



PERSHORE BENEFICE
The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross with
St Nicholas' Pinvin, St James' Birlingham & St Mary's Wick
Sunday, 3 January, 2021
EPIPHANY

SERVICE SHEET, BULLETIN & DIARY

Please use this service sheet as an aid for worship at home.

THE 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. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah

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.

For the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians

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.

For the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 2: 1-12

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

A REFLECTION BY DAVID BRAY (Licensed Lay Minister)

The journey of the wise men is something we think about a lot – remember the poem :

A cold coming we had of it

Just the worst time of the year

For a journey, and such a long journey

And we tell lots of stories - about the fourth wise man who got lost, and so on.

We aren't having many journeys now - and even with the hardships that makes them sound more attractive.

But the story in the Bible doesn't mention the journey as such - only that the men came. And their place in the story is to show how different these men were from Herod.

Herod is the king, and he should have been the one to welcome Jesus. But when he finds out all he does is to try to protect his own back - so he sends the wise men to Bethlehem, hoping that when they return he will learn important information he can use to eliminate a threat.

What his scheming does is to have the opposite effect. The men come to find Jesus, they offer him immensely fine gifts, and they are filled with joy. Herod's enmity has led to Jesus being glorified.

And when the time comes for them to go home, they find another way so Herod doesn't get the information he wanted.

Those who had a duty to greet Jesus failed, but in God's care for the world others came forward to fill their place.

We must be sure we do what is expected of us – but we also must be ready to step in when someone is not doing what should have been done.

And perhaps we will be able to give our gifts, such as we have to offer, to the Christchild.

COMMUNION

During Communion the choir will sing the following hymns:-

HYMN

A&M 94

(Dix)

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy-seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee our heavenly King.

(Cont.)

Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way,
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing
alleluias to our King.

[William Chatterton Dix, 1837-1898]

HYMN

A&M 96

(Epiphany)

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
odours of Edom, and offerings divine,
gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his favour secure:
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

[Reginald Heber, 1783-1826]

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his name.

[John Samuel Bewley Monsell, 1811-1875]

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. **Amen.**

*

Pershore Abbey
CCLI No. 46441

PERSHORE BENEFICE BULLETIN & DIARY

3 JANUARY 2021

As a Kingdom People we are churches that seek to:

- Worship God
- Welcome All
- Reach out to the world

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd Claire Lording

Email: vicar@pershoreabbey.org.uk

Assistant Curate: The Revd Steve Dunton

Email: curate@pershoreabbey.org.uk

Abbey Wardens: Mr Bill Newman (01386 640497) Mrs Suzanne Clarke (01386 553293)

The Benefice Office of Pershore with Pinvin, Wick & Birlingham

Alveston House, 11, Broad Street, Pershore, WR10 1BB (01386 552071)

Email: office@pershoreabbey.org.uk **Website:** www.pershoreabbey.org.uk

The office remains closed, but we are still working and available by phone and email

PLEASE PRAY FOR

WE PRAY TOGETHER FOR ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY THE CURRENT CRISIS

We pray for those whose weddings, blessings and baptisms have been affected by the crisis, and for all those who are making new plans to celebrate these special life events.

We pray for all those welcoming new life into their families.

We pray for those in need.

We pray for those who have died and for their families and friends.

We pray for those whose anniversary of death occurs in the coming week.

OFFICE STAFFING OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

The Benefice Office will not be staffed over the Christmas and New Year period

Our office staff will be on annual leave from:

12 noon on Thursday 24 December 2020 until Tuesday 5 January 2021

All email enquiries and answerphone messages will be dealt with on their return

If your enquiry is urgent please call the answerphone service on 01386 552071 to access the latest emergency contact details over the Christmas period

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THIS YEAR

NOTICES AND MESSAGES

THE VERY REVEREND CHRISTOPHER CAMPLING: We were all saddened to hear that Christopher died on 9th December at home, after a short spell of ill health. He was Vicar of Pershore from 1968-76, caring also for the village parishes. He is fondly remembered as a faithful, holy and kind parish priest, who kept up his connection with Pershore long after he moved to pastures and responsibilities new. We give great thanks for his faithful ministry and for all those who were blessed by his journeying alongside them. His funeral service will take place on 19th December at St Mary's, Goring-by-sea, so please do pray for Christopher's family and all those who mourn. May he rest in peace. *Claire*

A MESSAGE OF THANKS AND GOOD WISHES: Jean and Keith want to thank you all for your support and prayers particularly over the last few months. Keith is settled into his new home and is looking well. They are eagerly waiting for the day when they can actually meet up in person rather than through a glass wall! They send Christmas Greetings to everyone.

