



CANALSIDE NEWS

SUNDAY 9th JANUARY 2022

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

**THIS
SUNDAY**

HOLY COMMUNION

10.30am St Michael's, Hilperton

**JOINT ANNUAL COVENANT /
COMMUNION SERVICE**

3pm St George's, Semington

The Service at St Michael's will be filmed and available to watch online on Sunday afternoon.

Here is the link to watch the service together with any of our pre-recorded services:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS6_E8D47JK0aDFP89UvBrQ

READINGS FOR THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION AT ST MICHAEL'S

The Collect (a special prayer for this Sunday)

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



A Prayer of Spiritual Communion

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits
you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly,
and follow you more
nearly, day by day. Amen.

The 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. **Amen**

The New Testament Reading: Ephesians 3.1-12

3 When I think of all this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles . . . ² assuming, by the way, that you know God gave me the special responsibility of extending his grace to you Gentiles. ³ As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me. ⁴ As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. ⁵ God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets.

⁶ And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus. ⁷ By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.

⁸ Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. ⁹ I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning.

¹⁰ God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹² Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence.

The Gospel: Matthew 2.1-12

2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem,

asking, ² “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

³ King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. ⁴ He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶ ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
are not least among the ruling cities of Judah,
for a ruler will come from you
who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”

⁷ Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. ⁸ Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

⁹ After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹ They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

READINGS FOR THE COVENANT SERVICE AT ST GEORGE'S

The Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 31.31-34

31 "The days are coming," declares the LORD,

"when I will make a new covenant

with the people of Israel

and with the people of Judah.

32 It will not be like the covenant

I made with their ancestors

when I took them by the hand

to lead them out of Egypt,

because they broke my covenant,

though I was a husband to them,"

declares the LORD.

33 "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel

after that time," declares the LORD.

"I will put my law in their minds

and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,

and they will be my people.

34 No longer will they teach their neighbour,

or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,'

because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest,"

declares the LORD.

"For I will forgive their wickedness

and will remember their sins no more."

The Gospel: John 15.1-10

5 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the

branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

⁵“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

⁹“I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.

This Week’s Reflection by Claire

What an incredible journey!

Miles and miles of inhospitable, rough terrain. Hot by day and freezing cold by night. Yet with grit and determination, the wise men follow that bright, shining, guiding star; the one they had spotted in the night sky.

This is a story about how God calls people...all people...on a journey.

The wise men dare to make a journey, an incredible journey, which not only changes their lives but also helps to point others to Jesus, the Messiah, the king. The hope and light for all people – all nations...Jews and non-Jews, or Gentiles, alike.

This isn’t an easy journey for the wise men to take...

They almost certainly would have questioned the meaning of the dazzling star enticing them to leave, as they gaze into the night sky. It must have seemed beyond belief mustn't it?

What a strange idea that a star can lead them to the place where the Messiah is.

But they diligently weigh up the evidence before them and carefully interpret the signs that lead them to believe that there is a new king being born in Bethlehem.

They are so convinced that they put aside any doubts...refuse to be distracted by what others may think of them. Their plan could so easily have attracted ridicule and derision couldn't it?

Then they have to face all the preparations, as they put all their affairs in order.

For the wise men, the journey involves leaving their country and all that is familiar to them; their homes and their families.

In those days, travelling is risky, dangerous and unpredictable. There is always the possibility that they might never return.

How many of us here, would volunteer to ride atop a smelly old camel... for days on end?!

Just incredible... don't you think!

They could have so easily given up then, couldn't they? Would you?

So, why didn't they?

Just who are these wise men prepared to take on an incredible journey, not only to the stable but also returning a different and unfamiliar way to avoid bumping into Herod again and being forced to spill the beans on the whereabouts of the holy child?

Truth is, we don't know. There is little evidence.

We do know that they were gentiles, outside the boundaries of the Jewish tradition and that they hailed from the East.

We tend to think of them as three in number because we hear about three gifts - gold, frankincense and myrrh.

But there could have been any number.

Storytellers have named them Melchior, Caspar (or Gaspar), and Balthasar, but those names are not found in scripture, and first appear in a mosaic in a 6th-century church in Ravenna, Italy. It's interesting isn't it?

We also tend to refer to them as kings, as we sang in our carol today. This is a reference to Psalm 72, which speaks of Kings of Tarshish, Sheba and Seba bringing gifts and to Isaiah in the Old Testament, where the people of Sheba bring gold and frankincense.

We think of them as astronomers or astrologers because they are observing stars, then considered a learned occupation, whose astrological charts predict the birth of a child born to be king

The Jewish people would have been suspicious of these gentiles, and their determination to look to the stars for answers. To the Jewish people only God has the answers. From their perspective they would have seen the wise men as being about as far from the Kingdom of God as you could possibly get. What on earth would they know about the Messiah? After all, they know nothing of the scriptures.

