



# The Bridge Group of Churches

Nackington - Lower Hardres - Bridge - Patrixbourne - Bekesbourne

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*Weekly Sheet for the Bridge Group of churches:*

## **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas / The Epiphany**

### **Today's Readings:**

Isaiah 60.1-6; Psalm 72.1-7,10-14; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

### **Upcoming Services:**

**All In person services remain suspended, pending a change in  
Government restrictions and local virus rates.**

**Services will be provided online.**

### **Collect**

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.  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

### **Readings**

**Isaiah 60.1-6;**

### **The Ingathering of the Dispersed**

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.

### **Ephesians 3.1-12;**

#### **Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles**

This is the reason that 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 to 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 to 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.

## **Matthew 2.1-12**

### **The Visit of the Wise Men**

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.

## **Parish News**

### **Churches open for private Prayer**

Unless circumstances change, the churches of the Bridge Group Parish remain open for Personal prayer / Quiet time as follows:

<b>St Peter's Bridge</b>	<b>Wednesday 10-4pm</b>
<b>St Peter's Bekesbourne</b>	<b>Sunday 10am -12pm</b>
<b>St Mary's Patrixbourne</b>	<b>Tuesday 2-4pm &amp; Saturday 10am-1pm</b>
<b>St Mary's Nackington</b>	<b>Sunday &amp; Wednesday 10-4pm</b>
<b>St Mary's Lower Hardres</b>	<b>Monday &amp; Thursday 10-4pm</b>

### **Sad News**

Sadly on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December we lost a dear friend to the church in Bekesbourne and a most valuable member of our local community when Jill Thomas sadly died of kidney failure. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband Stephen and their two sons and the whole community. On Christmas Eve we opened Bekesbourne Church from 10am-12 noon for people to pray and light candles for Jill and her family. She will be very much missed.

### **Thank you!**

A huge thank you from all of us at the Vicarage and from Margaret for all the lovely cards, gifts and good wishes you sent us for Christmas! We pray blessings and prayers for a New Year in which we can all get together again.

### **Taking a break**

The Parish Office will not be staffed during the period 26<sup>th</sup> December – 4<sup>th</sup> January however email and phone messages will be monitored, and any urgent matters attended to.

Thank you for your understanding.

**Contact Details: Vicar:** Rev'd Estella Last Tel: 01227 206272 [estellalast@gmail.com](mailto:estellalast@gmail.com)  
(Estella is generally not available on Mondays). **Reader:** Mrs Margaret Clarke Tel: 01227 765 598 **Administrator:** Mrs Megan Shirley, [bridgeoffice23@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeoffice23@gmail.com)