MINISTRY AND CHURCH NEWS

PATTERNS FOR KINGDOM LIVING - A NEW RESOURCE FOR A NEW YEAR: For many of us the sense of making a fresh start at the turn of a year will be stronger than usual at the end of 2020.

With this in mind, a new recently developed, self-directed, “**Patterns for Kingdom Living**” resource is now available through the Dioces of Worcester website.

They offer a really accessible way to help people renew their sense of God's grace and identify next steps in their journey with God. The start of a New Year seems a great time to embrace this and those who have already taken have described these flexible resources as encouraging and life-giving. You will find all the relevant links, including a 1 minute taster video, here: <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/kingdom-patterns/>

FAITH AT WORK IN WORCESTERSHIRE:

The **DISCOVER CHAPLAINCY** event, **Tuesday January 26th, 1900 – 2030** is for anyone wanting to know more – those thinking about volunteering as chaplains as well as people who are just curious. To book a place sign up via [Eventbrite-discovering-workplace-chaplaincy](#)

A copy of the latest Faith at Work newsletter is available to view and download here: [Faith at Work Newsletter November 2020](#)

CHURCH GIVING - GIVE.NET DONATION PAGE NOW LIVE:

We need your support now more than ever, so please consider giving through our dedicated give.net page, which offers secure regular or one-off payments from as little as £1. Click on the logo here or visit our website to donate. If you would prefer to set up a Standing Order, download the form [here](#).



HELP IN THE COMMUNITY

CTIP FOODBANK NOW OPEN ON TUESDAYS:

The Foodbank remains open on Tuesdays 1100 - 1300 and Fridays 1300 - 1500.

The Pershore Foodbank will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day over the festive season.

Social distancing procedures remain in place with clients being asked to wait in the entrance hall, as guided by a volunteer.



Our thanks go to all of the volunteers who work so hard to make this possible, and to all those who continue to donate items.

CITIZEN'S ADVICE:

Face to Face sessions have now been suspended. To speak to an adviser please ring **01386 712100**.

For General Advice select option 1.

For help to complete your first Universal Credit application select option 2.

This service is available Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 1000 -1300.

The Worcestershire Adviceline is also available Monday to Friday between 1000 - 1600: ring 03444111303 or email enquiries.wychavon@citizensadvice.org.uk

IMPORTANT LOCAL INFORMATION:

Get all of the latest Covid-19 information from Pershore Town Council by following this link.

www.pershoretowncouncil.gov.uk/latest-news

A MESSAGE FROM PERSHORE FOODBANK

Thank you to everyone who donated Christmas Goodies.

We have delivered many hampers, and with your help have made Christmas more cheerful for many people, not only in the town, but also in the wider community.

The community effort to help others in need has truly been unparalleled.

Lynne Raymer

FOODBANK REQUESTS

We need donations of the following items:

- UHT Milk
- Tinned carrots
- Sugar



OTHER NEWS

RESET THE DEBT CAMPAIGN: Launched by the Baptist Union, the Church of Scotland, Church Action on Poverty, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. The campaign grew out of listening and learning from communities during the lockdown of 2020. The project heard that debt was becoming an increasing problem for households and communities across the UK.

In the UK an estimated 6 million people, who were only just managing previously, incurred an extra £10- 12 billion in debt due to COVID and lockdown, whilst the better off saved £25 billion in lockdown and were less likely to be furloughed or lose their job. Reset the debt asks us to contact your MP with a Reset the Debt bauble and letter, calling for a Debt Jubilee.

See <https://resetthedebt.uk/> for resources as well as short films which tell people's real stories about living with unmanageable debt.



