

News and Prayer Update for 24th 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 recorded service is: <https://youtu.be/sLiVQEyi4L0>

HYMN: Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! (Reginald Heber 1783-1826)

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy, there is none beside thee
perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
all thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

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Collect for Third Sunday of Epiphany

Almighty God,
whose Son revealed in signs and miracles
the wonder of your saving presence:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness
sustain us by your mighty power;
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 128

- 1 Blessed are all those who fear the Lord, ♦
and walk in his ways.
- 2 You shall eat the fruit of the toil of your hands; ♦
it shall go well with you, and happy shall you be.
- 3 Your wife within your house shall be like a fruitful vine; ♦
your children round your table, like fresh olive branches.
- 4 Thus shall the one be blest ♦
who fears the Lord.
- 5 The Lord from out of Zion bless you, ♦
that you may see Jerusalem in prosperity all the days of your life.
- 6 May you see your children's children, ♦
and may there be peace upon Israel.

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First reading: Genesis 14: 17 – 20

¹⁷ After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

¹⁸ And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High.

¹⁹ He blessed him and said,

'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth;

²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

Second Reading: Revelation 19: 6-10

⁶ Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

⁷ Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready;

⁸ to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure'—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

⁹ And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are true words of God.'

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow-servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

Gospel Reading: John 2: 1 - 11

¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

² Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.'

⁴ And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.'

⁵ His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'

⁶ Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

⁷ Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim.

⁸ He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it.

⁹ When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom

¹⁰ and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.'

¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS – Revd Philip

My mother loved the film, 'The Sound of Music' and as a teenager I was taken to see it several times. In the song 'Do-Re-Mi', Julie Andrews sang, 'Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.' Just over three weeks ago we began a new year although already in some ways it does not feel particularly new. We are still in the season of Epiphany, but in 9 days will come Candlemas and we begin the countdown to Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. The church year is full of endings and beginning as we move from one season to another. In some ways it would be convenient from a preacher's point of view to say that our Gospel reading this morning marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry, but in fact that had begun already with the calling of the first disciples. What we do have in John's account of the wedding at Cana in Galilee is the beginning of Jesus' miracles. In some ways it was a very ordinary setting for such an extraordinary and significant event.

A lot of my time over the past weeks has been taken up with helping couples setting the date they will get married. Many of them had been due to get married last year but decided to postpone their ceremony to the first quarter of this year in the hope that the situation would be better, that they would be able to have more guests and a bigger party afterwards. Now, with the third lockdown and with only emergency weddings allowed, they are once again pushing the dates back to later in this year. It is quite time consuming for me and I have sometimes felt like a juggler keeping a number of balls in the air at one time. The common factor is their understandable desire to share their special day with as many of their family and friends as possible, and to celebrate with a party.

In Jesus' day this was just as important, although there was a greater degree of social obligation. Marriage celebrations would go on for several days, I have read that it would sometimes be seven days, days filled with eating, drinking and dancing. For the guests it would have been a welcome break from the grind of daily work, because the majority would not have been not well off. Wine was especially important. One early rabbi is recorded as saying, "Without wine there is no joy", and I know where he was coming from. Wine symbolised the generosity of God and good times. To drink wine made from the grapes you had planted was a sign of the continuity of God's blessing on the people and the land.

However, for whatever reason at this wedding the wine had run out. This was a major catastrophe, and the couple would bear the stigma for the rest of their lives. I sometimes repeat the story of the child who was asked who the people were who should be invited to a wedding. She replied that if you hold a wedding you should make sure that Jesus is there. She may well have been thinking about the story of how Jesus stepped up to mark and by miraculously turning 180 gallons of water into wine saved the day. Not just 'vin ordinaire' but wine of the very best vintage. Better make sure that Jesus is at a wedding because he can take care of any unexpected incidents. Smart thinking.

So, to quote the words of John at the end of our reading, 'Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in

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him.' What Jesus had done passed almost unnoticed as the celebrations continued around him, but this miracle cemented in his disciples minds the conviction that here was a very special person. It would be some time before Peter would make his famous declaration, "You are the Messiah sent from God", but this first miracle was a sign that pointed him on his journey of discovery about the true nature, the divine nature, of Jesus.