But the Gospel writer, Matthew, shows us through the story of the wise men how Jesus the Messiah brings salvation...hope... to those considered beyond the scope of God's interest.

The wise men stand in stark contrast to the religious people of the day.

The Jewish chief priests and scribes are well versed in the Scriptures. They profess to have faith in God and have even worked out that the Messiah is a stone's throw away from them. Just 5 miles down the road in Bethlehem.

Yet they fail to make even this short and relatively straightforward journey to meet with Jesus, and witness the new thing which God is doing in their midst. What a missed opportunity. What were they thinking?

The wise men don't have their religious advantages, it's true. They don't have the prophecies to guide them. But they learn about God in a different way. God meets them where they are and speaks to them in a way that they can understand; through the familiar, their study of the stars.

The wise men are open to God showing them a new thing in an extraordinary way. They learn something surprising which encourages them to make their incredible journey.

God, by connecting with them, invites them on in a journey in a way that they could hardly have anticipated. A far greater journey, not only in miles but also in their minds and hearts, to follow the star and find the Christ child.

So...what kind of journey is God asking of us this year, as we continue to face the challenges of this covid crisis?

It may seem impossible – and perhaps even foolish – to even consider making an unknown journey. But that's ok – God doesn't ask us to do

the impossible. God knows what is happening in our lives and is there with us every step of the way.

Just look at the incredible journey we've already made, with God, as a community.

In this current climate, it seemed incredible that we would be able to pay our parish share. But by working together, with God, we are able to celebrate the good news that we have raised enough funds to pay our way.

And what of those acts of loving kindness which have been offered to those in need. There have been many who have gone the extra mile to give solace to the isolated and alone; helping people to get their vaccines, being a friendly listener over a cup of tea and intrepid shopper.

And supporting our church family and our communities has encouraged people to embark on a new and exciting journey exploring how to offer their gifts in new ways...from lay pastoral assistants, to readers and home group leaders to name a few.

We've offered new ways to help people to connect with God through worship – from many different services to home communion and online acts of worship, so that all have the opportunity to belong.

So you see we don't have to find a metaphorical smelly old camel and journey to faraway places...we can follow God's star right here...right now...in our communities.

For every journey with God, no matter how short or how long, can be incredible...

Are we open to recognising God's invitation to follow the bright, shining, guiding star that is Jesus?

What incredible journey are we willing to make with God this year?

A reminder: Next of kin contact

Many thanks to those of you who have already done this but for those of you who haven't here's a reminder: If you attend church or other Benefice events on your own you might like to consider giving us contact details for your next of kin who we could contact in the unlikely event of an emergency. These details will be kept securely and will only be used for the purpose set out above. The Ministry Team, Administrator, Church Wardens and Deputy Wardens will have access to the details should they be needed. If this is something you would like to do please let Michael have one or two contacts giving their name, their telephone number(s) and their relationship to you.

100 Club

Congratulations to Margaret Hulbert the winner of the December 100 Club Draw and the £50 prize. If you would like to join the club, supporting St Michael's and St Mary Magdalen's Churches please contact Michael.

Do you know your body ?

Valerie Sims has been busy again and very kindly produced a new quiz sheet for us all to puzzle over in the coming weeks. This time the theme is "Do you know your body ?" Most of the clues are general knowledge, anagrams, hidden words and a few cryptic ones. If you would like a copy please contact Michael and let him have the entry fee of £2. Closing date: 28/02/2022. The winner will receive £15, 2nd £10 & 3rd £5. All the proceeds will go towards the upkeep and maintenance of St Mary Magdalen's Church in Horse Road, Hilperton and St Michael and All Angels' Church in the Knap, Hilperton.

Your Christmas postage stamps

A New Year perhaps a new resolution to save stamps for Marilyn to send to the Bible Society so they will be able to raise funds. Thank you to all those who have given me so many stamps so far. Please keep them coming. Marilyn

Prayer Requests

It is important that we pray for all those who seek our support, especially at this time. Please let Michael know of anyone who particularly needs our prayers. Do ensure that you have their permission.

This week we pray for..

Amelia-Lily and family
Andrew Margetts
Barbara & David
Beryl Curtis
Chris
Colin Jackson
Collette Miyagawa
David Franklin
David and Audrey
Sheppard
Deanna and Family
Debbie &
Sam and Family
Doreen
Doris and Arthur Walker
Hannah, Ash & Oliver
Holly Thompson



*St Mary Magdalen's
Hilperton*

Iris Webb
James Vincent
Jess Humphries
John
Lilly & Phil
Margaret Hulbert
Mike Aldridge
Nancy Leonard
Ottie
Pat & Stan Thompson
Pauline Burbidge
Phyl Brown
Rosa Light
Roselyne Mélan
Rosie Alice & Mark
Sophia & Family
Winnie Curtis

- We pray for all those who mourn but particularly at this time for Iris Webb and her family following the passing of Paddy earlier this week.

