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An open sky reminds us that often limits are self-imposed – there are always other possibilities, other realities. And that's why star-gazing can also be the basis for action and change.

As another New Year dawns we follow the Magi – the wise men who followed the leading of the star to find the Christ child. Star-gazers forget about themselves, as they become part of a bigger picture. They dare to believe that something else is possible, that change can happen. What will that change be for us? Perhaps it might be a renewed confidence in the message we have been entrusted with as the church in this place. And maybe also a renewed commitment to welcome all who long to gaze at the stars with us.

*Revd Deb Smith*

### SOCIAL MEDIA

<https://www.facebook.com/bridportchurches/>

If you don't use Facebook, just search using Google or another search engine for 'Bridport Team Ministry Facebook'

### NEED FOOD or OTHER HELP?

**FOOD BANK** Cupboard Love is remaining open. Any issues contact 07443 596096 or [cupboardlove.bridport@gmail.com](mailto:cupboardlove.bridport@gmail.com)

Need help with shopping call this number 07552 312594  
Volunteers can help if you are self-isolating. Look at this link of local businesses: <https://www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

### 9pm SERVICE OF COMPLINE

9pm LIVE ZOOM Compline (*night prayer*) Sun, Tues & Thurs Email for link: [maggiecrosbie@hotmail.com](mailto:maggiecrosbie@hotmail.com)

# All the best for 2021



Greetings from the worshipping community of Bridport!

## 2nd Sunday of Christmas

### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

### THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

In the days after Christmas, I hope to be out walking about the countryside, desperately keen to work off at least some of the pud, and enjoying taking a break from rushing, rushing rushing...

Memories of times away with family and friends will be poignant this year. This has always been a time to see friends. Time to do silly things like getting wrapped up against a bitter night and then to lie on the hard frosty ground and gaze at the teeming millions of stars and perhaps even see a shooting star blast across the sky and be filled with wonder. There's something about looking up at the night sky filled with stars that gives you a sense of perspective.



You realize just how tiny you are, and how we are part of something so much bigger than ourselves and our small concerns. The word 'epiphany' means a 'manifestation' or 'appearing'. Apart from its specific religious meaning, it's used to describe a flash of revelation or realization, a moment of 'eureka' – just like that which comes when looking up at the stars. The short season of Epiphany in the church calendar is there to do the very same thing: to make the point that Christianity is a eureka kind of faith. It revolves around the belief that God chooses to be revealed to human beings, and this revelation makes us see everything differently. Star-gazing can be a spiritual experience. I suppose it's to do with perspective. When we want to see new possibilities we say 'the sky's the limit', in other words there are no limits.

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ST SWITHUN'S  
BRIDPORT-WALDITCH-BOTHENHAMPTON-BRADPOLE-ALLINGTON-WEST BAY  
ST JOHN'S  
HOLY TRINITY  
ST MARY'S

**A Sunday Service may be livestreamed (BTM Facebook at 11am) or on demand via our website**

————— **TODAY'S READINGS**

**Ephesians 1 : 3 -14**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

**John 1 : 10 - 18**

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."')

From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

*At St Swithun's – a further possible reading:*

**Ecclesiasticus 24 : 1 - 12**

Wisdom praises herself, and tells of her glory in the midst of her people. In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, and in the presence of his hosts she tells of her glory: 'I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth like a mist. I dwelt in the highest heavens, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud. Alone I compassed the vault of heaven and traversed the depths of the abyss. Over waves of the sea, over all the earth, and over every people and nation I have held sway. Among all these I sought a resting-place; in whose territory should I abide? 'Then the Creator of all things gave me a command, and my Creator chose the place for my tent. He said, "Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance." Before the ages, in the beginning, he created me, and for all the ages I shall not cease to be. In the holy tent I ministered before him, and so I was established in Zion. Thus in the beloved city he gave me a resting-place, and in Jerusalem was my domain. I took root in an honoured people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage.

————— **TODAY'S COLLECT**

*God our Father,  
in love you sent your Son  
that the world may have life:  
lead us to seek him among the outcast  
and to find him in those in need,  
for Jesus Christ's sake. xxx*

**Amen.**

————— **PLEASE PRAY FOR**

Those who are sick. Those who have died and the families and friends who mourn them. Please pray for anyone else you know who needs or would appreciate your prayers.