There has been little to celebrate over the past months, although we should celebrate the work of those in the NHS and care homes who have born the brunt of caring for those suffering from the virus. Now there are some other celebrations as the older members of our communities receive their inoculations. I hope that later this year our wedding couples can truly celebrate their nuptials as they would wish. All of us, however can celebrate the fact that in Jesus, God is with us. Through this beginning of his miracles, we can follow the same journey to faith as did Peter.

HYMN: Tell Out My Soul, The Greatness of the Lord. (Timothy Dudley-Smith b.1926)

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age to same;
His holy Name--the Lord, the Mighty One

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!

Prayers for the coming week:

Our prayers this week follow the themes of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Sunday

Jesus Christ, thank you for seeking us; thank you for the friendship you offer us. Lead us to a life that is ever more complete. Give us the confidence to respond to your call. Transform us and enable us to become witnesses of your tenderness for the world.

Monday

Holy Spirit, may we know the presence of Christ in our hearts. May we cherish that presence as a secret of love. Encourage us in our prayers, enlighten our reading of your word and enable the growth of your fruit and gifts in our lives.

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Tuesday

Father God, your love is revealed to us your love through Jesus Christ but also through our sisters and brothers. Help us to welcome one another although we are all different. May we learn to live in forgiveness, united in one body, enabling the gifts in each one to be used to your glory so that we together reflect Jesus our living Lord.

Wednesday

Lord Jesus, thank you for your example of the life of prayer in communion and harmony with the Father. Teach us, by your Spirit, to pray in accordance with your loving will. May we see your kingdom of love develop as all your people join in prayer and praise.

Thursday

Thank you Father God your gift of the Scriptures - your word to guide and reprove, strengthen and mature us. Thank you for its power to change. Guide us by your Spirit so that we choose the life you have called us to. Thank you that you reach out to us. Enable us to know the happiness which you want to share with us.

Friday

Lord Jesus Christ, may we always be welcoming of others whatever their background. Help us to show compassion to all and to radiate your love to all who are suffering and to accept them as you accept all who come to you. Bless us all in our work for you and may our words and actions always be helpful.

Saturday

Holy God, three in one, we thank you for giving us life and loving us. Thank you that you are present in each one of us and in creation. Help us to love and care for the world you have made. Give us hope as we pray for justice and peace for all and that your name will be glorified in all the earth.

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

Storytelling Service Link: <https://youtu.be/ARzSxxM21JM>

NOTICES

❖ **Services – each of the PCCs in our United Benefice have decided to suspend worship services and private prayer in our Churches until mid-March**

We will continue to stream a recorded and a live service each Sunday.

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Below is information about other services that you can join remotely:

Some New Services for you to join:

- 10.30 on Sunday mornings starting this week - join **Morning Worship** on the link below. Please join from 10.15 onwards and we will have time for a chat afterwards for those who wish to.
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87937255579?pwd=ekxOUGt4SIZXVjk4WG9kK0dlcUo0UT09>
If you require the ID and Passcode please contact Revd Patricia.
(this service is in addition to the weekly pre-recorded online service).
- **Wednesday Morning 09.00 Celtic Morning Prayer** with Revd Trish Cope.
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86430788721?pwd=dGVuMXpxWDkzTU5FbENralB2Q09JQT09>
If you need the meeting ID and Password for this meeting please contact Revd Trish: Tel: 07703 470101; Email: trishcope2012@btinternet.com
The reading and psalm for this meeting are at the end of this Update
- **Telephone Service - Thursday evenings at 19.00** starting on 4 February.
Please contact Chris Stanisstreet if you need further information or help to join this.

To join this service:

1 DIAL THIS NUMBER: 0333 0164 757

2 You will be asked to enter the CONFERENCE ROOM NUMBER followed by the HASH KEY # . The number is: 358 104 39 #

3 You will then be asked to enter the PIN NUMBER followed by the HASH KEY # . The pin number is 1843 # We can then speak to each other.

