

PARISH OF THE UPPER SKERNE
5th JANUARY 2025
EPIPHANY



Sunday 5th January

10am Holy Communion at St Catherine's, Fishburn
10am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham
11.30am Holy Communion at St Alban's, Trimdon Grange

Tuesday 7th January

6pm Holy Communion for Christmas at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Wednesday 8th January

10am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church.

*If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Julie Robson, either in person or on **07443515495***

EPIPHANY

Collect

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 *Isaiah 60.1-6*

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

***Psalm 72.(1-9)* (R) Kings bow down before him; all the nations do him service.**

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;
That he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;
That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the little hills bring righteousness. **R**

He shall defend the needy among the people;
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another. **R**

He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.
In his time shall the righteous flourish;
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more. **R**

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute,
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.
All kings shall bow down before him, and all the nations do him service. **R**

For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress,
and the oppressed who has no helper.

He shall have pity on the lowly and poor; he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,
and dear shall their blood be in his sight. **R**

Second Reading Ephesians 3.1-12

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.

Gospel Acclamation **Alleluia, Alleluia !** The peoples are gathered together, and the kingdoms to worship the Lord **Alleluia !**

Matthew 2:1-12

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.

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

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.

Parish Prayers

Week beginning 5th January THOSE WHO LIVE IN:

(*Mon*) Carrside Road, TV (*Tue*) Cartwright Close, Eden Gardens, S
(*Wed*) Castle View, BM (*Thurs*) Chaytor Terrace, F (*Fri*) Cherry Tree Drive, S
(*Sat*) Chestnut Road, S

Week beginning 12th January THOSE WHO LIVE IN:

(*Mon*) Chisholm Road, TV (*Tue*) Church Road, TV (*Wed*) Church Street, BM
(*Thurs*) Church View,S (*Fri*) Cinnamon Drive, TC (*Sat*) Claremont Grove, S

Recently Departed

(Letter in brackets denotes church)

George Owens (A), Kevin (Keg) Jones (E), Jean Etherington (MM)

The Sick

We remember those known to us who are ill at this time. We give thanks for those who are regaining their strength. This week our prayers are asked especially for:

Doreen Jones, Theresa Cornwell, Daphne Jones, Susan Tomkins, David Smith, Joan Clifford, Geoff Pinder, Maria McMann, Bob Watson, Christine Wass, Peter Robinson, Lyn Chamberlain, Barbara Bowes, Sandra Noble, Rev John Rogers, Helen McGonnell, Max McLellan, Leo Ford, Lydia Holroyd, Millie Kate Oswald, Rev Peter Robson.

Morning Prayer Readings

Week beginning Sunday 5th January (Epiphany)

Collect for Epiphany

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.

Epiphany Sunday 5th January	132	Jeremiah 31.7-14	John 1.29-34
Monday 6 th January	48	Isaiah 62	John 2.13-end
Tuesday 7 th January	99	Isaiah 63.7-end	1 John 3
Wednesday 8 th January	46	Isaiah 64	1 John 4.7-end
Thursday 9 th January	148	Isaiah 65.1-16	1 John 5.1-12
Friday 10 th January	149	Isaiah 65.17-end	1 John 5.13-end
Saturday 11 th January	150	Isaiah 66.1-11	2 John
Baptism of Christ Sunday 12th January	89.19-29	Isaiah 42.1-9	Acts 19.1-7

Collect for Baptism of Christ

Heavenly Father,
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
may we recognize him as our Lord
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
whose children suffered at the hands of Herod,
though they had done no wrong:
by the suffering of your Son and by the innocence of our lives
frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Parish Notices

A message from Rev Peter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Upper Skerne (and beyond),

Some of you will be aware that I have been unwell for some time. After a bit of a whirlwind tour of GP surgeries and hospital departments in recent weeks, I have been diagnosed with lung cancer, with other cancers in various parts of my body, including the bones and lymph glands.

There is no cure for this condition. However, I have gladly taken up the offer of pain management, which is working well, and I will be offered some form of intervention - chemotherapy and/or immunotherapy or a more targeted intervention, all of which, at least potentially, will help maintain a reasonable quality of life and extend my life expectancy. I will also receive a single, high dose of radiotherapy to attack the cancers while my treatment plan is being decided upon by the oncology team at James Cook Hospital.

