

# WHO'S WHO AT ST. MARK'S

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Mr. Stuart Paul Junior Warden

**Vestry Members:**

Cathy Collins, Dayna Hume, Brenda Matthews, John Mentzer,  
Brenda Milner,

Libby Moore, Stephanie Powers, Jean Robertson, Laurie  
Voedisch

**Clerk to the Vestry:** Rebecca Ethier

**Parish Office:** Terry Dellasanta

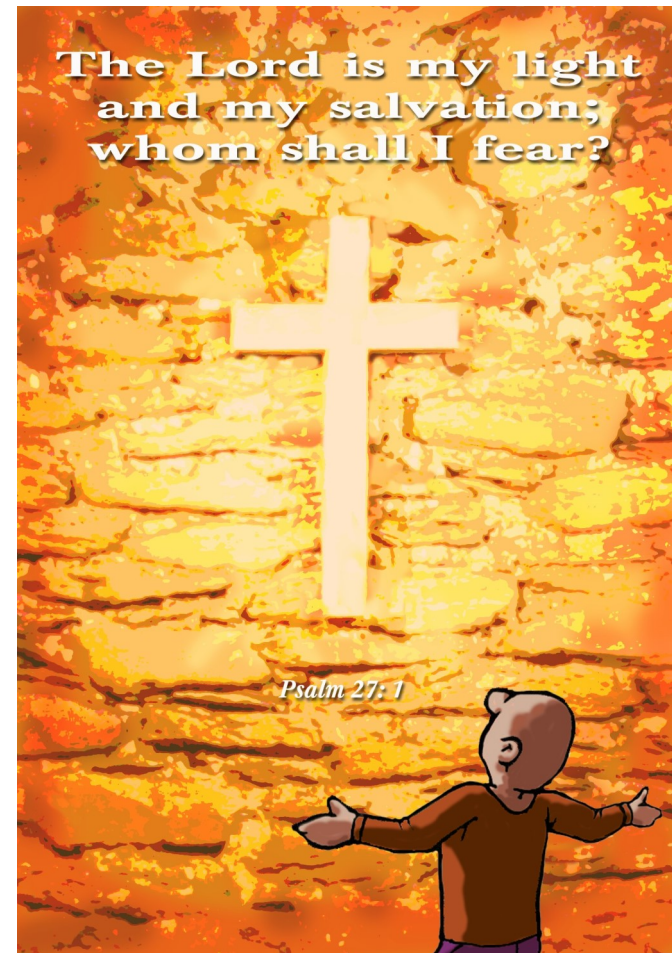
**Groundskeeper:** Michael Coughlin

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**PLEASE SEND ALL ITEMS FOR THE MAGAZINE BY THE 10TH  
OF THE PRECEEDING MONTH**

The views and opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the individuals concerned and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the Rector, the Vestry or the Parish.

## St. Marks Magazine



January 2024

# Manifesting the Light



Epiphany is my favorite season of the Church Year. Coming off the emotional height of Christmas, we spend a few weeks basking in the glimmer of light as we hear the stories of the things made possible by the Incarnation. Sunday after Sunday in the seven weeks of Epiphany, we will hear most of the *Sermon on the Mount*, as Matthew narrates Jesus' largest body of teaching. These are the lessons on which we build our faith; they form the root of our belief.

It is no coincidence that just after experiencing the glory of the birth of Jesus, we are led into his most prominent teaching. While we are still excited about the miracle of the Son of Man, we are called to remember just why He is the prophet who will lead us through what we will face. Build your city on the hill, let your light shine, don't lose your saltiness, blessed are the peacemakers. These core principles guide us in our ministry, give the church its purpose, create God's reign anew on Earth.



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"These are vegetables, mother. You wouldn't want me to eat something I've given up for Lent, would you?"



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As we explore the manifestation of Jesus to the world, shining our light on a dark world, we root ourselves in these essential teachings. We are called to share the love and the witness of God's salvation, so abundantly offered, with our neighbors and our world as we walk our own path in the ancient teachings of our prophet and prince.