BLUEBELL BULB PLANTING: An opportunity for time out from Christmas busyness on Boxing Day - time to be decided, and beyond. If you would like to help with planting some native bluebell bulbs in the Abbey churchyard, please contact Helen Oldham. You will need to bring gardening gloves and tools for digging a small hole up to 15cm deep, and wear weather appropriate clothing. In the New Year there will be another planting session to add some 'snowdrops in the green'.

ADOPT A PIPE UPDATE - ONLY 8 LARGE PIPES REMAINING!



The adopt a pipe scheme continues to be well supported with only 8 of the large visible pipes left for donors to adopt!

There are many smaller pipes still available too, so if you are looking for an alternative Christmas gift, take a look at the [Adopt a Pipe Scheme Leaflet](#) for further details on the scheme.

We also have special certificates available for those wishing to adopt a pipe as a gift.

AND FINALLY . . .

The Pershore Benefice wishes you all a Merry Christmas and a peaceful, healthy and brighter New Year.

Thank you for your support, patience and understanding throughout 2020; for embracing new technologies and connecting with worship in new ways; for accepting our virtual presence where we have not been able to come together physically, and for striving to keep our church, congregation and community together.

We look forward to welcoming you all in 2021 and moving forward together with hope to meet the challenge of a New Year and all that it will bring.

If you need any help in accessing any of the online features mentioned in the bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact the office or Revd Claire Lording for support.



PERSHORE BENEFICE

INFORMATION ON PUBLIC WORSHIP

Details of our planned public worship services up to 10 January 2021 within the Pershore Benefice are given below, but please do check our social media pages and website for full service details in case of any changes. Thank you for your continued support.

ATTENDING A PUBLIC WORSHIP SERVICE

It is important that you only attend a public worship service if you feel that it is appropriate and safe for you to do so within the current guidelines.

We understand that some of our congregation are still shielding and will not feel able to attend, however, the decision to attend or not is yours and yours alone.

For those who do wish to attend a service, things will be different. There will be no hymns and the service will be shorter than usual. Please rest assured that people will be available to help you with clear instructions and guidance.

New guidance requires that face-coverings must be worn by those attending a place of worship. The full guidance and list of exemptions can be found [here](#).

PERSHORE ABBEY

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER

Sunday Praise at 1030

SUNDAY 3 JANUARY

BCP Eucharist at 0800

Said Eucharist at 1030

SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

Said Eucharist at 1030

PLEASE NOTE:

Daily Offices have resumed

Please check on Social Media and website for any changes to advertised services

ST MARY'S, WICK

SUNDAY 10 JANUARY

Morning Praise at 1030

ST NICHOLAS', PINVIN

SUNDAY 3 JANUARY

Said Eucharist at 1030

ST JAMES', BIRLINGHAM

**NO SERVICES UNTIL
SUNDAY 17 JANUARY**

PERSHORE BENEFICE

INFORMATION ON CHURCHES OPEN FOR PERSONAL PRAYER

Please see below for information on the current situation for each church in the Benefice.

Please be aware that only restricted areas of our churches will be open and numbers will be limited to ensure your safety.

PERSHORE ABBEY

DAILY
1000 - 1700

ST MARY'S, WICK

DAILY
1000 - 1600

ST JAMES', BIRLINGHAM

SUNDAYS ONLY
1030 - 1330

ST NICHOLAS', PINVIN

SELECTED SUNDAYS
(see website for opening updates)
1000 - 1300

IMPORTANT UPDATE:

THE USE OF FACE COVERINGS IS NOW MANDATORY FOR ALL THOSE ENTERING OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED SAFETY OF EVERYONE.

Please be mindful that due to social distancing capacity will be reduced in our churches.

When entering our church please observe social distancing rules at all times.

Hand-sanitiser and tissues will be available to keep you and others safe.

Please be considerate of others and keep to the guidelines.

NHS COVID-19 APP - TEST AND TRACE THROUGH QR SCANNING

We are now displaying a QR code poster at all entrance points to our buildings.

