolas' Church, Taplow

Epiphany

Sunday, 5th January, 2020

Faithful to God

Caring for each other

Serving the Community

Welcome to this morning's Holy Communion Service. At St Nicolas, children are invited to our Sunday School at the end of the first hymn. Pending the replacement of our heating system, we have temporary heaters: **Parents and carers are asked to keep children away from these gas heaters on both sides of our church.**



Collect (or Prayer for Today)

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.

First Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12 *Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles*

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 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 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.

The Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12 *The Visit of the Wise Men*

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.



Anthem: *From the rising of the sun* Frederick Ouseley

Post Communion Prayer

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.

This Week's News and Notices

- ◆ **Sunday school at St Nicolas restarts today:** Pam has kindly agreed to continue taking our Sunday School on the first Sunday of each month and Caroline is going to lead it on the third Sunday of the month. The fourth Sunday is always Worship for All so we now just require support for the **second Sunday in the month** (not this month). Jane has material available to help those who are new or feel inexperienced at this task.



- It is a very important job welcoming children and families, and helping our children begin to understand our faith and enjoy being part of this worshipping community. Is God calling you? Please speak to Jane today or call her on 01628 661182.
- ◆ **Open Wednesday:** This restarts on this **Wednesday (8th)** at the usual time.
- ◆ **Next Sunday (12th):** Jane is away on holiday next Sunday and given the lack of heating at St Nicolas, there will be **one joint Parish Eucharist at 10.45am at St Anne's** with our choir and organist at which we will welcome the Rev'd Sue Smith to preside and preach.
- ◆ **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: 18th to 25th January.** This year, St Nicolas has the honour of hosting Prayers for Christian Unity for our local Churches Together as part of the Open Wednesday Eucharist on **Wednesday 22nd January**. We are also invited to join with Churches Together at **3pm on Sunday 19th January** - venue to be advised. This year material for prayer has been provided by Churches Together in Malta and Gozo. On 10th February, many Christians in Malta celebrate the Feast of the Shipwreck of St Paul, marking and giving thanks for the arrival of Christian faith on these islands. The reading from the Acts of the Apostles used for the feast is the text chosen for this year's Week of Prayer. Hospitality is a much