

NEWSLETTER

Sunday 30 January: Epiphany 4/Candlemas



Readings: Ezekiel 43.27-44.4; 1 Corinthians 13; Luke 2.22-40

Today

- 10.30am Benefice Communion: Holy Trinity, Stockton
Revd Canon Nick Bird, Revd Mark Poole, Judith Hewitt
- 7.00pm Re-Ignite Youth Group: St Nicholas Tower Room

Please note: there will be no other services taking place today

 [Online Benefice Worship](#) (YouTube)

This week

Monday 31 January

- 9.00am [Morning Prayer \(zoom\)](#)
1.30pm Sewing & Art Group: St Nicholas Tower Room

Tuesday 1 February

- 9.00am Morning Prayer: St Mary, Warthill
1.45pm Little People, Play and Praise: St Nicholas Tower Room
- 7.30pm A Quiet Space: St Nicholas Tower Room

Wednesday 2 February

- 9.00am Holy Communion: St Nicholas, Dunnington
10.00am Holy Communion: Holy Trinity, Stockton
10.45am Funeral: St Nicholas, Dunnington
7.00pm [Compline \(zoom\)](#)

Thursday 3 February

- 9.00am [Morning Prayer \(zoom\)](#)

Saturday 5 February

- 10.00 am Community Café: St Nicholas Tower Room

Sunday 6 February: 4th Sunday before Lent

- Readings: Isaiah 6.1-8; 1 Corinthians 15.1-11; Luke 5.1-11
- 8.00am Holy Communion: St Nicholas, Dunnington
10.30am Holy Communion: St Nicholas, Dunnington
10.30am Holy Communion: Holy Trinity, Stockton
4.00pm Family Worship: St Nicholas, Dunnington

 [Online Benefice Worship](#) (YouTube)

Candlemas - A reflection by Revd Canon Nick Bird

Friends,

We arrive at the Feast of Candlemas, properly held on the 2nd February and 40 days after Christmas. It's a day that often goes unremarked, even though it is the conclusion of the Christmas season and the period of the celebration of the incarnation of Christ – God taking flesh. Whilst the rest of the world goes wild about the Christmas festivities for the 40 days plus before the big day arrives, the church celebrates for 40 days after. We keep our nativity scenes firmly in place to act as a reminder of the season, and a prompt to continue to rejoice alongside the song of the angels - "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among people".

But Candlemas is also a turning point, a fulcrum, a moment of conversion. The joy, and indeed sentimentality, of the crib is consciously turned away from, and, with Lent beginning on 2nd March, we begin to look to the cross. This is why our feast days and festivals are of such crucial importance. We gather as a people to make that collective change of focus from one thing to another, and there are few more stark pivots than from crib to cross, birth to death, manger to mortality.

It is notable that we look not to Easter Day at first, but to Good Friday. Too many times we try and take the spiritual bypass that jumps straight to the empty tomb and the joy of the resurrection, whilst trying to skip the passion and crucifixion. It doesn't work. The *Via Dolorosa* is unavoidable. This is the name given to a processional route in the Old City of Jerusalem, the path thought to have been trodden by Christ on the way to Golgotha, known at the *Sorrowful Way*, and the road taken by many a pilgrim. This is the path we commit to, our own *Via Dolorosa*, because it is the inevitable path through life itself – suffering, sorrow and death – without which there can be no resurrection. Candlemas is the celebration of light in the darkness, and a great statement of faith and hope, that in the end love wins.

Revd Canon Nick Bird



As of 27th January, the wearing of masks is no longer legally required. However, we will still be **strongly encouraging** people to wear masks in church, especially since social distancing may be difficult. The Church of England's official guidance has been updated in light of this, and can be read in full either by [clicking here](#), or by visiting tinyurl.com/updatedcovidguidance. We will be following these guidelines closely as we strive to ensure that everyone feels that attending church is as safe an activity as possible.

Parish Churches News & Events

A Quiet Space (secular meditation course): This course is now fully booked. Thank you for your interest & we look forward to getting started!

Volunteer chalice bearers sought (St Nicholas Church): If you have attended church since Christmas you will be aware that the Priest now intincts (dips) each wafer in the wine before giving it. This requires someone to stand on the right of the priest to hold the chalice. So far Carole, Barry and Judith have been doing this, but we would like to start up a rota including some other people. No special skill is required - just the ability to stand and hold the chalice in a convenient position for the priest to dip the wafers in. Please inform Carole White if you feel you could offer to do this occasionally.

Sunday Coffee at St Nicholas: We are now currently asking for volunteers to make and serve coffee after the 10.30 service, only. If you can help, please sign the list on the Tower Room rota board.

