

St Francis Weekly News for THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY



17th January 2021

This newsletter may have come to you by email or through your letterbox, if you received it on paper but are happy to receive an email in future please email deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com If you know anybody else who would like this delivered or emailed please contact Deborah or Revd Janet: revdjanetwyer@outlook.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

CHURCH CLOSED FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP

In line with Bishop Graham's recent recommendation, we have taken the decision to close the church for Sunday worship. We will continue to broadcast the service via the St Francis YouTube channel.

If you would like assistance in respect of joining our YouTube channel or would like to talk about how you might receive the sacrament please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Vicar: The Revd Janet Wyer [07368 832294]

EPIPHANY

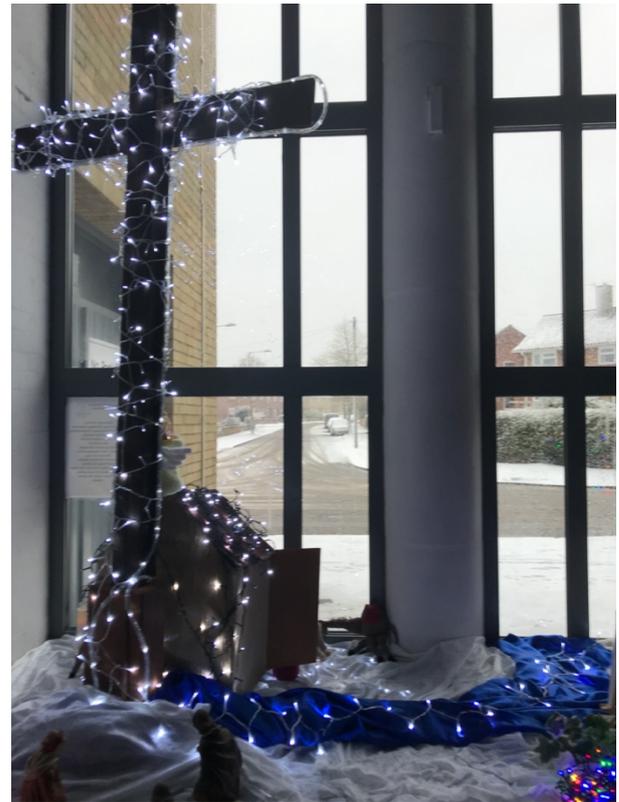
Last Sunday we celebrated the Baptism of Christ, the first revealing of Jesus as the Son of God in the Gospel of John – this Sunday, 17th January we dip into John's Gospel again for his second revealing. Philip introducing Jesus to Nathanael.

Next week John's third revelation will be explored – the wedding at Cana where Jesus turned water in wine...



Brother Eeyore surrounded by the wonders of Epiphany!

A SNOWY DAY...



A TIME OF DEEP SADNESS

It was with a sorrow beyond words that we heard of the devastating loss of a young member of our St Francis family.

Those of us who knew Emily have fond memories of shared happy times and will long grieve the loss of this beautiful child.

Losing one of our little ones is heartbreaking and to do so in the midst of these most difficult of days is the cruellest of circumstances.

We extend arms of love to Emily's family, embracing them in our love and prayers. We remember also all who knew and loved her. Our hearts are with you at this saddest of times.

'She whom we love and lose is no longer where she was before; she is now wherever we are'

St John Chrysostom

ASSISTANCE DURING WINTER LOCKDOWN

We extend our deep gratitude to those who have once again been contributing non-perishable foods and goods to St Francis Free Food.

This means that we have a small stock of food and toiletries that we can pass on to those who find themselves in difficult circumstances.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you or someone you know is in need of a helping hand in respect of feeding themselves or their family.

24/7 answerphone: 01603 431259

Please leave your name and a contact number and we will return your call as soon as possible

Alternatively you may come to the church any weekday morning 10am – 12pm, there is always someone on the premises at this time.

GET CREATIVE!

Last week we asked if anyone might like to submit a piece of personal craftwork, artwork, poetry or other written material.