*Cn. J. Davey Gerhard is the Executive Director of TENS. He lives in San Francisco, California where he works on diocesan staff for Dio-Cal and worships at Holy Innocents in Noe Valley.*

# PARISH NOTICES

Cookbooks still available for \$15.00.

The North Central Massachusetts Association of Realtors took on the task and with the help of St. Mark's we were able to provide school snacks for children at home during vacation break. This came about because another non-profit was no longer providing this food due to the retirement of its founder. We now have another opportunity to reach out to the community once again and provide these snacks during February and April vacation. The task involves about 160 children at Leominster schools. NCMAR may also be expanding to other school districts should the need arise. If you can help, please reach out to Brenda Cole-Milner. You can call or text 978-790-3640. Collection of items will begin in February.

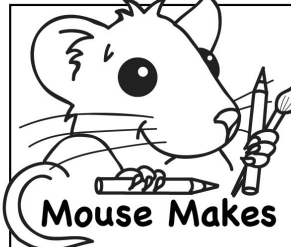
**Mac and cheese, Chef Boyardee, Fruit cups, Fruit snacks, Ramen, Items like peanut butter, jelly, pasta, sauce, oatmeal, boxes of cereal, juice, maybe boxed meal kits like hamburger helper or taco kits, some sort of treats like cookies.**

**Ash Wednesday** is February 14th, this year.


We are planning a Soup and Bread meal before the Wednesday services in Lent.

We will meet @6:30 for this meal and Lenten series including Worship. Please bring soup, bread or salad if you are able.

Thank you!



**EPIPHANY** is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down, worshipped him and left *three* special gifts.



Where was Jesus born?  
-----  
Luke 2:1

What three gifts did the wise men give Jesus?  
-----

Who was the king?  
-----  
Luke 2:1


and -----  
Luke 2:11

Where did the wise men come from?  
the -----  
Luke 2:1

How were the wise men warned not to return to Herod?  
In a -----  
Luke 2:12

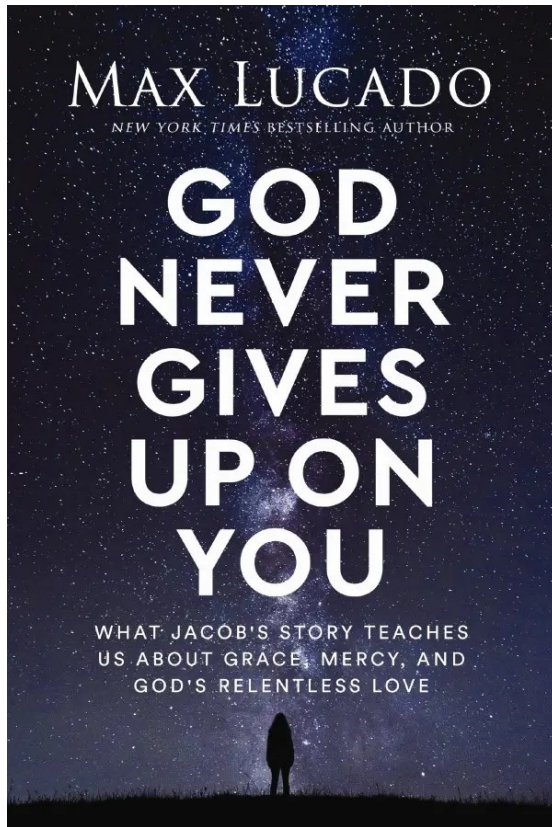
What had the wise men seen?  
a -----  
Luke 2:2

C	H	I	L	D	S	T	A	R	J	D	K
J	E	S	U	S	W	A	E	B	O	B	I
E	S	R	E	J	O	I	C	E	Y	O	N
W	H	A	C	H	R	I	S	T	H	R	G
S	E	E	E	O	S	J	C	H	U	N	O
Y	P	L	A	U	H	R	U	L	E	R	L
G	H	I	S	S	I	T	H	E	R	O	D
I	E	M	T	E	P	I	P	H	A	N	Y
F	R	A	N	K	I	N	C	E	N	S	E
T	D	R	S	W	I	S	E	M	E	N	E
S	M	Y	R	R	H	D	R	E	A	M	I

  
Look up the Bible verses, fill in the blanks, find them in the word search then look for the words opposite.