Messy Pancake Party: We will be making and serving pancakes on Tuesday 1st March, from 3.30 until 5.30. Put the date in your diary now!

Funeral: The funeral for Jane Papaglimis will take place at St Nicholas Church on Wednesday 2nd February at 10.45. There will be no coffee after the Communion service, sorry.

Family Worship: We gather for an informal and interactive service at 4.00pm on Sunday 6th February, to look at the parable of the Lost Sheep. Please invite any families who may live near you.

Parish Lunch: The list is filling up so do sign up soon if you are interested in joining us for a roast dinner on Sunday 13th February. There will be a Communion service at 12.30 with lunch served at 1.00.

Holy Trinity Church Coffee Morning: Holy Trinity Church in Stockton on the Forest warmly invite you to our next coffee morning on Saturday 12th February from 10am-12pm. Come along and have a natter, a cuppa, and a scone. There will be cakes, books, a raffle, children's games with Lisa, and the 100 Club draw.

Silver Service Afternoon Tea: Holy Trinity Church, Stockton on the Forest, are holding their regular Silver Service Afternoon Tea on Tuesday 22nd Feb. Join us for an afternoon of friendship, tea, and cakes, plus a quiz!

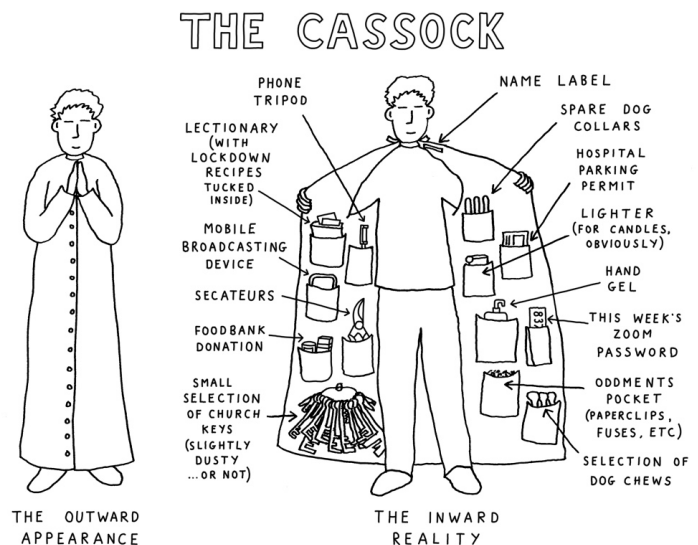
Holtby Trader Valentine's Special: On Saturday 5th February, Holtby Trader will be having a Valentine's Special from 10am-12pm. There will be pastries, sweets, chocolates, and sweet thoughts on cards to show you care.

Benefice Prayer Meetings: Revd Mark Poole will be holding a monthly benefice prayer meeting on zoom on the following dates at 7pm: Thursday 17th Feb, Tuesday 29th March, Wednesday 20th April (after compline), Tuesday 24th May, Thursday 23rd June, Monday 25th July. All are welcome. The zoom link can be found either on the front of the newsletter, or by emailing Mark at: revmarkpoole20@gmail.com. There is no pressure to pray aloud, just to be present in the presence of prayer in your own home.

District online prayer gathering: From Thursday 6th January, we'll be hosting a weekly online time of prayer – focussing on seeking God's renewal for our lives, church and world. We'll begin at 6.30pm for about 45 minutes. You can join on zoom or watch on facebook - joining details available at <https://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/news-events/district-online-weekly-prayer-gathering/>

From the Deanery: Theology @4: Revd Dr Greg Hoyland is leading a new set of these studies at Thorganby Church at 4.00pm on Saturday afternoons, always the first Saturday of the month. Everyone is welcome, it is an open invitation to attend this Derwent Ings Church, part of our Deanery.

On 4 Feb the subject is Being Church, (What is church [for]?), Being and Belonging, Personhood - Individuals in Community, and Being and Doing). On 5 Mar it will be Led by the Spirit and on 2 Apr it will be The Dignity of Difference. Greg is an excellent speaker and will keep us all up to date with these thought-provoking addresses.



cartoon by Dave Walker, from CartoonChurch.com

Lectionary Corner at St Nicholas

2 February: Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

3 February: Anskar, Archbishop of Hamburg, Missionary in Denmark and Sweden 865

To receive newsletters by email, contact grapevine.rey@gmail.com. Also available on the St Nicholas Church website and in St Nicholas Church.

To receive the Methodist Circuit News, please contact the office by email yorkcircuitoffice@gmail.com or phone 07984 019995.

Next newsletter on **Sunday 6th February** [Email items to grapevine.rey@gmail.com](mailto:grapevine.rey@gmail.com) by **9.00 am on Thursday 3rd February**