

# SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY

## St. Mary's Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 EPIPHANY



A very warm welcome to St. Mary's

8.00am	HOLY COMMUNION (said)	Revd Ian Bird
10.30am	FAMILY EUCHARIST	Revd Natalie Davies
6.30pm	TEAM EPIPHANY SERVICE AT ST MARK'S	

### **10.30am – Family Eucharist**

Processional:	49
Gradual:	343
Offertory:	53
Communion:	119
Post Communion:	51
Setting:	<i>Nardone</i>
Motet: A New Year's Carol	<i>Britten</i>
Voluntary: Sonata No. 1 First Movement	<i>Mendelssohn</i>

No Evensong.  
Please join us at St Mark's for  
the Team Epiphany Service

### **Readings for 8am and 10.30am**

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

### **Churchwardens**

Avril Harris

### **Director of Music**

Simon Lole

*(please contact via the Parish Office)*

## Collect

O God,  
who by the leading of a star  
manifested your only Son to the peoples of  
the earth:  
mercifully grant that we,  
who know you now by faith,  
may at last behold your glory face to face;  
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.

## Post Communion Prayer

Lord God,  
the bright splendour whom the nations  
seek:  
may we who with the wise men  
have been drawn by your light  
discern the glory of your presence in your  
Son,  
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Coming to the 10.30am Sunday service at St Mary's ....

If you find the chancel steps difficult, please ask a Welcomer to arrange communion at your seat. If you need a gluten-free wafer, please let a Welcomer know. Everyone is welcome for refreshments after the service.

**St Mary's Pastoral Team** We have a small team of pastoral visitors at St Mary's. If you or someone you know would like a visit, please contact Rector Ian on 01929 422916.

**Donations** – All donations by whatever payment method are gratefully received. We have a contactless 'donation station' near the West (main) Door with the facility for Gift Aid or you can use the QR Code.



## ST MARY'S DIARY FOR THE WEEK

Daily (Mon– Sat)	8.00am	Morning Prayer – All Welcome
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	2.30pm	All Things Bright & Beautiful service
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	T-Pot in the Rectory Classroom
	11.00am	Holy Communion in the chapel
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	5.45/6.30pm	Children/Adults Choir practice
	6.30pm	Friday Fun Club in the Rectory Classroom

## SERVICES FOR NEXT SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> January - Baptism of Christ

8.00am	<b>HOLY COMMUNION (said)</b>	<i>Revd Ian Bird</i>
10.30am	<b>CHORAL EUCHARIST</b>	<i>Revd Ian Bird</i>
6.30pm	<b>COME &amp; SING EVENSONG</b>	<i>Revd Natalie Davies</i>

# WELCOME TO ST MARK'S CHURCH

Bell Street, Swanage, BH19 2SA



## THIS SUNDAY: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – Epiphany

**10am Holy Communion**

*Rev Dave Richards*

*Bible Theme: Isaiah 60.1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12*

***Followed by Coffee and Cake in the Church Room***

*Gluten/wheat-free: Please talk to the Welcomer if you'd like a gluten-free Communion Wafer. Also, gluten/wheat-free refreshments after the Service.*

**6:30pm Team Epiphany Service at St Mark's**

***Followed by light refreshments served in Church***

## DIARY FOR THIS WEEK:

- **CHURCH & GARDEN OPEN:** 10am - 4pm Monday - Saturday
- Mon 5<sup>th</sup>: **Community Café** 10am - 12noon at Herston Village Hall with Citizens' Advice, Digital Dorset and the Community Pantry
- Mon 5<sup>th</sup>: **St Mark's Choir Rehearsal:** Church Room 6:15pm - 7pm
- Tue 6<sup>th</sup>: **Fortnightly Bible Study:** Church Room 7pm - 8:30pm (Refreshments from 6:45pm)
- Wed 7<sup>th</sup>: **Prayer & Share:** Church Room 10am – 10:45am
- Thurs 8<sup>th</sup>: **St Mark's Church Committee Meeting:** 7:30pm