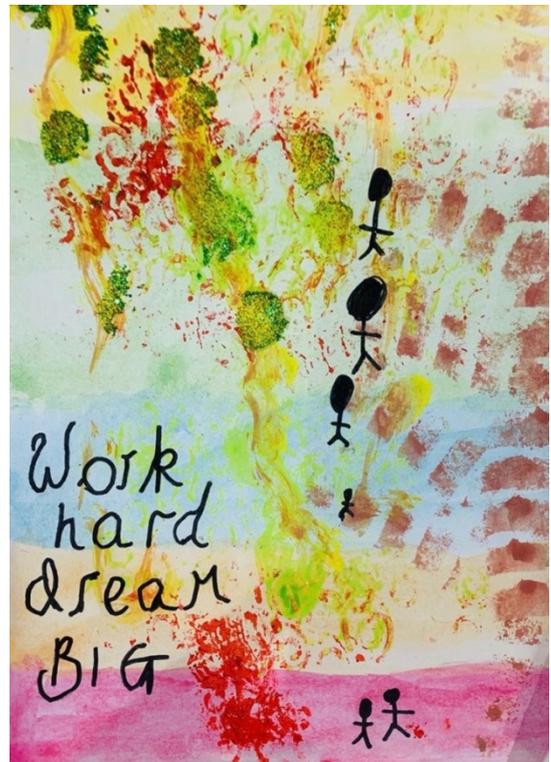
Although I think many of you are being very shy, we have had a couple of pieces sent in.



This lovely shot of St Francis Church was taken during the last lockdown in the Spring of 2020 and the photo of a beautiful crocheted blanket was sent to me by Margaret Moore. Thank you Margaret!



It made me smile to see Revd Winnie trying to hide behind the sofa – at least I think that's him, can there more than one Winnie?



I was also very pleased to receive this from William aged eight. He drew this after listening to the song 'What a Wonderful World' There are trees growing, sunshine, family, and the rainbow is in the background for hope. The people at the bottom are family that one day we will see again. Thank you William xx

If you have something that you would like us to consider for the newsletter please feel free to send via email revdjanetwyer@outlook.com or post a copy of your submission through the vicarage door. [not the original please, we cannot guarantee its safe return]

HEARTSEASE COMMUNITY MONEY ADVICE CENTRE [HCMAC]

The last six months has been an exciting time for this new project. First we got approval from the church to set the centre up. Since then we have raised enough money from grants to enable us to run for an initial three year period. We have gained Charity Commission approval for the charity that is running the centre, and we have been authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority.



David & Deborah Lechmere our debt advisers

Meanwhile two debt advisers have been trained, and we have set up all the necessary policies for the centre to run. We have furnished the office we will run from longer term, once Covid allows, and set up a website, Heartseasecommunitymoneyadvice.wordpress.com and email address heartseasecmacentre@outlook.com and a mobile phone number 07765 739987. Not bad for six months work, particularly during a global pandemic, although being forced to stay at home does lead to more time for some of these activities.

We are now ready to open the centre. We would have loved a formal opening, of our office in Next door @St Francis, and the opportunity to invite people in to see us, but the reality is that we cannot do this at the moment. However, we are now in a position to start helping people over Zoom or on the telephone. If you or somebody you know is in debt and needs help then please call or email as above. We also want to help those who are not actually in debt but who are struggling financially to try to avoid debt too.

Longer term we hope to be able to have drop in coffee mornings and face to face consultations, we will also have available a mobile phone, and/or laptop for when you need to contact people about benefits or other important financial matters and have no credit or data. We can also help you fill in all those horrible forms. We will be looking for volunteers, to train as debt advisers, and also to provide hospitality and to help people with form filling etc. If you think you may be able to help, please call or email as above.



cma
Heartsease
Community Money Advice

Now open

We have trained debt advisers

We can also help you before you get into debt

Please call 07765739987 and leave your name & number

Or email heartseasecmacentre@outlook.com



WINTER LOCKDOWN

Please note that the Church is not open for Sunday Worship.

However, the church is available for individual prayer every weekday 10.30am – 11.30am.

If you would like to spend some time in the church or would like to make enquiries about receiving the sacrament please do feel free to contact Revd Janet [07368 832294]

If you would like to join in with Sunday Worship we continue to broadcast via the St Francis YouTube channel. Just search for 'St Francis Heartsease YouTube'!

THE BELLS ARE STILL RINGING!

Well, one is anyway...

With another lockdown thrust upon us and the reality that many people are again having to shield; St Francis is once again ringing out the reminder that the community is being held in prayer throughout the day and that God's love is with us always.

If you hear the bell – it means that prayers are being said for you; and please remember that no matter what is happening in our lives we are all precious in God's eyes and we are never alone.

Incidentally, each ring should total 33 tolls of the bell [3 x 11] which is the number of years Jesus was with us on earth. It is a reminder that he is with us still in spirit and his blessing is always upon and around us.