I know this will be come as a shock to you all - as it was to me and Julie - but I wanted to be as clear as possible about the situation so as to avoid any confusion or misapprehensions. Having said that, because my treatment plan has yet to be decided upon, the situation is very fluid and the future unclear at this point. I might be forced to take full retirement but, equally, I might be able to return to something like my previous ministry - or something in between.

It has been difficult for Julie and I to keep this news to ourselves but I hope you will understand our reasoning - particularly as this was happening over Christmas time. It was even harder, though, to share with our children when the time came. Happily, the wonders of modern communications meant we were able to video-call them all at the same time. It goes without saying that they were upset but I'd like share a response from our son, Simeon. "What concerns me, Dad," he said, "is how you will cope if the chemo makes your hair fall out!"

It's that kind of humour which will help us all through this. That and a positive attitude. The future is very uncertain but Julie and I are determined to continue to live life as normally as possible. Julie will continue to work as Parish Administrator, though her working times might sometimes have to accommodate hospital appointments. But we believe this is the right time for me to step back from my public ministry, at least in the short term. I'm pleased I was able to fulfill most of my duties over the Christmas period and I am very grateful to my clergy and lay colleagues who have covered those services I was unable to lead; in particular, Revd David who has graciously accommodated my every request.

It's natural, under these circumstances, for people to want to offer help. While fully appreciating that fact, there really is little Julie and I need in terms of practical support. If we find we do need help, we know there are plenty of you out there who will step up at a moment's notice, and we thank you for that.

The most important thing you can do is to pray. What you actually pray for is up to you, of course. You will know that people in this parish have experienced miraculous healing after prayer so there is no reason why you can't pray the same for me. Or you might feel more comfortable praying for God's peaceful, caring and loving presence into the situation. And it's important to realise that Julie and my family are in greater need; it is far harder for them than it is for me. Please remember that, even though it might be my name which appears in the parish prayer list.

Despite what I have shared with you, there is still much to thank God for, and much to celebrate - both in all of our private lives and in the life of the Church. So please be encouraged to do so. In the words of St Paul:

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

2024 Fundraising "Thank you" from Chris Rowsby

Many thanks to all the volunteers (too many to name) who have helped throughout the year at Coffee Mornings, including pancake production, Medieval Fayre Day, and the recent fundraising events held at St Edmund's:

Snow Parade Service, Brass Band Concert, Mayor's Civic Carol Service, Alex Ord's Farewell Concert and the forthcoming Christingle Service.

Apologies if I've missed some events out - thank you for your help at those ones, they are appreciated too!

Your time and effort makes a huge difference to St Edmund's Finances in 2024 you have raised just over £3,000

St. Edmund's at Christmas – a message from Michael King.

Thank you to all who contributed in any way to decorating the church for Christmas. It looked magnificent, clearly the result of a lot of hard work.

During the Advent period and up to Christmas Day we had a footfall in excess of 1300 people including those who attended the 4 concerts. The revised time of the service on Christmas Eve paid dividends with 80 people attending the service and 70+ on Christmas day. Once again, thank you to all who contributed to the activities in any way.

Postage Stamp Update – a message from Brian Mutch

I have just sent to "The Royal National Institute for the Blind People" another 643 grams of Stamps which have been given to me over the last Four and Five Months

This amount is one third that is required to provide a blind person with the "Talking Book Service" for a full year (A full year needs 2000 grams)
Since we started to send these stamps to the RNIB, quite a few years ago now, we have enabled them to provide just over SIX talking book cassettes
With this in mind, it is the perfect time of year for us all to continue what we have started, and keep every stamp that you get with your Christmas cards etc and Please keep saving and sending the stamps into me, so we can help to keep this vital service running

Wednesday Meditation Group

The online meditation services are meeting once again every Wednesday morning at 10am. For more information, please contact Rev Robert Cooper.

Sunday Meditation Service

The Sunday meditation services will recommence on Sunday 5th January 2025 at St Catherine's, Fishburn.

Parish Facebook Page

The Parish Facebook page is up and running really well and has had lots of views. If you haven't seen it yet, please take a look on Facebook/Parish of the Upper Skerne. This is what the front page looks like:



If you have any community news or information which might be of wider interest and would like it to go onto the Facebook page, please send your information to the parish office.

One Step Forward Sedgefield Bereavement Support Group.

This group meets in St Edmund's Church every Thursday at 2pm
Please contact Sue Archer on 07779 093386 for more details.

