

News and Prayer Update for 10th January

Rostherne with Bollington, St John High Legh and St Paul Over Tabley

www.rosthernewithbollington.co.uk
www.stjohnshighleggh.org
www.stpaulsovertabley.co.uk

Vicar: Revd Philip Robinson, Tel: 01565 830 595
Email: robinsonpj50@gmail.com

Assoc. Priest: Revd Trish Cope, Tel: 07703 470101
Email: trishcope2012@btinternet.com

Curate: Revd Patricia Robinson, Tel: 01565 830 595
Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

Reader: Mrs Chris Stanisstreet Tel: 01925 755 559
Email: stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

Pastoral Worker: Mr Stewart Jackson Tel: 07835 249 835

Do You Need to Talk To Someone? Call any of the above, we have other people who are also experienced in listening who are willing to help, so **please do call, we are here for you.** All conversations are in strict confidence.



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Link for this week's Service: <https://youtu.be/Otpkjm5XezE>

HYMN: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (Charles Coffin 1676-1749
translated by John Chandler 1806-1876)

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh.
Awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Saviour, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward.
Without your grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and make us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine
and fill the world with love divine.

All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

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Collect for The Baptism of Christ:

Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;
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.

Psalm: Psalm 29

- 1 Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven, ♦
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name; ♦
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; ♦
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

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- 4 The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; ♦
the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; ♦
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf ♦
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the Lord splits the flash of lightning; the voice of the Lord shakes
the wilderness; ♦
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare; ♦
in his temple all cry, 'Glory!'
- 9 The Lord sits enthroned above the water flood; ♦
the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.
- 10 The Lord shall give strength to his people; ♦
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

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First reading: Genesis 1: 1 – 5

- 1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,
2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a
wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
3 Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.
4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the
darkness.
5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening
and there was morning, the first day.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1: 4 – 11

- 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins.
5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem
were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their
sins.
6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and
he ate locusts and wild honey.
7 He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not
worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.
8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'
9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in
the Jordan.
10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and
the Spirit descending like a dove on him.
11 And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well
pleased.'

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.
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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS from Christ Stanisstreet, Reader

“The Baptism of Jesus”

Imagine you're fast asleep, happily dreaming in your cosy bed, then suddenly your mother bursts into your bedroom shouting, sprinkling water over your face, telling you to wake up and get up, you'll be late.

John the Baptist in today's reading was like your mum. His wake-up call ministry burst in on a surprised Jewish world. Since the time of patriarchs and prophets they had been expecting a sign from God that the Messiah was coming but didn't expect to be told to get baptismally washed in the Jordan and repent of their sins.

Repentance means to turn around and go the right way. John was telling the Jews they needed to be ready to meet the person much greater than him. What John did with water the “coming one” would do with the Holy Spirit.

So, why did Jesus, the one without any sin, ask John to baptise him? It seems to be illogical however, on reflection there were several good reasons.

A moment of decision

For thirty years Jesus had remained in Nazareth, carried out daily chores and engaged in family life. The emergence of John the Baptist was a sign that it was time to make a decision, to leave the comfort of home and meet the challenge of his God given commission.

In all our lives there come times of decision or rejection. Maybe, whether or not to have children. Following a holiday in The Gambia, my husband and I saw first hand understaffed, poorly resourced schools, which eventually led to my decision to temporarily leave my comfortable home life and well paid job to become a VSO volunteer for 2 years in rural Namibia.

A moment of identification

Though Jesus was sinless his baptism was not for his own sake but rather to enable him to identify with others who had chosen to repent and follow God's ways.

There may have been times in your lives when you identified with a movement not for your sake but to support others. Through supporting those working for climate change at present, we may not see immediate advantages to our lives but hopefully future generations will benefit.

