

Dear all,

I don't know about you, but there are, occasionally, some things I have a mental barrier over. For many years it was how to spell the word 'embarrassment' or its variants. You can imagine how embarrassing that was when chalking children's feelings words up on the board in Personal and Social Education lessons.

Another word I had a blindness over was 'Epiphany' – this time meaning, not spelling. This year is the first time I have been confident enough that I am right without looking it up!

The word means 'manifestation' or 'showing'... 'showing forth', revealing... The Epiphany Season is Christmas part 2. Once the baby is born, he is revealed to the world, starting locally with the shepherds, but then to the whole world in the persons of the Wise Men. Traditionally there are 3 wise men, or kings – one African, one Indian, and one Asian, encompassing, in effect, the whole world.

For the next 3 Sundays, we play havoc with chronology. This Sunday, we jump forward about 30 years, as we consider the showing forth of Jesus as God's Son, related in the Baptism account. Next Sunday, although He argues it is not yet His time, Jesus' divinity is manifest in the first miracle or sign (John's word) at the wedding at Cana. In 2 weeks' time, Jesus' home town ignores and rejects the person manifest among them – showing that we must all make a choice when God is manifest to us. And then, back to baby again when the infant Jesus is brought to the old man, Simeon, in the temple. Simeon's eyes are opened, and He sees God's Messiah there in front of his eyes.

This Sunday, we will also be recognising and celebrating Plough Sunday. The hymns for the morning are: [When Jesus came to Jordan \(Hymn\) - YouTube](#), (I can find no online recording of the 2<sup>nd</sup> hymn, Source and fount of all creation), and [We Plough the Fields and Scatter \(All Good Gifts\) - YouTube](#).

The readings for Epiphany are Isaiah 43: 1-7; Acts 8: 14-17 and Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22. The Psalm is 29.

Anglican Chant [Psalm 29 "Ascribe unto the Lord, O Ye Mighty" - YouTube](#)

And from Namirembe [Zabuli 29 \(Psalm\) | Anglican Chant | Thomas Attwood - Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, Namirembe - YouTube](#)

A Hebrew version ["Havu l'Adonai" Psalm 29 \(in Hebrew\) by David Loden - YouTube](#)

And a version from HeartSong [Psalm 29 - HeartSong - YouTube](#)

Anthems suggested include:

[Harris: Come Down, O Love Divine - YouTube](#)

[If ye love me \(Thomas Tallis\) - The King's Singers - YouTube](#)

[Tomorrow shall be my dancing day – John Gardner - YouTube](#)

Or a very different version [My Dancing Day - YouTube](#) Maddy Prior and the Carnival Band.

[O Holy Spirit Lord of grace \(Tye\) - YouTube](#)

[Marenzio: Tribus Miraculis - YouTube](#)

The standard collect that the Church of England has for each Sunday and feast day is often theologically complex, and sometimes quite wordy. This is usually the collect printed in the service sheets. There is an alternative collect for each of these, which are certainly pithier. The alternative collect for this Sunday is a masterful example.

Heavenly Father, at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognize him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen



Stay safe.

Blessings and love

Mark