



St. Peter's Caversham
The Pebble

5 January 2014

Epiphany

The Adoration of the Magi

It was the arrival of the kings
that caught us unawares;
we'd looked in on the woman in the barn,
curiosity you could call it,
something to do on a cold winter's night;
we'd wished her well –
that was the best thing we could do, she was in pain,
and the next thing we knew
she was lying on the straw
- the little there was of it -
and there was this baby in her arms.

And what were we to make of –
was it angels falling through the air,
entwined and falling as if from the rafters
to where the gaze of the kings met the child's
- assuming the child could see?
What would the mother do with the gift?
What would become of the child?
And we'll never admit there are angels
or that somewhere between
one man's eyes and another's
is a holy place, a space where a king could be
at one with a naked child,
at one with an astonished soldier.

Christopher Pilling

A Warm Welcome

to all who are sharing with us in worship today.
The Ministry of Healing and Wholeness is offered
in the Lady Chapel during Communion.
Everyone is warmly invited to Morning Tea in
the Parish Lounge after the Solemn Sung
Eucharist this morning

The Liturgy for Today:

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
(1662 Book of Common Prayer)
10:30 am Solemn Sung Eucharist

HYMNS:

50 From the eastern mountains
48 Bethlehem, of noblest cities
52 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness
248 O strength and stay
47 As with gladness

READINGS FOR TODAY:

[Isaiah 60: 1-6](#)

[Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6](#)

[Matthew 2: 1-12](#)

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY:

[Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7](#)

[Acts 10: 34-38](#)

[Matthew 3: 13-17](#)

Parish News

Procession This morning's 10.30 am Service begins with a procession around the interior of the Church as we recall the journey of the Magi to find and worship the infant Jesus.

Thursday Eucharists continue as usual at 10 am in the Lady Chapel throughout the festive season. Next Thursday sees also the resumption of the monthly Eucharist the Vicar celebrates at Frances Hodgkins complex, a well attended and much appreciated Service.

Watchnight Service report A dozen worshippers gathered for the Vigil of Readings appropriate to the turn of the year, followed by the celebration of the Eucharist according to the Liturgy of St Basil. The candlelit darkness made for a wonderful ambience. This Service will now become a regular fixture in the Christmas/New Year cycle of worship.

Sir David The television news bulletins seem to have neglected to mention that our Archbishop David Moxon, recently moved to Rome to represent the Anglican Communion in its diplomatic relationship with the Holy See, is to be knighted in the new year. The last such time that a senior churchman was honoured in this way that the Vicar can recall was the knighting of Paul Reeves, who both encouraged David Moxon's vocation, and ordained him.

Next Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The revision of the liturgical calendar in recent years has encouraged the Church to see Christmas, Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord as part of an integrated and extended cycle of Scriptural and Eucharistic reflection on the entire mystery of the Incarnation, and its saving implications for us.

Nelson puzzlement Churches in the Nelson diocese generally have their quiet traditional Service at 9, and their informal enthusiastic Service at 10.30. But just lately some puzzling data has emerged. The 9 am Services across the diocese are increasing in numbers, while the numbers are down at the 10.30 Services. Could this be because the latter are a pale imitation of Baptist and Pentecostal worship, and people are now hungry for more? Structure and content matter in worship and in Christian formation.

Religious affiliation census data As the year drew to a close the Anglican Church was digesting the news that the latest census reports that Anglican affiliation has declined 17% over the past 7 years. We should note that affiliation means those who declare themselves to be Anglicans without necessarily attending Church or contributing to the local Church in any way. The more interesting question is how has Church attendance panned out throughout NZ history. The peak attendance was in the late 1880's, then through the 1890's, when about 30% of the population were regularly at worship. A slow decline set in from the early 1900's through to 1945, levelling off and slightly reversing through the post war baby boom years of the late 1940's and the 1950's, when Sunday Schools did well, and new suburban parishes were created across the country. Decline resumed in the mid 1960's, and has been constant since then. This correspondent came to faith just when the long decline began, and has seen various pick me up remedies come and go. Rather than clutching at straws we need to keep our integrity and be ourselves, without jettisoning key beliefs, or pretending to be a revivalist sect. We should rejoice at those we have with us, and do all we can to make their time with us rewarding, rather than wringing our hands at those who are not there. Church history is full of surprises – who knows what is coming around the corner.

Pray for the Sick and Infirm especially Claire Johnson, Hannah Scott, Cherry Gordon, Juen Miyagi, Coral Paris, Shirley Buxton, and Denise Walker.

Pray for those whose memorial occurs at this time: Noel McQuarrie, Francis Hore, William Littler, Doreen Fraser, Lena Holmes, Christopher Holden, Arthur Hill, Mary Wood, Majorie Welch, William Bloxham [Priest], Francis Mumford, Robin Heaps, and Janet Younie.

Parish Priest: Fr. Hugh Bowron 455-3961

Vicar's Warden: Tubby Hopkins 454-2399

People's Warden: Kate Paterson 455-5384

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