24HR PRAYER VIGIL

The Revd Helen Garrod has organised an all day prayer vigil...

All day Sunday (17 January), for 24 hours, there is a constant stream of people praying for the NHS, those who are unwell, those who are bereaved and all who are working to maintain life at this time.

The vigil begins at midnight Saturday with a welcome from Bishop Jonathan who supports healthcare chaplaincy across Norfolk and on Sunday at 07.30 we will be joined in fellowship by Bishop Graham. You are welcome to join the zoom room throughout the vigil and share fellowship as we pray together in this time of national and international need.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87958829911?pwd=Wm82bH B0bi8rNmhEVjRI MG9WK0gwQT09>

Meeting ID: 879 5882 9911

Passcode: 770988

HOME GROUP

Jim Green will again be offering the opportunity for folk to get together via the St Francis Zoom Room every fortnight on a Wednesday evening.

The forthcoming dates are:

January 27

February 10, 24

March 10, 24

As before the times are 7- 8pm, and the format is very simple: chat, catch up with each other, read a Bible passage, pray for each other.

Please email Jim and he will forward on the zoom link address.

jimpiecrust@gmsail.com

NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTICE BOARD

If you have a notice you would like included under the noticeboard – please email your piece to

revdjanetwyer@outlook.com

or deborah.lechmere@ntlworld.com

PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

The lock down and the doom and gloom that seems to relentlessly stream out of the media might be too much for some of us to cope with - in all sorts of ways. Please remember you are not alone, if you would like a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

If you live on the Heartsease we are also able to offer help if you or someone you know needs support with emergency basic food provision. Our contact details are as follows:

Revd Janet [07368 832294]

24/7 Answerphone: 01603 431259

[checked daily]

There is also someone available in church weekday mornings if you would refer to talk to someone face to face.



USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

Norfolk Assistance Scheme: **01603 223392**

A LETTER FROM 100 ACRE WOOD...

I thought that you might like to read a letter I recently received via 'Robin Mail'

It began...

Dear Revd Winnie, Brother Eeyore, Piglet and Revd Janet

We are all safe in lockdown. Rabbit and owl are helping vulnerable animals in the wood!

Rabbit is ok and has had a good harvest and has been tidying the wood of rubbish.

Me, Tigger, I've been looking after the beehives, filling jars of honey, storing honey and giving extra honey to the local Foodbank along with Rabbit's extra veg.

Owl has been helping by picking berries so we can make jam, Rabbit made chutney.

We all miss you

Hope this letter finds you well

Tigger, Rabbit, Owl.

xx xx xx

PS. We all hate the rubbish people are leaving! Cans cut our feet, plastic bottles trap the bugs, crisp packets are upsetting the squirrels and mice AND we the animals hate dog mess and dog mess bags that are left everywhere!

Apart from that we are fine. Sorry for moaning it's just we are seeing more and more rubbish [and fly tipping is a major problem as well]

Love from us all at 100 Acre Wood xxx

How lovely they took the time to write to us here at St Francis – much appreciated Tigger, Rabbit and Owl!

A WORD FROM THE VICAR

Given that I function much better in sunshine and warmth I've found this winter thus far very, very chilly. Especially as we have turned off the central heating in the church building [too expensive to run] and are relying on electric halogen radiant

heaters instead. [quite efficient, but sometimes not able to reach the parts central heating can reach...]

I was also rather dismayed to open the curtains this morning to find that the Heartsease had turned white! As if to confirm this I then received a text from Bee that read 'It's snowing. Yuck'

Short but to the point, and my sentiments entirely as I trudged through slushy stuff to ring the nine o'clock bell signalling morning prayer.

However, on venturing out at midday [bell and prayers again] It was looking rather beautiful and much to my delight I could hear the delighted squeals of children playing in the snow. That cheered me up – much better!

Better still was this drawing in the snow that hubby David pointed out to me.



Looks like a garden visitor decided to submit a drawing for our Creative Corner, I thought that this was a rather good effort in depicting an endangered polar bear, poised on the tip of an iceberg... [why does that remind me of a brand of clear mints?]



And strangely enough another polar creature popped into my inbox – thank you Jack!

Keep wrapped up warm and safe folks, and may you know the warmth of God's love enfolding you through these cold winter days

Revd Janet

FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in need of prayer at this time: Huggy; Megan; Denise H; Christine; John P; Scott; Stephen C; Margaret T; David & Cynthia S; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Pete; Fr Brian; Hazel; Ben; Frazer.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Doreen; Rosemary; Sheila; John; Joy; Shirley.