- The Diocese as we await the announcement of who the 79th Bishop of Salisbury will be.
- Let us thank God for the continuation of the vaccination programme and the ray of hope it brings to all our lives.
- We pray for our schools as Term 3 begins and all the challenges that will inevitably bring.
- Please pray for all those grieving at this time around the world for all those who have died from the Coronavirus.
- Lord we bring before you all those suffering from the effects of Coronavirus in any way and thank you for the NHS, scientists, health professionals, politicians and key workers working so hard to help us through the crisis.



HILPERTON AND STAVERTON CALENDAR 2022
 Sold to raise funds for the Churches of Hilpertown and Staverton (St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road and St Michael & All Angels' in the Knap)
 Many thanks to all those who donated photographs to all our seasons and to my wife Sue Wilson - The Judge

£10

Through the Seasons

NOW ON SALE!

Hilpertown and Staverton Churches have produced a photo calendar for 2022. 12 seasonal views taken locally by people in our communities. An ideal gift for this Christmas. If you would like a copy just contact Michael Gamble on 07795400262 or at canalsideoffice@gmail.com. £5 from each copy sold will go to St Michael and All Angels' Church in the Knap, Hilpertown and St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road, Hilpertown. The other £5 is the cost of printing.

We have now sold all our initial supply of calendars but we have placed another order and they should be with us shortly so if you would like a copy please get in touch with Michael as soon as possible. The cost is £10 each. 50% of sales will go to St Michael's and St Mary Magdalen's. The other 50% is production costs.

Calendar 2023!

We plan to have another Hilperton and Staverton through the Seasons Calendar next year – so why not start taking your photos now?

Prayer for our Churches and Community

Saturday 15th January from 0915-1000 via zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81266654491>

All welcome for a time of quiet reflection followed by prayer for our ministry and the world as we start a New Year.

DATES FOR DIARIES					
Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
FEB	Su	6 th	1500	EBONITE CONCERT	St Mary Magdalen's



Month	Day	Date	Time	Event details	Location
JAN	Tu	11 th	0930	Hilperton/Staverton Morning Prayer https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88326941179	Online
	W	12 th	1000	Midweek Communion	St Michael's
	Th	13 th	0900	Semington Morning Prayer https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84008141990	Online
			1430 1600	Friendship Group	St Mary Magdalen's
	F	14 th	0915 1045	Toddlers@the Tin	St Mary Magdalen's
	Sa	15 th	0915 1000	Prayer for our Churches and Community https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81266654491	Online

Sunday
16th
January

HOLY COMMUNION
9.15am St George's, Semington

CELTIC COMMUNION
10.30am St Mary Magdalen's

FOODBANKS UPDATE

TROWBRIDGE STOREHOUSE: Many thanks to Bill who continues to collect donated items from the church porches & take them directly to Storehouse. Storehouse sends a Happy New year to All their Supporters and Clients. This week the food bank needs **Basic items, Sugar, Tinned meat pies, Tinned Macaroni and cheese, Tinned meat and any unused, unwanted Christmas goodies such as biscuits, crackers etc**

If you prefer you can make a one off financial donation or support Trowbridge Storehouse regularly, please follow the link below and select storehouse.

<https://westwiltsvineyard.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/zk54op3a>

A Community Lunch is now held on a Wednesday, instead of soup and sandwich.

MELKSHAM FOODBANK: is particularly requesting **sugar, custard, tinned fruit, rice pudding and tinned meat (eg stew or curry)**. Please take your donations to the Somerset Arms any time or to the church porch as close before 6pm on a Wednesday as possible. Please continue to support the work of both our local foodbanks.

Find details on our Facebook page & our website:

www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk

BENEFACT CONTACTS:

Rector: Rev. John Rees 01225 764365 canalsiderector@gmail.com

Curate: Rev. Joy Albone 07931638524 canalsidecurate@gmail.com

Other clergy:

Rev Hugh Hoskins 01225 781579 hughhoskins9@gmail.com

Rev. Jill Perrett revjperrett@hotmail.co.uk

Licensed Lay Ministers: Claire Horton canalsideclaire@gmail.com

Marilyn Stubbs 01225 753118

Office: Michael Gamble 07795400262 canalsideoffice@gmail.com



SUNDAY SERVICES



Sunday
9th
January

HOLY COMMUNION
10.30am St Michael's, Hilperton

**JOINT ANNUAL COVENANT /
COMMUNION SERVICE**
3pm St George's, Semington

Sunday
16th
January

HOLY COMMUNION
9.15am St George's, Semington

CELTIC COMMUNION
10.30am St Mary Magdalen's

Sunday
23rd
January

HOLY COMMUNION
10.30am St Michael's, Hilperton

CHRISTINGLE TEA@theTIN
4pm St Mary Magdalen's