**You can dial in any time between 6.45pm and 7.00pm.
The service will begin at 7.00pm**

Please say the **words in bold** and try to ensure that there is **no background noise** - I will need to move my snoring dog 'Bailey' into another room, that's for sure! Chris.

- **Suggestions:**
If you have any other ideas please let us know - contact Revd Philip by phone 01565 830595 or email. robinsonpj50@gmail.com

❖ **Coffee and Chat Wednesday 20th 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>

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

❖ Anna Smyth's funeral

Anna was a dear friend to many in the United Benefice and her funeral was held on Tuesday 19th January. Philip recorded the service for Anna's family and friends who were unable to attend. Her family have given permission for her funeral to be shared with the congregation and the link is: https://youtu.be/Xou6_RatoBk

❖ Christingle Service in the United Benefice:



Our final Christingle Service will no longer be able to go ahead at St Paul's. There is an online Christingle Service available at: <https://youtu.be/1CHlvU77fAg>. Christingle kits and instructions are available and if you would like to have a kit to use with the online service, please contact Patricia (details above) before the end of January.

We 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://thyq.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:

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 - please order by telephoning the Vicarage we will deliver them to you as we go about our duties.

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St Mary's are offering: Freshly made Chunky Seville Orange Marmalade £2.50.
Also available – Finely Shredded Marmalade, Strawberry, Raspberry, Damson and Gooseberry Jams

St Paul's are offering: Strawberry, Strawberry +Gooseberry, Greengage, Gooseberry and Raspberry jams.

❖ 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 25th Jan – Conversion of Paul: Psalm 66; Ezekiel 3: 22-end; Philippians 3: 1-14

Tues 26th Jan – Psalm 36; Hosea 4: 1-16; 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13

Wed 27th Jan – Psalm 46; Hosea 5: 1-7; 1 Corinth 10:14 – 11:1

Thurs 28th Jan – Psalm 47; Hosea 5:8 – 6:6; 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16

Fri 29th Jan – Psalm 65; Hosea 6:7 – 7:2; 1 Corinth 11: 17-end

Sat 30th Jan – Psalm 68; Hosea Chapter 8; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11

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, ♦

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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.

Psalm and reading for Celtic Morning Prayer 27th January

Psalm 46

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength, ♦
a very present help in trouble;
² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, ♦
and though the mountains tremble in the heart of the sea;
³ Though the waters rage and swell, ♦
and though the mountains quake at the towering seas.
⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, ♦
the holy place of the dwelling of the Most High.
⁵ God is in the midst of her; therefore shall she not be removed; ♦
God shall help her at the break of day.
⁶ The nations are in uproar and the kingdoms are shaken, ♦
but God utters his voice and the earth shall melt away.
⁷ The Lord of hosts is with us; ♦
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
⁸ Come and behold the works of the Lord, ♦
what destruction he has wrought upon the earth.
⁹ He makes wars to cease in all the world; ♦
he shatters the bow and snaps the spear and burns the chariots in the fire.
¹⁰ 'Be still, and know that I am God; ♦
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.'
¹¹ The Lord of hosts is with us; ♦
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

God of Jacob, when the earth shakes and the nations are in uproar, speak, and let
the storm be still; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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Hosea 5: 1 – 7 Impending Judgement on Israel and Judah

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¹ Hear this, O priests! Give heed, O house of Israel! Listen, O house of the king! For the judgement pertains to you; for you have been a snare at Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor,

² and a pit dug deep in Shittim; but I will punish all of them.

³ I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me; for now, O Ephraim, you have played the whore; Israel is defiled.

⁴ Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God. For the spirit of whoredom is within them, and they do not know the Lord.

⁵ Israel's pride testifies against him; Ephraim stumbles in his guilt; Judah also stumbles with them.

⁶ With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the Lord, but they will not find him; he has withdrawn from them.

⁷ They have dealt faithlessly with the Lord; for they have borne illegitimate children. Now the new moon shall devour them along with their fields.