We remember with love Emily and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends.

A PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or feeling isolated. In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Church of St Francis
Heartsease**

Heavenly Father

**We ask your blessing upon us.
Hold the Heartsease Community,
and all the world,
in your arms of love.
Be with us.
Give us your strength,
peace, and healing grace.
Watch over us,
protect us from harm;
and keep in safety
all those who care for the sick
and attend to our needs,
in Jesus name we pray.
Amen**

PRAYERS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF
EPIPHANY

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
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

Eternal Lord, our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation
to your glory, hidden through past ages
and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

God of glory, you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life: fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory may shine in
all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

READINGS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF
EPIPHANY

1 SAMUEL 3: 1 - 10



Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD
under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those
days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow
dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his
room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and
Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD,
where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called,
'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran
to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But
he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went
and lay down. The LORD called again, 'Samuel!'
Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am,
for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my

son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know
the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet
been revealed to him. The LORD called Samuel
again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli,
and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli
perceived that the LORD was calling the boy.
Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if
he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your
servant is listening."' So Samuel went and lay
down in his place.

Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as
before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak,
for your servant is listening.'

PSALM 139: 1 - 9



O Lord, you have searched me out and known me;

♦
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

You mark out my journeys and my resting place ♦
and are acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word on my tongue, ♦
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

You encompass me behind and before ♦
and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, ♦
so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go then from your spirit? ♦
Or where can I flee from your presence?

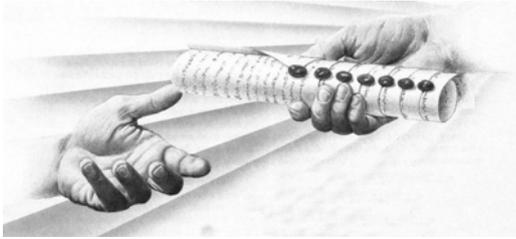
If I climb up to heaven, you are there; ♦
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

If I take the wings of the morning ♦
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

Even there your hand shall lead me, ♦
your right hand hold me fast.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now,
and shall be for ever. Amen

REVELATION 5: 1 – 10



Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.'

Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song:

'You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slaughtered and by your blood you
ransomed for God
saints from every tribe and language and people
and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests
serving our God,
and they will reign on earth.'

JOHN 1: 43 – END



Philip Brings Nathanael To Jesus by Harold Copping

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man

REFLECTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

Two Sundays into Epiphany and we delve even deeper into this season of revelation.

We have left the baby in Bethlehem – and we have visited the Jordan, where the man Jesus has been baptized by John, that moment when the heavens were rent apart and the Spirit of God, like a dove rested upon Jesus and God's voice was heard to say - 'This is my Son'

And today, we listen in to a conversation between Jesus and a young man, a young man who has been praying hard for the Messiah to come and lo and behold, there he is right in front of him!

John's account of Philip's enthusiastic introduction of Jesus to Nathanael is robust – and packed with meaning.

Unfortunately, as in many books of the Bible, lots of meanings and allusions that crop up, go straight over our twenty first century heads.

Scripture is after all rooted and grounded in a culture, time and way of life that is way beyond our understanding.

Take for example the boy Samuel – he was the result of Eli's prayer and blessing upon his mother Hannah at the shrine of Shiloh, she had gone there in tears to pray for the gift of a child – an encounter with Eli left her blessed with her heart's desire.

But no sooner than the child was weaned she took him back to the Shrine and presented him to Eli as an offering to the Lord.

Admittedly she got to see him once a year when she took him some new clothes – but otherwise the child grew up a servant to the Lord and no doubt to Eli and his wayward sons.

Can't see that happening nowadays...

Anyway, never mind the unlikelihood of such a thing happening these days – the reality of such a thing was matter of fact in those far off days of long ago Palestine.

Much the same as the Word of God being heard and spoken was commonplace in Eli's younger days.

However as Eli approaches extreme old age, as we heard in our reading: 'The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread'

Poor old Eli, high priest and judge of Israel and his sons appear to have drifted a long way from being the leaders of the people God had called them to be.

The fact that the boy Samuel had no idea that the voice of God might be heard in the tabernacle where he slept night in night out gives us some clue as to how limited their vision had become.

And it took Eli way too long to realise what was happening with the boy – and the fact that he left the lad to it speaks volumes

'If he calls again just say you're listening – he'll tell you what to do' he says, before sleepily pulling up the covers and drifting off to sleep again.