A moment of approval

Jesus made a momentous decision and no doubt looked for God's approval. Jews believed in a series of Heavens with God sitting in the highest one in a light that no-one could approach. On rare occasions the Heavens opened and God spoke to people in a distant voice but spoke directly to Jesus: “*This is my Son the beloved*”. At baptism Jesus submitted his decision to God which was unmistakably approved. When the living God looks at us, at every baptised and believing Christian, he says to us what he said to Jesus on the day he was baptised: “*You are my dear child; I am delighted with you.*” He sees us not as we see ourselves but as we are in Christ.

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A moment of empowerment

The God who called forth light from the primordial waters as we heard in our Genesis reading, is the same God who calls us to new birth in the waters of baptism. The Holy Spirit who swept over the primordial waters descended on Jesus in the waters of the Jordan and named him “beloved.” It descended on Jesus like a dove empowering him for his mission just as it empowered the disciples at Pentecost and empowers us today.

Doves are symbols of gentleness. Jesus went on to conquer but that conquest was one of love. In the waters of baptism, God names us “beloved” and then calls us to live out our new birth as his children, in the name of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In these challenging times we are surrounded by generous humanitarian care for others. In recent history there has never been such a need for us to reach out with love, further than we have ever done, into our communities and world.

Like Jesus, we need to make the decision to act, identify ourselves as the body of Christ, know that we have God’s approval and the empowerment of his Holy Spirit within us. Amen

HYMN: Hail to the Lord’s Anointed (Godfrey Thring 1823 – 1903)

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free,
To take away transgression, and rule in equity.

He comes in succor speedy to those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong.
To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in His sight.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth,
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.
Before him on the mountains shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness in fountains from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall bow down before him, and gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him, his praise all peoples sing:
To him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend;
His kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious, he on his throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious, all-blessing and all-blest:
The tide of time shall never His covenant remove.
His Name shall stand forever, the changeless name of love.

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STORYTELLING SERVICE LINK: <https://youtu.be/jZPeEEPTuV4>

Service sheet and craft ideas available by emailing Revd Patricia.

PRAYER in the coming week:

Intercessions (coronavirus) from Church of England website – SET B

Let us pray to the Lord,
who is our refuge and stronghold.
For the health and well-being of our nation,
that all who are fearful and anxious
may be at peace and free from worry:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs,
and care for them in their vulnerability:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For a blessing on our local community,
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,
where all are known and cared for:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Prayer for January

Thank you for bringing us to the beginning of another New Year. Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Emmanuel, is your gift to us not just at Christmas, but throughout the year.

Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit and help us to keep following you. Thank you that you are with us in our times of difficulty as well as our joys and celebrations and that you never leave us but always care.

Please guide us through 2021 and help us to bring our prayers to you.

Amen

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NOTICES

❖ **Services are currently able to be held, although further restrictions may be required in the future!**

FACE COVERINGS – These are still mandatory in places of worship. Please come prepared. (Please inform the clergy if you are exempt from wearing a face covering and do let the service leader know if you lip read).

Sunday 10th January: The Baptism of Christ

10.00 Holy Communion at St John High Legh

11.00 Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Little Bollington

11.00 Annual Plough Service at St Paul Over Tabley (**Booking Essential**)

To book for the Annual Plough Service, please contact Revd Patricia Robinson to ensure that you have places reserved for you. Phone: 01565 830 595; Text: 07854 418 488; Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com

Sunday 17th January:

10.00 Holy Communion at St John High Legh

10.30 Holy Communion at St Mary Rostherne

Wednesday Mornings

09.00 Celtic Morning Prayer at St John High Legh

It is important that no one feels they must come to services if they are reluctant to – please keep yourselves safe.

We will continue to stream a service each Sunday (often recorded at St Paul's)

❖ **Coffee and Chat Wednesday 13th January:** We are having a Zoom Coffee and Chat meeting on Wednesday mornings from 11.00 am to 12.00 noon.

Just click on the link below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89014498190?pwd=WXJWU0JySGNqR05VRU1qOE1jbGwxQT09>

If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Patricia.
Email: pmrobinson51@gmail.com or Tel: 01565 830 595

❖ **Christingle Service in the United Benefice:**



Our final Christingle Service is on:
Sunday 24 January at St Paul Over Tabley.

