

Dear Friends,

This week in our gospel reading, taken from John's gospel, we revisit the scene of Jesus' first miracle, the wedding at Cana in Galilee. It is here that we find one of my favourite exchanges between Jesus and Mary: *'When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'* This exchange reminds me of Jesus' humanity, being a typical son wishing to assert his autonomy from his mother, alongside Mary's motherly knowledge of Jesus that means she knows that he will respond to her request! The servants though, had a choice, and they choose to follow his instructions. As a consequence, at a time of great need, they are part of a miracle revealing the glory of God. We find ourselves in a time of great need and like the servants we too have a choice. As we make that choice, if we are courageous enough to follow the call and instructions of Jesus, we too may find ourselves playing a part in a miracle. What a wonderful opportunity to make a difference. Rev Dan



## A Message of Hope for 2021

This time last year as we stood at the beginning of a new decade, we were full of hope. Messages from the East were suggesting that there was a new virus emerging but none of us thought it would travel so far and have such a world-wide impact.

This past year has seen us move from imagining all that might be, to coping with unimaginable loss...

The loss of life... some of us have grieved the loss of a life cut short, a loved one for whom the usual patterns of mourning could not be shared

The loss of livelihoods... some of us have lost jobs, careers, prospects for the future, hopes and dreams which have been savagely squashed

The loss of lifestyle... many of us have struggled with the loss of social interaction, sports we enjoy, festivals, theatre, gigs, feasts, company we keep, family and friends we can no longer meet through lockdown

So much loss... and yet for some, new possibilities have been glimpsed... a world where value is placed on care rather than cost, where the beauty of a world free from harmful emissions has been glimpsed.

And here we now are at the beginning of 2021 at the moment when the Church remembers the messengers from the East who came, not with dire warnings but with hope for the future. They had seen a star, a light in the darkness, which inspired them with promise.

And we too, have a hope and promise held out to us in the shape of the vaccine as we look into this new year. But of course, there's still a long way to go...! That was true for the Magi too. In following that star, they had no idea where it would take them, what they would find, but hope drove them on.

It was a journey that probably took them well over a year, just as our Covid journey seems to lengthen, they must have at times felt like giving up. They took some wrong turns, visiting Herod in the Palace, but eventually found the hoped-for Prince. Not as expected, in a palace of plenty but rather in a place of poverty.

I can't predict the twists and turns of this year for any of us. I don't know what the future might hold for you, but I do know who holds that future. The Magi discovered a God who didn't distance Himself but chose to share in our world with us, born as a baby, vulnerable, poor, dependent on others, and yet with the power to bring healing, hope and a future for each of us. Forgiveness for our failures and the prospect of a new start when all seems lost.

The journey we take to discover that Christ child will last a lifetime. Knowing God's presence with us won't prevent future calamities but we will have the grace and spirit to face them and to discover new possibilities of joy.

Bishop Ruth

## COLLECTS AND READINGS

**24<sup>th</sup> January 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany Genesis 14.17-20; Revelation 19.6-10; John 2.1-11**

**Collect:** God of all mercy, your Son proclaimed good news to the poor, release to the captives, and freedom to the oppressed: anoint us with your Holy Spirit and set all your people free to praise you in Christ our Lord.

**Post Communion:** Almighty Father, whose Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

**31<sup>st</sup> January Candlemas Malachi 3.1-5; Hebrews 2.14-end; Luke 2.22-40**

**Collect:** Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations and glory of Israel: make your home among us, and present us pure and holy to your heavenly Father, your God, and our God.

**Post Communion:** Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

### Our Pastoral Prayers

*To include somebody on this prayer list please let Liz in the office know by 8am on Friday, making sure the person you wish to be included wants their name in print.*



#### Marriage

Couples preparing for marriage and those recently married, also for those who have had to postpone their special day due to current circumstances.

#### Baptisms:

We pray for all parents and godparents, including those who have had to postpone their service due to current circumstances.

#### Those in need of our prayers:

Margaret Moyle, Hazel, Christine Marston, Val & George Crawford, Maureen & Ian Thompson, Pete, Brenda, Olive, Victoria Yasenko, Bishop Peter Hancock, Gloria Vivash, Audrey Lomax.

#### For those who have died:

We pray for those who have recently died and their loved ones who grieve their loss.

Pamela Puddy



#### Those whose anniversary falls this week:

George Dickson, Barbara Reed, Ann Ring, Barbara Stone

## PRAYER FOCUS

### **Sunday:**

*For those we would normally sit alongside in church and their families*

### **Monday:**

*For all key workers who are continuing to work at this time*

### **Tuesday:**

*For all affected by COVID-19, those who have contracted the virus, those who have lost their lives and all who are grieving, worried or anxious*

### **Wednesday:**

*For Bishop Peter as he continues his treatment, and Bishop Ruth as she assumes increased responsibilities*

### **Thursday:**

*For our friends in Mark and the Huntspills' as they prepare to welcome Rev'd Christine Judson as their new Rector*

### **Friday:**

*For Martin, Hannah, Aidan and Amy as they continue to prepare to join us here in Highbridge in March*

### **Saturday:**

*For all who are feeling lonely and isolated at this time*

### Who's Who at St John's:

Vicar: Vacant

Curate: Rev'd Dan Crouch 325194

Churchwardens: Chris Perry 783753

Jenny Dolan 785935

As a consequence of the national lockdown our church buildings are once again closed for worship.