Nice - Samuel, probably no more than eleven years old, expected to meet with the creator of heaven and earth alone...

No wonder the LORD had a rather stinging message he wanted Samuel to deliver.

And no wonder ears did indeed tingle when the message was heard [anyone who's ever had a dressing down from someone in authority will recognise that feeling for sure.]

But to give Eli credit – when Samuel obediently repeats The LORD'S word verbatim, he accepts the judgement, 'It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.' He says.

And indeed the LORD did just that – Samuel blossomed and grew, and in time took his place in salvation history as prophet, priest, leader and king

maker – he anointed both Saul and David, the first kings of Israel.

Samuel – God's appointed, forerunner to the One who would, in time fulfil all that the LORD had promised the faithful bearers of his word and law.

Jesus.

It's hard to miss how underwhelmed Nathanael is when Philip rushes up to greet him with the news that Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth is 'him about whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote...'

'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' he asks

Clearly Nathanael is not impressed – however, it takes only a brief introduction to Jesus and a short exchange of words and he is suddenly filled with awe and wonder

Rabbi – you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel' he exclaims.

Why the sudden turnaround?

Because Jesus has not only tapped into ancient knowledge, prophecy and visionary understanding that were commonplace among those faithful to the LORD and Jewish teaching, but has also chosen to reveal himself on what can only be called a mystical level; this is what sparks such joy in Nathanael.

So, back to the meanings, allusions and cultural references in Scripture that are packed with meaning but might go over our heads.

In those days, dedicated young men who were faithful to God would have spent most of their time studying a vast array of ancient Jewish texts and Scripture.

They would have been able to quote word for word the books of the prophets and the songs of the psalmists.

Hence Jesus and Nathanael enjoy having a little banter with the words of Zephaniah – Ah, says Jesus, when introduced to Nathanael 'here is one without deceit' Zephaniah 3:13

'How do you know me' asks Nathanael, understanding the reference

'I saw you under the fig tree' responds Jesus.

'To sit under the fig tree' in ancient Jewish tradition, is to sit in prayer studying God's word, praying for the fulfilment of the Promise of the Messiah – Jesus is acknowledging he is aware of Nathanael's inner yearnings, and his faithfulness in prayer and study.

And Nathanael, in a visionary moment is caught up in the wonder of the revelation he is a party to and caps Jesus allusion to Zephaniah 3 with one of his own, 'you are the King of Israel' he exclaims.
[Zephaniah 3: 15]

And then, John records the moment when Jesus reveals who he is: 'Very truly I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man'

Another Epiphany moment

In these times of modernity and so called progress how far distant those days of visions, revelations and wonders seem.

There are few among us when confronted with John of Patmos text Revelation who do not shake our heads with wonder at the sheer immensity of all that we don't understand.

We have lost so much, in so many ways over the centuries, and there is still so much for us to yearn



for, just as Nathanael yearned and prayed under his fig tree.

However, there is one thing we can be sure of – just as John saw the slaughtered Lamb standing before the throne, worthy of opening the seal – so the Lamb still stands today, opening the way for humankind to be a people worthy to serve - creating the way for God's justice to roll down upon the earth.

Jesus is the one in whom God's will is accomplished, he is the one who will unite heaven and earth.

And we are the people of this age who should, like Samuel and Nathanael, find our tabernacle, our own fig tree, and there listen and pray, waiting for the One who was, and is and is to come, to be revealed to us.

Amen

Revd Janet Wyer

Jesus set off for Galilee. And when he arrived there, he found Philip. Jesus walked towards him. 'Philip,' Jesus said, 'follow me.' Then Jesus walked a little further.

Philip was surprised at the sudden meeting, so he ran to find Nathanael. Excitedly he said, 'I have found him! I have found Jesus, the Messiah, the son of Joseph from Nazareth!'

Nathanael just laughed out loud. 'What? From Nazareth? You are joking! Nothing good comes from Nazareth!'

Philip looked shocked. 'Of course it can! It is him. Jesus!' But Nathanael just laughed. Philip was disappointed with Nathanael's reaction and decided that there was only one way to change his mind. 'Come and see,' he said. Reluctantly, Nathanael agreed, and off they went.

As they walked towards Jesus, he saw them first. 'Look, here is a good and honest man,' Jesus said, pointing to Nathanael. Nathanael was astonished. Jesus seemed to know him already. 'How do you know me?' Nathanael asked.