JESUS  
WISEMEN  
WORSHIP  
SHEPHERD  
KING • JEWS  
CHRIST • CHILD  
BORN • RULER  
ISRAEL • REJOICE  
JOY • HOUSE • MARY  
GIFTS • EPIPHANY

How many other words can you make from the letters in EPIPHANY?



### God Never Gives Up on You

- What Jacob's Story Teaches Us About Grace, Mercy, and God's Relentless Love
- By Max Lucado,

Ever wonder if you've gone wrong too many times for God to use someone like you?

This is a book for members of the Lost Halo Society – for the strugglers among us and the fumbler within us. We are all of us part saint, part scoundrel. We mean well, but we don't always do well. We have breakthroughs and breakdowns, often in the same hour. We need no reminder of our failures, but we could always use a refresher course on God's perfect plan to use imperfect people to do great things. This book offers you just that

## Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Exodus chapter 2 verses 1 to 12

In Egypt the Hebrew people flourished so well that the new Pharaoh grew scared and ordered all their new-born boys to be killed.

Moses' mother hid him when he was born, but he grew too big.



Sssh! Waaaa!

She made a basket from reeds for him and put it in the grass by the river Nile.



She told Moses' sister Miriam to keep watch.



Pharaoh's daughter found Moses.



Waaa!

Shall I get someone to look after the baby?



Yes!

So Miriam got her mother.



Look after him for me.

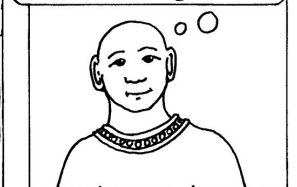
The princess adopted Moses as her son.



When Moses was grown up he went to see where his people worked as slaves.



Perhaps I will be the one to save my people.

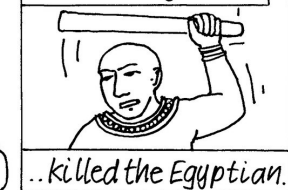


Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave.



Work harder!

Moses checked no-one was looking and...



...killed the Egyptian.

He hid the body in the sand.



No-one will know it was me!

## Looking at God

*Editor: This month we are launching a short 'quiz' to accompany the series on the books of the Bible. This will be a regular feature that runs throughout the year.*

### Quiz on the Book of Exodus

*How well do you know what happened in Exodus? Try this quiz!*

1. Who rescued Moses from the basket in the bulrushes?
  - a. Pharaoh's daughter
  - b. Pharaoh's maid
  - c. Pharaoh's wife
2. How many plagues did God send on Egypt?
  - a. 5
  - b. 10
  - c. 15
3. What was the second plague?
  - a. frogs
  - b. water turned to blood
  - c. locusts
4. What is the name of the sea the Israelites crossed to escape the Egyptians?
  - a. Dead Sea
  - b. Black Sea
  - c. Red Sea
5. At what place did the Israelites arrive to find the water was too bitter to drink and God made it sweet?
  - a. Marah
  - b. Elim
  - c. Horeb
6. Which bird did God provide for meat in the wilderness?
  - a. pigeon
  - b. quail
  - c. turtledove
7. What guided the Israelites through the wilderness?
  - a. a star in the sky
  - b. Moses had visions telling him where to lead the people
  - c. a pillar of cloud and of fire

## Plough Sunday: It's nothing to do with Snow.

In some parts of England, the first Monday after Epiphany is known as Plough Monday. It is preceded by Plough Sunday. Historically, both of these days were considered to mark the start of the agricultural working year. Ploughing of the fields began at this time as important. It allowed the fields to be laid bare and the top soil exposed to the frost and the freezing air. This would then kill the roots of weeds that had taken root in the fields since the harvest. It also marked the end of the Christmas Season and a time to get back to work. Since the early 1400s the tradition was for a Ploughshare to be brought into Church and a series of blessings upon it and the land. Some Dioceses still issue liturgical prayers for "Blessing the Plough" and "Blessing the Seed".