BALM: The following services are available:

- Group meeting on the third Tuesday of each month in the Village Hall, Bishop Middleham, from 2 to 4 pm.
- Group meeting at The Ladder Centre, Ferryhill, on the first Tuesday of each month from 1 to 3 pm.
- Regular support by scheduled telephone calls of up to an hour to people who for any reason are unable to attend groups.
- Face-to-face sessions at St Michael's Church, Bishop Middleham, if needed.
- For further information please ring Janet Deane on 01740 656391 or email janetgraham456@btinternet.com



PARISH OF THE UPPER SKERNE
12th JANUARY 2025
BAPTISM OF CHRIST



Sunday 12th January

8.00am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgefield

10.00am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgefield

10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Thursday 16th January

10.00am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham

BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Collect

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.

First Reading *Isaiah 43.1-7*

¹ Thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. ²
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they
shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and
the flame shall not consume you. ³ For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of
Israel, your Saviour. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for
you. ⁴ Because you are precious in my sight, and honoured, and I love you, I give
people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. ⁵ Do not fear, for I am
with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather
you; ⁶ I will say to the north, 'Give them up,' and to the south, 'Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth
⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I
formed and made.'

Psalm 29 *(R) The Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.*

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. **R**

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders;
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendour. **R**

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox. **R**

The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the Lord
all are crying, 'Glory!' **R**

The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.
The Lord shall give strength to his people;
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Second Reading Acts 8.14-17

¹⁴ When the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ¹⁶ (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus).

¹⁷ Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! This is my Son, the beloved, listen to him **Alleluia!**

Luke 3.15-17, 21-22

In the wilderness John proclaimed a baptism of repentance. ¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' ²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all time and eternity,
you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father
in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:
by the power of your Spirit
complete the heavenly work of our rebirth
through the waters of the new creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Morning Prayer Readings

Week beginning Sunday 12th January (Baptism of Christ)

Collect for Baptism of Christ

Heavenly Father,
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
may we recognize him as our Lord
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Baptism of Christ Sunday 12th January	89.19-29	Isaiah 42.1-9	Acts 19.1-7
Monday 13 th January	2	Amos 1	1 Corinthians 1.1-17
Tuesday 14 th January	9	Amos 2	1 Corinthians 1.18-end
Wednesday 15 th January	20	Amos 3	1 Corinthians 2
Thursday 16 th January	21	Amos 4	1 Corinthians 3
Friday 17 th January	67	Amos 5.1-17	1 Corinthians 4
Saturday 18 th January Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	33	Amos 5.18-end	1 Corinthians 5
2nd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday 19th January	145.1-13	Isaiah 49.1-7	Acts 16.11-15

Monday 20 th January	146	Amos 6	1 Corinthians 6.1-11
Tuesday 21 st January	132	Amos 7	1 Corinthians 6.12-end
Wednesday 22 nd January	81	Amos 8	1 Corinthians 7.1-24
Thursday 23 rd January	76	Amos 9	1 Corinthians 7.25-end
Friday 24 th January	27	Hosea 1.1 – 2.1	1 Corinthians 8
Saturday 25th January Conversion of Paul	66, 147.13-end	Ezekiel 3.22-end	Philippians 3.1-14
3rd Sunday of Epiphany Sunday 26th January	113	Deuteronomy 30.11-15	3 John 1.5-8

Collect for Epiphany 2

Eternal Lord,
our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation
to your glory, hidden through past ages
and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect for the Conversion of St Paul

Almighty God,
who caused the light of the gospel
to shine throughout the world
through the preaching of your servant Saint Paul:
grant that we who celebrate his wonderful conversion
may follow him in bearing witness to your truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Collect for Epiphany 3

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.

Church Services for January 2025



Sunday 5th January

10am Holy Communion at St Catherine's, Fishburn
10am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham
11.30am Holy Communion at St Alban's, Trimdon Grange

Tuesday 7th January

6pm Holy Communion at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Wednesday 8th January

10am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield

Sunday 12th January

8.00am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield
10.00am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield
10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Thursday 16th January

10.00am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham

Sunday 19th January

10am Holy Communion at St Catherine's, Fishburn
10am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham

Tuesday 21st January

6pm Holy Communion at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Wednesday 22nd January

10am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield

Sunday 26th January

10.00am Holy Communion at St Edmund's, Sedgfield
10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary Magdalene's, Trimdon Village

Thursday 30th January

10.00am Holy Communion at St Michael's, Bishop Middleham