## NEXT SUNDAY: 11<sup>th</sup> January – Baptism of Christ

**10am Holy Communion**

*Rev Dave Richards*

*Bible Theme: Isaiah 42:1-9 Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17*

***Followed by Coffee and Cake in the Church Room***

*Disciples of Christ, sharing the compassionate and caring love of God with the School and Community of which we are a part.*

**SOME ADVANCE DATES:**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> Jan – Junior Singing Club restarts 3:30pm - 4:25pm  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> Jan – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Joint Service at  
Emmanuel Baptist Church at 10:30am. No Service at  
St Mark's Church on this Sunday  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> Jan – Fortnightly Bible Study 7pm - 8:30pm in the Church  
Room (refreshments from 6:45pm)  
Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Jan – Celebration Service with St Mark's Band 10am

---

### ***COLLECT (SPECIAL PRAYER) FOR THE EPIPHANY***

O God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; 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.

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER:** Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek: may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light discern the glory of your presence in your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

---

- PLEASE let Dave (07779079844) know of anyone who is unwell, in hospital or housebound who would like a visit.



**For the latest St Mark's News check out our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/StMarksHerston](https://www.facebook.com/StMarksHerston)**

St Mark's Church, Herston, is part of the Swanage & Studland Team  
[www.swanageteam.com](http://www.swanageteam.com)

**St Mark's Website: [www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Mark-Herston](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Mark-Herston)**





**Sunday 4th January at 10.00am**  
**Family Communion**  
**Revd Tony Edmonds**

A warm welcome to our service this morning in  
St Nicholas Church, Studland.

This is a Family Communion Service, and we hope that there will be lots of families with young children in our congregation today.

If you are a parent, or a grandparent, please do not worry if children are noisy or want to run around during the service: we are just delighted to have them in Church with us. There are toys in the two green boxes at the back of the Church - and everyone is welcome to use them.

We do not pass around a collection plate at St Nicholas' Church, but we are most appreciative of donations to help maintain both the Church and its ministry. We have a traditional plate for cash donations with Gift Aid envelopes available as well as a contactless card payments station at the exit to the Church. If you would like to make regular donations, please consider setting up a Standing Order with your bank: if this is of interest, please contact the Treasurer, Eric Stobart at [eric@thestobarts.co.uk](mailto:eric@thestobarts.co.uk)

After the service, we serve coffee, tea and other refreshments in the Church Hall. Please join us - and get to know us all a little better. For regular updates on Church activities, check [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) You can also follow us on Facebook.  
(St Nicholas Church Studland) – do give us a like or two!

---

For additional information about St Nicholas Church and its services, please contact:

Associate Minister: Revd Dr Tony Edmonds 01929 450097 [revtonyedmonds@outlook.com](mailto:revtonyedmonds@outlook.com)

Church Wardens: Barbara Matthews 01929 450218  
Eric Stobart 01929 450222

[barmat18@btinternet.com](mailto:barmat18@btinternet.com)  
[eric@thestobarts.co.uk](mailto:eric@thestobarts.co.uk)

**SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY**  
**St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas**  
**4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – Epiphany**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Ephesians 3, 1 - 12

**Gospel Reading:** Matthew 2, 1 - 12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah <sup>(L)</sup> was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**Collect**

O God,  
who by the leading of a star  
manifested your only Son to the peoples of  
the earth:  
mercifully grant that we,  
who know you now by faith,  
may at last behold your glory face to face;  
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.

**Post Communion Prayer**

Lord God,  
the bright splendour whom the nations  
seek:  
may we who with the wise men  
have been drawn by your light  
discern the glory of your presence in your  
Son,  
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

# TEAM NOTICES

**Epiphany Team Service – Readings & Carols for Epiphany** –this evening, 6.30pm at St Mark's Church, Herston. Please do try and come if you can. The Team church choirs join together, readings and carols are heard as we smell the sweet scent of the incense that the wise men brought. There will be refreshments after the service.