St John's is, however, open for unsupervised private prayer at the following times:

Thursday 10am – 2pm

Sunday 2pm-4pm

We will keep you informed of any further plans as they develop.

Help raise funds for St. John's Church  
Doing your shopping online?

We have signed St. John's up to easyfundraising to help raise some much-needed funds. It's easy and free to use.

Visit [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) choose St. John's, Highbridge as your cause to support then join up for free.

Search and visit retailers (Over 4,000 online retailers including John Lewis, Argos, Uswitch, eBay, and M&S are ready to give your cause a free donation) and shop online as usual.

We will receive free donations from retailers when purchases are made through the easyfundraising website.

## Service of Welcome



Rev Martin Little will be licensed as Priest in Charge via Zoom on the 18<sup>th</sup> March by Bishop Ruth and a service in Church to induct, institute and install Martin as Vicar of Highbridge will take place at a later date when it is safe to do so.

If you need any practical help or assistance during the Coronavirus pandemic there is a designated helpline and email address available.

**01278 787852**

[burnhamandhighbridge@gmail.com](mailto:burnhamandhighbridge@gmail.com)

## OFFICE OPENING

Wednesday 9.30am – 2.45pm

Friday 9.30am -2.45pm

Term time only

With the ongoing restrictions Liz is continuing to work from home but can be emailed anytime [stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com) or contacted on her new number 01278 326344



## Calling all knitters



As we are now in another lock down, we have decided to release this years Christmas knitted gift pattern so if you or anyone you know would like to knit for us and would like the pattern please email the parish office

[stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsofficehighbridge@gmail.com)

# CALENDAR

## JANUARY 2021

Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Epiphany 2pm – 4pm Church open for prayer

Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm Church open for prayer

Sun 31<sup>st</sup> Candlemas 2pm – 4pm Church open for prayer

## FEBRUARY 2021

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm Church open for prayer

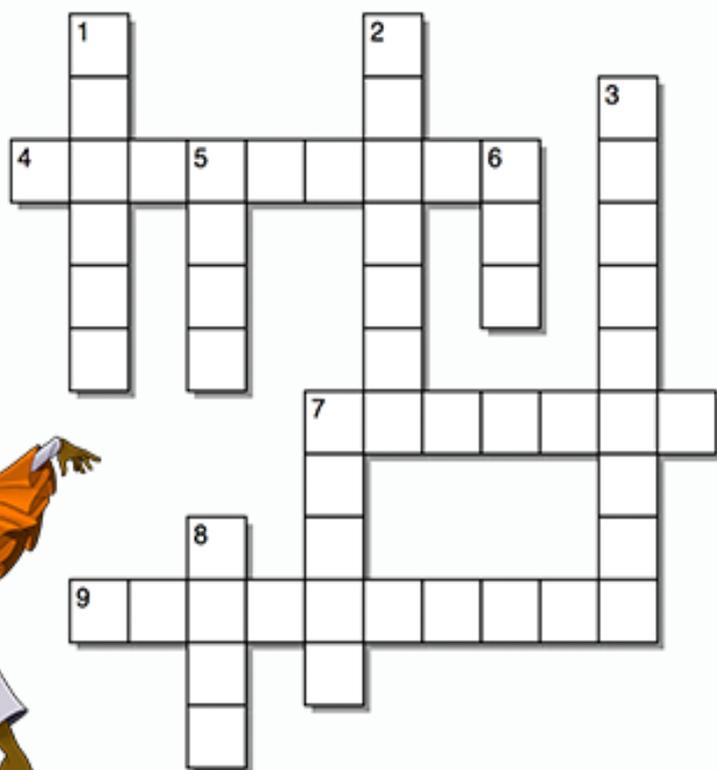
Sun 7<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent 2pm – 4pm Church open for prayer



# Bible Pathway Adventures

CROSSWORD

## WEDDING FEAST AT CANA



### ACROSS

- 4) Yeshua and His \_\_\_\_\_ were invited to the wedding. (John 2:2 ESV)  
7) Yeshua was invited to a \_\_\_\_\_. (John 2:1 ESV)  
9) "The master of the feast called the \_\_\_\_\_." (John 2:9 ESV)

### DOWN

- 1) Each stone jar held twenty or \_\_\_\_ gallons. (John 2:6 ESV)  
2) The city of Cana was located in this area. (John 2:1 ESV)  
3) After the wedding, Yeshua went to which village? (John 2:12 ESV)  
5) On the third day there was a wedding at \_\_\_\_ in Galilee. (John 2:1 ESV)  
6) There were \_\_\_\_ stone water jars. (John 2:6 ESV)  
7) Yeshua told the servants to fill six jars with this liquid. (John 2:7 ESV)  
8) The water turned into \_\_\_\_\_. (John 2:9 ESV)