

BUS STOP ADVERTISING - Christmas begins with Christ

Thank you to all those who gave money to help pay for a bus shelter advertisement. Due to last minute bookings by some large companies none of the bus shelters in Highworth itself were booked but five shelters were booked in Swindon - two in Fleming Way, one at Regent Circus, one in Cheney Manor Road and one in Queen's Drive. There were also a number of high visibility sites booked in town and city centres and with the radio campaign it is estimated that almost 15million people were reached with the message that 'Christmas starts with Christ'. I think that makes it worth doing.

If we want to sponsor our own bus shelter in Highworth we need to start earlier next year! Yes, the campaign is planned to run over five years so we will have the opportunity.

Lesley Uzzell



Week beginning Sunday 3rd January 2010

Today we celebrate Epiphany. Traditionally we hear the story of the Magi and the gifts that they brought to Jesus after his birth. Their gifts have meanings that reflect the destiny Jesus was to fulfil - gold for a king, frankincense for God incarnate, myrrh for death. Matthew does not give the Magi names, nor does he tell us exactly from whence they came. But, although over the years tradition has given us names and origins and stories for the kings and although these details humanise the wise men, they are not relevant to today's story.

The word 'epiphany' means 'to make known'. God led the Magi to spot a new star, God led them to follow that star, and they became the first gentiles to have revealed to them the divinity of Christ - by their gifts they showed an understanding of the future of Jesus' life, and perhaps also the significance of the whole gospel. God 'made known' to the Magi that He was sending His son.

The Magi may have been kings or important people in their homelands, but in today's story they are merely supporting actors. They followed the true Star, the King of Kings - only His name is important, only His details are relevant, only His story is central to our lives.

So Epiphany is not about the Magi - it's all about Jesus. It's the starting point of the gospel, the good news, for all mankind.

Lesley Uzzell

PRAYING FOR THE BENEFICE

This week we pray for those who live in Oak Drive, Orange Close, The Paddock, Park Avenue, Parsonage Court and Pentylands Close

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

...all those who are sick or troubled,
praying especially for
Joan Burton, Val Cox, Andrew Crowley, Peggy Dobson, Gwen Drew, Hilary Fortnam, Peter Gibbs, Syd Huband, Janet Lival, Margaret McKerracher, Carole Richmond, Betty Taber, Anne Willis

...all those who are recently bereaved,
praying especially for those who love and miss
Marion Gentsch, Leslie Hodgetts, Rick Steed, Alan Thomas

...staff and pupils at Warneford School as they come to terms with the loss of a much-loved and long-serving teacher

...all involved with Northview School as they await the fate of their school

PRAYER

Holy Jesus,
Before your infant form the sages bowed their knee and acknowledged your lordship over all power and wisdom.
Grant us also clear vision and courage that, in the light of your true light, we may devote our power and potential to your service, even when that requires us to go home by another way.

Amen

Parish of Highworth with Sevenhampton & Inglesham - who to contact

All Ministry Enquiries - Rev Geoff Sowden (day off Friday) telephone 01793-765554
Church Office (Administration/General Enquiries) - Rosie Castle, tel 01793-762702 or email to stmichaelshighworth@offices.orangehome.co.uk

www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk

Our readings today are:

8.00am Isaiah 60:1-6 (pew bible page 746) Matthew 2:1-12 (pew bible page 966)
10.00am Matthew 2:1-12 (pew bible page 966)

Please join us for refreshments after our 10am and 4pm services today

If you prefer not to take alcohol, alcohol-free wine is available at our communion services - please take a pink card from a steward and ensure it is visible as you come for communion

SERVICES TODAY, Sunday 3rd January 2010, Epiphany

Highworth	8.00am	Holy Communion CW, Geoff Sowden
	9.00am	Church Breakfast, church room - all are welcome
	10.00am	Morning Praise with children's activities, Lesley Uzzell/Charles Kirke
	4.00pm	T-time service with children's groups, Geoff Sowden/Katie James
	6.00pm	Songs of Praise at URC, led by HMC
	7.00pm	Informal Worship, Arthur Woo
Blunsdon	10.00am	Family Communion, Geoff Sowden



CHURCH BREAKFAST - we meet for breakfast this morning, in the church room, between the 8.00am and 10.00am services - all are welcome, please do come and join us.