Visitors with smart phones can choose to leave their details by scanning this code with the NHS COVID 19 App. You can find out more information about the NHS Covid-19 App, including a short video, by visiting the NHS website from here: [NHS COVID-19](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-19).



WORSHIP DURING COVID-19 AND KEEPING IN TOUCH

PERSHORE ABBEY COMMUNITY ONLINE

As we go into the Christmas break and prepare for the New Year, we are going to take some time to recharge our batteries and to consider how best to move forward with our online offerings, so our programme may be a little less full than of late.

We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank Trudy Burge for her tireless commitment to the Benefice and for developing and maintaining such a strong online presence.

We will continue to update Facebook with new items when we can, but hope you will bear with us as we look towards putting together a new sustainable level of activity.

There's still plenty to come over the next week though so don't forget to keep up with us on the following platforms:

Our YouTube channel is called **Pershore Abbey Community**

Our Facebook page can be found at **#pershoreabbeycom**

Our Facebook posts, latest Instagram posts and a Twitter feed can also all be found on our website at **www.pershoreabbey.org.uk** at the bottom of every page.

C OF E LAUNCHES WORSHIP PHONE LINE:

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services 24 hours a day.

Please share this with those who are not online.



C OF E ONLINE SERVICES AND SUPPORT:

The Church of England continues to broadcast online each Sunday via social media at 09:00. For simple daytime and night prayer services, download the free Church of England App "Time to Pray".



The "Daily Prayer" App is free to download and is now available through our website.

There is also an accompanying daily audio offering on SoundCloud and iTunes led by the Archbishop of Canterbury .

STAYING UP TO DATE: The best way to stay up to date with all the current news and information at this time is through our website and Facebook pages.

All of our platforms can be easily accessed directly from **www.pershoreabbey.org.uk**



SERVICE SHEET, BULLETIN AND DIARY: If you would like to receive email updates and a copy of the Benefice Service Sheet direct to your inbox, please email the office at office@pershoreabbey.org.uk.

A copy is also uploaded to the website every Friday

PASTORAL SUPPORT: The Ministry Team and Abbey Pastoral Group are doing their best to keep in touch with everyone. This is mostly by telephone or email. If you have yet to hear from anyone or have a particular need please contact Claire (vicar@pershoreabbey.org.uk / <tel:552071>) or Angela Gerrard.

ABBAY & BENEFICE DIARY

(A) Abbey, (B) Birlingham, (P) Pinvin, (W) Wick,
(St A) St Andrew's, (V) New Vicarage, (CTIP) Churches Together in Pershore

0800 Silent Prayer

0830 Matins

1700 Evening Prayer

LIMITED PUBLIC WORSHIP SERVICES HAVE NOW RESUMED

Please check on social media and our website for the latest updates

The Abbey remains open daily from 0900 - 1700 for personal prayer

SUNDAY 3 JANUARY 2021

Epiphany

0800 BCP Eucharist (Abbey)

1030 Said Eucharist (Abbey)

1030 Said Eucharist (St Nicholas', Pinvin)

Monday 4 January

~

Tuesday 5 January

1100 FOODBANK (St A)

Wednesday 6 January

~

Thursday 7 January

0930 WW Weigh and Go (St A) - TBC

Friday 8 January

1300 FOODBANK (St A)

Saturday 9 January

~

Sunday 10 January - Baptism of Christ

1030 Said Eucharist (Abbey)

1030 Morning Praise (St Mary's, Wick)

Please be aware that all funeral, wedding and baptism services are subject to strict controls on the number of people attending, and are therefore private events
Please check our social media pages and website for further updates

AS THE COVID PANDEMIC CONTINUES TO EVOLVE, PLEASE DO CONTINUE TO CHECK OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES AND OUR WEBSITE FOR ANY CHANGES TO ADVERTISED SERVICES AND FOR ALL OF THE LATEST INFORMATION

WEBSITE:

Please remember you can see all the latest updates and information on our website
www.pershoreabbey.org.uk

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Search for Pershore Abbey Community to follow us on Facebook.

We are also on Twitter and Instagram.



All of our Social Media feeds are now available through our website.

Scroll to the bottom of each page to follow us there.