

NEWSWIRE: 10th January 2025



- Services on Sunday
 - Deanery Epiphany Celebration Service
 - Men's Curry Night
-

A message from Duncan

Are your Christmas decorations down yet?

If not, fear not. Twelfth Night was last Sunday when many take down their decorations but history suggests decorations would often be left up throughout Epiphanytide until Candlemas (Feb 2). That is when Christmas is properly over! Candlemas remembers the day of purification which was when a Jewish mother would present herself at the temple to re-enter the worshipping life of the community 40 days after giving birth (Leviticus 12). This is what Mary and Joseph are doing in Luke 2.23 when they meet Simeon and Anna. In the Book of Common Prayer there is a short liturgy that reflects a Christian version of the practice called 'The Churching of Women'.

I realise that these Old Testament and old Church traditions will raise alarm bells for most of us today. Surely such social exclusions are archaic, unjust and frankly unwarranted? I think, however, there are some beautiful truths and practices to which these traditions testify. Perhaps over the next few weeks I will at least *try* to defend some of them!

The first defence helps us enter into the season of Epiphany and begins with a question. *What was Mary doing whilst she 'endured' her exclusion from the worshipping life of the community?* Answer: enjoying Jesus. In this 40 day period Joseph and other family members would have taken on all the tasks normally assigned to Mary to enable her to focus on her newborn, just like any Jewish mother. Time to fall in love, to bond, to forge a relationship, for mother and child just to 'be' together.

That is a perfect picture of what Epiphany is about for the Church, for us: a time to focus on loving Jesus, seeing his glory and his beauty afresh, all over again.

So in these cold days, pull up a radiator and a comfy chair and enjoy Jesus. Perhaps recall and read some of your favourite stories from the gospels in his presence and tell him why you love him. Or if you're brave - some of the gospel stories that trouble you and question him about them - he can take it! Or simply shut your eyes and 'be' together, together with the one who said in John 14.23: *"Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."*

Be at home with Jesus this Epiphany.

Grace, peace and joy to you all,

Duncan

Collect for the first Sunday of Epiphany

Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;
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.

SERVICES ON SUNDAY

9am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's

Readings: Isaiah 43.1-7; Luke 3:13-15, 21-22

9.30am - Morning Worship at St Peter's

Readings: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

10.30am - Morning Worship at St Leonard's and live streamed on [this link](#)

Readings: Isaiah 42:1-4; Luke 3:15-23a

If you have difficulties accessing the service on the livestream link above, please try accessing [our youtube channel](#) directly.

4pm - Families@4 at St Leonard's



NEXT WEEK

Monday 13th January

Bump to One meet on Mondays from 10.30am to midday in St Leonard's

Walkie Talkies meet on Mondays (term time) from 10am to 11.30am in St Leonard's church hall.

Tuesday 14th January

Mum's Bible Study meets on **Tuesday** mornings (term time) from **10 - 11.30am**. Please contact Jo Shaw for more details. Email: jollypops@gmail.com

Tinies and Toddlers meet on **Tuesdays** (term time) from **1.30pm - 3pm** in **Cassington Village Hall**. The Village Hall is not available on Tuesday 14th January. There will be a "Special" visit to Churchfields Care Home from 1.30pm – 3pm instead.

St Leonard's PCC Meeting

Wednesday 15th January

Warm Welcome Wednesday from 10.30am to midday in **St Leonard's** church.

NEXT SUNDAY - 19th January

9.30am - Holy Communion at St Peter's

10.30am - Holy Communion at St Leonard's and livestreamed

Looking further ahead

The funeral of the late Jasmine James will be held at **St Leonard's** at **11am** on Tuesday **21st January**.

Men's Curry Night - Wednesday 29th January (see below)

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to our Advent Reflections. We received many words of appreciation for daily messages that brought joy, peace, calm and inspiration in the busy Advent season.

We've arranged for our next **Men's Curry Night** for Wednesday 29th January at 8.00pm. We'll follow the usual format with a set menu, but if you've any queries, please contact Andy Greenwood at AMG1954church@gmail.com

A Celebration of The Epiphany
With Music, Prayer and Readings



Sunday 12th January 2025 at 6pm
St Mary Magdalene, Woodstock

Please pray for:

- Jon who has been in hospital and is now recovering with his family
- Dave recovering from a number of strokes.
- Ben and healing for his mental health.
- Scarlett's recovery from long Covid.
- Katie suffering with epilepsy. Please pray that the right medication be found to control her seizures.

To add names to the prayer list, please contact the Church Office (stleonards_stpeters@btconnect.com) Names will be added to the list by express permission, and only first names will be published.

www.stleonardseysham.org.uk | www.stpeterschurchcassington.org | [Youtube channel](#) | [facebook page](#)