Jesus smiled and told him, 'I saw you sitting under the fig tree.'

Nathanael was very puzzled. Jesus continued, saying, 'I saw you before Philip found you and called you to "Come and see".'

Nathanael looked at Jesus. Then he said to Jesus in amazement, 'You are the Son of God!'

Jesus replied, 'Do you believe because I saw you and recognised you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this. One day you will see heaven opened and the Son of Man coming in glory with angels around him.'



part of the
SUPER
COLORING



Name _____

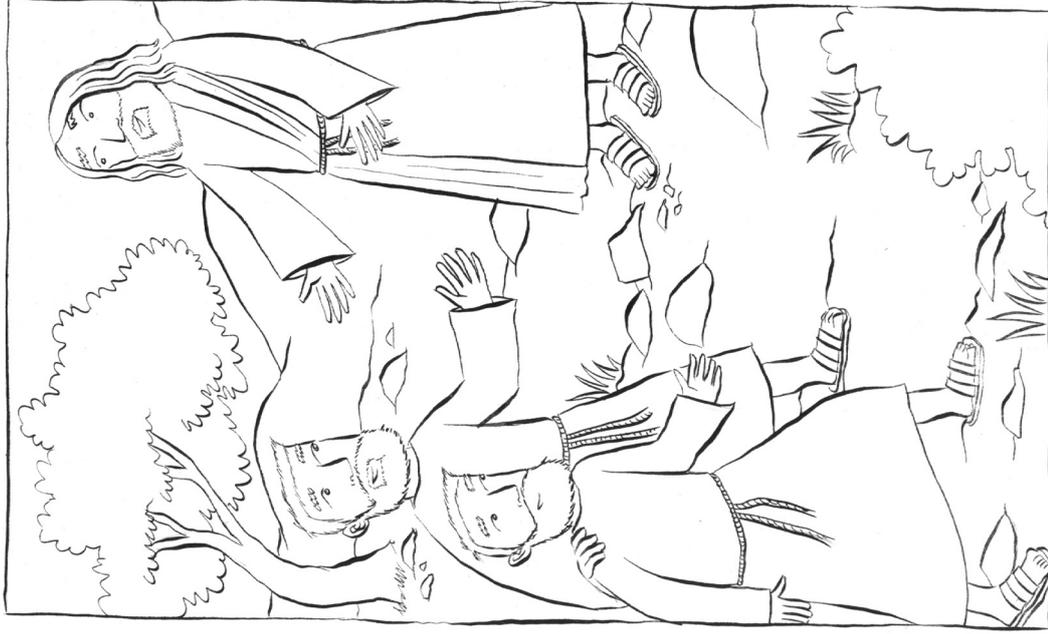
ROOTS Activity Sheet

17-23 January 2021
Epiphany 2



John 1.43-51

Philip and Nathanael both have an unexpected encounter with Jesus.



Philip brought Nathanael to, 'Come and see.'



Puzzle

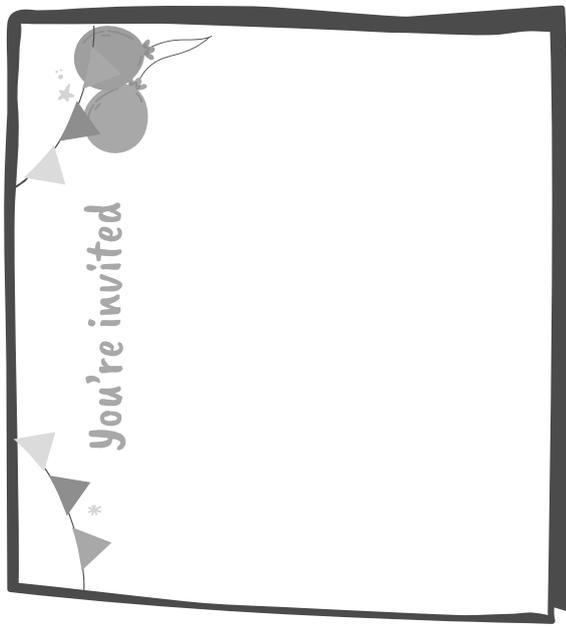
Can you unjumble the letters to find the two friends who met with Jesus?

liPiph

ahEanaltN



Imagine you are Philip and write an invitation for Nathanael to come, see and hear Jesus.



Philip brought Nathanael to hear from Jesus. Who would you bring to Jesus? Draw them into the picture.