**'Come & Sing' Choral Evensong** next Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church. Our guest this month is Dr Barry Rose OBE, formerly Guildford, St Paul's and St Albans Cathedrals. *Come and Sing* event is open to all singers. Arrival at St Mary's is for a 4.00pm rehearsal start. Cups of tea are provided between the rehearsal end and the service start at 6.30pm. All Welcome. Music provided. Just come and sing!

**T-Pot is held** will restart on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January and then run every Wednesday from 10.00am to 12.30pm in the Rectory Classroom. So if you are on your own or new to the area and would like to meet others, come along for a cuppa and a chat.



**All Things Bright and Beautiful** returns on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January and takes place in St Mary's Church each Tuesday from 2.30pm – 3.30pm. A short service, which includes well known hymns, is followed by tea and cake. All Things Bright and Beautiful is particularly suitable for carers and those for whom they care and is dementia friendly. Is there someone who you could bring along or encourage to come? All are welcome.

**Friday Fun Club** – returns on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January and meets on Friday evenings 6.30-8pm, during term time, in the Rectory Classroom for 10-13 yr olds to enjoy food, games and chat. If you would like to join or need more information please contact Trish Clark at [jandtclark@hotmail.com](mailto:jandtclark@hotmail.com) or Tel: 01929 425427.

**Sunday School** (every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays in the month). All children in school years 4-9 are welcome to join us for our Sunday School following the service this morning in St Mary's Rooms, finishing at 12.30pm. Come for snacks and fun activities!

---

## Team Contact details

**Team Rector**

Revd Dr Ian Bird Tel: 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)

**Team Vicar**

Revd Jo Levasier Tel 01929 208217 (normal day off Friday)

**Parish Administrator**

Karon Quirey [swanage.team@btconnect.com](mailto:swanage.team@btconnect.com)

**Parish Office**

Tues & Weds 9am-5pm / Friday 9am – 4pm Tel: 01929 421117

Visit our Team website [swanageteam.com](http://swanageteam.com)

# REFLECTION

**Isaiah 60:1-6   Ephesians 3:1-12   Matthew 2:1-12**

Matthew's gospel is structured with breathtaking precision in sequences and an overall circular shape. We learn to interpret his stories by their mirror-image. A little after the beginning, a little before the end, Matthew places episodes of shocking homicidal violence – the massacre of the innocents, the crucifixion of Jesus – ironically attached to claims of kingship of Israel. We recognise the lust for power – evil - easily enough: we hear daily on the news of rulers and would-be rulers who massacre people to assert their power. We may even recognise it in ourselves.

What makes Matthew's gospel stories good news?

Matthew's quote from Jeremiah about Rachel weeping for her children and refusing comfort seems appositely bleak, but Jeremiah is breaking breath-taking good news: God will rescue Rachel and her children. *'I have loved thee with an everlasting love... Again I will build thee.'* *'Their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together, for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them.'* *'Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thy eyes from tears.'* Rachel who was buried not with her people but as an outsider, by the wayside, will be restored to them, with her children. God's loving covenant with Israel will be renewed.

Isaiah's rising star, also alluded to by Matthew, comes from a chapter probably written after the promise had been realised and the exiles were back in Jerusalem. Israel's glory is restored; a dazzling glory that draws in the gentiles – the whole world. The promise made to Abraham that his children would outnumber the stars in the sky and the sands of the sea is fulfilled. Matthew doesn't say that the wise men (not *kings* – those are Herods) are gentiles: their gifts certainly represent Wisdom and worship in the first, destroyed temple.

That God's loving wisdom is universal but revealed definitively in a fragile human being's birth, death and resurrection is 'the mystery' or blinding glory that stopped St Paul in his own homicidal tracks. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul understands that the birth, death and resurrection of a man he despised was the all-conquering love-gift of God's self to the world – creative love exceeding anything the prophets could have imagined.

*Revd Terence Handley MacMath*