SERVICES NEXT WEEK, Sunday 10th January 2010, Epiphany 1

Highworth	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP Arthur Woo
	10.00am	Family Communion with children's activities, Arthur Woo/Hilary Fortnam
	4.00pm	T-time all age communion, Geoff Sowden/Stephen Fasham
	7.00pm	Informal Worship, Arthur Woo
Hannington	10.30am	Morning Worship, John Godfree
Blunsdon	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP, Rev Dr Richard Armitage
	10.00am	Family Worship, Jane Ockwell
	6.30pm	Evensong, John Rees
Grove Hill	7.30pm	Evening Service, Geoff Sowden



ST MICHAELS CHURCH FINANCES

I hope you are aware this year has been difficult for our finances. We are extremely grateful for the support we receive from Clintons Trust; however, this year from our day to day income and expenditure we are expecting a deficit. We have been able to pay our Parish share to the Diocese, support charities in their work, and fund our Youth Worker and Parish Administrator. Thank you to all who give via planned giving, clearly for some people this has been a bigger sacrifice this year due to the economic climate. Can I ask that as you get ready to give your last monetary gift for this financial year that along with your other Christmas gifts you consider your giving to St Michael's.

Ann Crowley, Treasurer

ST MICHAEL'S YEAR END ACCOUNTS

A small reminder and plea! Our year end is fast approaching and it would be appreciated if everyone who needs to produce information for the accounts could do so asap. Please let me know if you need any assistance. Wishing you all a Happy Christmas with thanks for the work you have done during this year.

Ann Crowley

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Mon 4 th	9.30am	Prayers in Church - all welcome
	10.00am	Ministry team Meeting, church office
	10.00am	Watercolour Group. Church Room
Tue 5 th	9.30am	Pilates in the Church Room
	10.00am	Tuesday morning fellowship (Lynn)
	8.00pm	Social Committee at 27 Pound Road
	8.00pm	ICC Prayers at The Bridge led by HCC
Wed 6 th	9.30am	Music Bugs in the Church Room
	9.30am	Little Fishes in the Chancel
	7.00pm	Pilates in the Church Room
	8.00pm	Wednesday Fellowship, 26 Priory Green (Wendy)
Thu 7 th	7.30pm	Bellringing practice, Bell Tower
Fri 8 th	8.30am	BWS in Church and churchyard
	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sat 9 th	10.00am	Coffee Morning and bulletin folding, Church Room
	2.00pm	Clues 2 Use - Holiday Club follow-on - Methodist Church
Sun 10 th	3.00pm	MU Deanery Epiphany Service, St Philip's Upper Stratton

CLUES 2 USE - Landlubbers on the Jesus Quest

Next Saturday 9 January is the next of the Holiday Club follow-on afternoon sessions. The session will be 2.00pm until 5.00pm and held at the Methodist Church. If you have primary aged children they are all welcome to attend. We are looking for a few volunteer helpers too so if you would like to help in any way please contact Lesley Uzzell (St Michael's representative on the group) by phone or via email below, with your availability and any preference you have for what you can do. Setting up will take place from 10.00am on 9th January, and then all helpers will meet up at 1.00pm on the day for a brief of the afternoon's plan. After a quick debrief at 5pm the tidying up will take place from about 5.15pm. **Lesley Uzzell**

MOTHERS' UNION

MU members are reminded that there is a Deanery Epiphany service at St Philip's Church Upper Stratton on Sunday 10th January at 3.00pm. After the service mince pies and coffee will be served. Everyone is welcome - please let me know if you need a lift.

Anne Rees

RECYCLING

Please remember that you can recycle your Christmas cards when you take them down this week by putting them in your orange box.

CHRISTMAS STAMPS

The Children's Society can use your Christmas stamps. The container is under the table near the main door.

BURNS NIGHT SUPPER

The Social Committee are once again putting on a Burns Night Supper - on 30th January. Tickets are on sale from today 3rd January, price £8.50, from a member of the committee.

Social Committee