

# NW WEEKLY

The Weekly Pewsheets of the North Westmorland Parishes

## Happy New Year

Wishing you a Happy New Year and God's blessing for 2018.

## Mission Community Office Manager

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Joyce Keetley as Office Manager for our new Mission Communities. Joyce will be based at the Hub in Appleby. More news to follow shortly.

## Soul Survivor Fund

Are you willing to help a child from the deanery's youth congregation to attend Soul Survivor in the summer? Every year this Christian youth camp has a big impact on the developing faith and the life of our youth congregation. It costs around £180 to send a child for the week, but anything you could offer would help a child to attend. Please send any donations to Stewart at the Vicarage, Morland CA10 3AX. Cheques can be payable to Appleby Deanery.

## A.T.O.M.

A.T.O.M. returns on Sunday 21st January in Morland Village Hall from 10.00 to help set up and share breakfast. Service starts at 11.00. Do come and join us.



## About Today...

Today is the Feast of the Epiphany. An Epiphany is a sudden moment of understanding or revelation. In the Church, the Epiphany celebrates the visit of the Magi, recorded in Matthew's Gospel. It is significant as the moment at which Christ, the Jewish Messiah, is revealed also to the Gentiles (non-Jews). The Magi are rather mysterious characters. Matthew's account speaks simply of 'Magi from the east'. Most likely, the Magi were Persian Zoroastrians, whose priestly caste were called "magus" and were known for their study of the stars (Magi is the Latin plural of Magus). In the King James Bible, the word 'Magi' is translated simply as 'wise men'. It was a later tradition which fixed their number at three, made them kings and ascribed them with names – Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

In this perspective, the season of Epiphany is an apt one to pray for the worldwide mission of the Church. The feast of the Conversion of St Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, appropriately falls in the Epiphany season, as does the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The season of joyful celebration that begins at Christmas now continues through the successive Sundays of Epiphany, and recalls the key events in which Jesus is recognised as God's son: his baptism; the wedding at Cana and finally his presentation in the Temple, 40 days after Christmas, when he was recognised by Simeon and Anna, in the celebration also known as Candlemas.



## For your prayers

- The world-wide mission of the church, for all missionaries and missionary organisations, particularly the Church Mission Society.
- The recently bereaved, especially the family and friends of Brian Crisp whose funeral is at Askham tomorrow at 1.00pm.
- The pupils and teachers of our schools, returning from the Christmas break.
- Our PCCs, meeting over the next few weeks.
- Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

*From our calendar of prayer:*

- In the Anglican Communion: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia, clergy and people. The Most Rt Revd Winston Halapua, the Bishop of Polynesia and Primate and Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa. The Bishop of Tarnaki also of Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia, The Most Revd Philip Richardson.
- Our Diocese: This month we pray for Moving Mountains and our plans to reach the whole of Cumbria with the Good News of Jesus.
- Our Bishops: Bishop James, Evangelical Bishop's Meeting, Solihull. Bishop Robert, Service Sedbergh.

## Today's Readings

*Ephesians 3.1-12 - St Paul speaks of the Gentiles (non-Jews) being brought into God's plan through Jesus*

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 Magi (who were Gentiles!)*

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.