An online Christingle Service is available at: <https://youtu.be/1CHlvU77fAg>

We also have our own Christingle giving page with the Children's Society so if you would like to make a donation to the Children's Society go to:

<https://thyg.uk/CUS047758> **Please note there was a digit missing from the link so if you tried and didn't get through to it please try again.**

❖ **Join the Prayer Chain:**

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Our Reader, Chris Stanisstreet has organised a **Prayer Chain** which is done by email and telephone. The idea behind this, is that when a specific prayer request is made, it is passed on by group e-mail to the people on the list who then pray for the particular situation.

If you would like to receive prayer requests or would like to make a prayer request, please let Chris Stanisstreet know:

Tel: 01925 755559; Mob 07918 981 723; stanbess2003@yahoo.co.uk

❖ **Offering and Fund Raising** – Please continue to give if you can

❖ **Knutsford Food Bank**

Now the New Year is here please help us support the Knutsford Food Bank by bringing items to church or asking us to collect them for The Welcome - the New Year is a time when families and people in need can find themselves in difficulty. Contact Revd Patricia for more information or collection of items.

❖ **Homemade Jams For Sale:**

There are various Jams and Marmalade available at prices between £2.00 / £3.00 per jar depending on size, either from St Mary's or by telephoning the Vicarage- we will deliver them to you.

St Paul's are offering: Strawberry, Gooseberry, Damson or Strawberry, Greengage and Gooseberry jams.

St Mary's are offering: Strawberry, Rhubarb & Ginger, Rhubarb Jelly, Redcurrant Jelly, Marmalade and Yellow Raspberry.

❖ **Morning and Night Prayer**

If anyone does not yet have access to the "Worship at Home" booklet containing the Order of Service for Morning Prayer or Night Prayer, please contact the Vicarage, as there are large print copies and ordinary size ones that can be posted out or versions that can be e-mailed.

Bible Readings and Psalms for the Coming Week from the Lectionary.

Here are some suggestions for more Psalms and Bible readings to use with Morning and Night Prayer:

Readings for Morning Prayer: These readings usually follow on from each other so you get a bit more of the story each day (except on special Saints Days).

Mon 11th Jan – Psalm 2 or 80; Amos: Chapter 1; 1 Corinthians 1: 1-17

Tues 12th Jan – Psalm 8; Amos chapter 2; 1 Corinth 1: 18-end

Wed 13th Jan – Psalm 20; Amos Chapter 3; 1 Corinthians Chap 2

Thurs 14th Jan – Psalm 21; Amos Chapter 4; 1 Corinthians Chap 3

Fri 15th Jan – Psalm 67; Amos 5: 1-17; 1 Corinthians Chap 4

Sat 16th Jan – Psalm 33; Amos 5: 18-end; 1 Corinthians Chap 5

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Readings for Night Prayer (for Epiphany)

Short Reading:

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. (Titus 2.11)

Psalm 16

- 1 Preserve me, O God, for in you have I taken refuge; ♦
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my lord, all my good depends on you.'
- 2 All my delight is upon the godly that are in the land, ♦
upon those who are noble in heart.
- 3 Though the idols are legion that many run after, ♦
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, neither make mention of their names
upon my lips.
- 4 The Lord himself is my portion and my cup; ♦
in your hands alone is my fortune.
- 5 My share has fallen in a fair land; ♦
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
- 6 I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel, ♦
and in the night watches he instructs my heart.
- 7 I have set the Lord always before me; ♦
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.
- 8 Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoices; ♦
my flesh also shall rest secure.
- 9 For you will not abandon my soul to Death, ♦
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.
- 10 You will show me the path of life; in your presence is the fullness of joy ♦
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Collect:

King of kings and Lord of lords,
making the true light to shine:
lighten our darkness now and evermore
that with our lips and in our lives
we may praise you;
for you are our God, now and for ever.

Blessing:

May the living waters of Christ cleanse us,
may the Spirit descend upon us,
and the blessing of God be with us
this night and always.