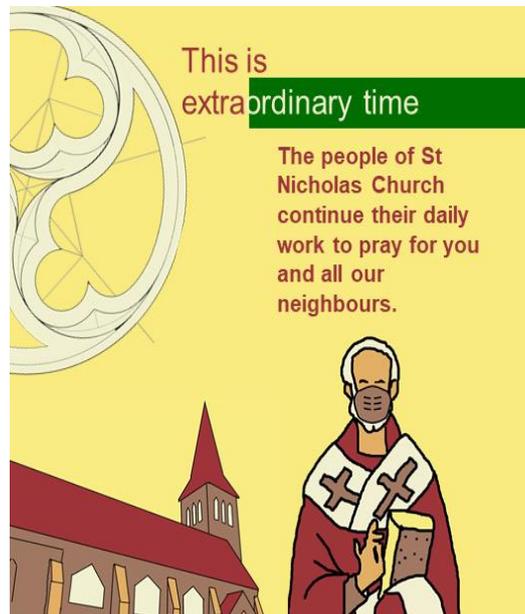


**Worship at St. Nicholas, Sutton
for Epiphany, 3 January 2021
Collect, hymns & readings**



Collect (prayer of the week)

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.

Amen.

Hymns

Opening *Brightest and best*

Gradual *We three kings of Orient are*

Readings

Isaiah 60.1-6

The Ingathering of the Dispersed

⁶⁰Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² 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.

³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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

³This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— ²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ^{4a}a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In 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: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 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. ⁸Although 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, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so 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. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Matthew 2.1-12 *The Visit of the Wise Men*

2In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, '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.' ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:
⁶ "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." '

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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.' ⁹When 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. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On 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. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Epiphany

The subtitle in the *Book of Common Prayer* of this, one of the principal feasts of the Church, is 'The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles'. This emphasises that, from the moment of the Incarnation, the good news of Jesus Christ is for all: Jew and Gentile, the wise and the simple, male and female. Nothing in the Greek text of the gospels indicates that the Magi were all male and even the number three and making them Kings is a much later, non-scriptural tradition. The date chosen to celebrate this feast goes back to the placing of the feast of the Nativity of Christ in the winter solstice: the north European pre-Christian tradition of celebrating the birth of Sun on 25 December differed from the Mediterranean and eastern tradition of having 6 January as the Solstice. As often happens, the two dates merged into a beginning and an end of the same celebration. The western church adopted 'the twelve days of Christmas' climaxing on the eve of Epiphany, or 'Twelfth Night'. The implication by the fifth century was that this was the night on which the Magi arrived. The complications of dating became even more confused with the changing in the West from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar, the eastern church refusing to play any part in such a radical change. So this day remains the chief day of celebrating the Incarnation in Orthodox Churches.

(from *Exciting Holiness, collects & readings for the festivals of the Calendar of the Church of England*)

I encourage you to make a habit of daily prayer, whether *A Way of Daily Prayer*

(attached, or on website under Useful Information-Service Sheets);

Common Worship *Daily Prayer* <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>;

or *Book of Common Prayer*.

Bible readings for Morning and Evening Prayer:

Sunday 3 January Epiphany

MP Jeremiah 31.7-14, John 1.29-34

EP Baruch 4.36-end of 5, John 2.1-11

Monday 4 January

MP Isaiah 60.13-end, John 1.43-end

EP Ruth 2, Colossians 3.1-11

Tuesday 5 January

MP Isaiah 61, John 2.1-12

EP Ruth 3, Colossians 3.12-4.1

Wednesday 6 January

MP Isaiah 62, John 2.13-end

EP Ruth 4.1-17, Colossians 4.2-end

Thursday 7 January

MP Isaiah 63.7-end, 1 John 3

EP Baruch 1.15-2.10, Matthew 20.1-16

Friday 8 January

MP Isaiah 64, 1 John 4.7-end

EP Baruch 2.11-end, Matthew 20.17-28

Saturday 9 January

MP Isaiah 65.1-16, 1 John 5.1-12

EP Isaiah 61, Titus 2.11-14; 3.4-7