Plough Sunday and Plough Monday were also days for collecting arms, which would be distributed to the poor of the parish. In common with New England, English farming communities relied on seasonal help. Once the ploughing was completed there was a period of inactivity until seeding and drilling. This would also mean that many agricultural workers would be under employed or simply out of work. The collections made on Plough Sunday would be used to support those who found times hard in the coldest times of the year.

The significance of Plough Sunday as the beginning of the preparation for the year's harvest as well as the first "back to work in the New Year day" certainly brings things into perspective. It reminds us that there is a continuous cycle to the year. There is work that needs to be undertaken year round to make each community successful. The holidays are over, the New Year has begun, and it is time to put the hand to the plough and start cultivating the fields.

It's a great time to consider the bounties that you wish to harvest this year. Only by looking to the harvest can we see the work we need to do. There is little point expecting a bumper harvest of potatoes if all you do is buy some onion seeds. For faith communities to flourish we all need to apply our hand to the Plough, Christianity like ploughing is a team effort. We many no longer need help harnessing the team of horses to the ploughshare, and it no longer takes 2 men and a boy to plough 10 acres a day, but everyone in our parish has a role to play and is called to take their turn at the plough.

Therefore consider taking time this January determine which metaphorical fields need ploughing in ready for planting will help to bring forth an eventual harvest. As the tradition holds, it is time to plough into the new year. It is time to put the hand to the plough and move forward in cultivating the fields of your life. **Plough on dear friends, Plough On.**

**Answers:**

Question 1: a (Pharaoh's daughter)

Question 2: b (10)

Question 3: b (Water turned to blood)

Question 4: c (Red Sea)

Question 5: a (Marah)

Question 6: b (Quail)

Question 7: c (A pillar of cloud and of fire)

Question 8: c (From a rock)

Question 9: a (Mt. Sinai)

Question 10: b (Thou shalt not commit adultery)

Question 11: a (Two cherubim)

Question 12: c (They didn't know what had happened to Moses)

Question 13: b (Bezaleel)

Question 14: a (Joshua)

Question 15: c (40)

8. When there was no water to drink, how did Moses provide it?

- a. from earthen jars
- b. from his rod
- c. from a rock

9. On which mountain were the Israelites given the Ten Commandments

- a. Mt. Sinai
- b. Mt. Nebo
- c. Mt. of Olives

10. What is the seventh commandment?

- a. Thou shalt not covet
- b. Thou shalt not commit adultery
- c. Thou shalt not bear false witness

11. What was on top of the Ark of the Covenant?

- a. two cherubim
- b. candlestick
- c. Aaron's rod

12. What compelled the Israelites to form and worship the golden calf

- a. they wanted to make a statue to the Lord
- b. they made it as a symbol of their freedom from slavery
- c. they didn't know what had happened to Moses

13. What was the name of a man who was given the Spirit of God, to enable him to become a good craftsman, and assist with the building of the tabernacle?

- a. Caleb
- b. Bezaleel
- c. Buz

14. Who was Moses' successor?

- a. Joshua
- b. Caleb
- c. Aaron

15. For how many years did the Israelites wander in the wilderness?

- a. 20 years
- b. 30 years
- c. 40 years

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## God in Music

*Editor: The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series looking at great works of music.*

### 'Glorious the song when God's the theme': the *Nunc Dimittis*

St Luke tells us in his Gospel that the angels sang praises to God at the birth of Jesus, and he has given us three poems that have become part of Christian song: the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and the *Nunc Dimittis*.

The first two are full of praise and rejoicing. The last comes as Mary and Joseph fulfil the Law of Moses and bring the child Jesus to Jerusalem. In the temple they meet Simeon and Anna. Simeon represents each of us who can look back over life with gratitude in the face of death as he says, 'Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace.' It is a story that has inspired preachers and artists, and also composers.

In the Christian Church these words of the *Nunc Dimittis* have become part of worship at the end of each day, not just the end of life. Cathedral and parish church choirs have sung settings of these words in that great tradition of Anglican choral music at Evensong – settings that have captured the sense of quiet resignation, but also conveyed the glory of the light that is Jesus shining for all people. Rachmaninov's setting is part of his Vespers, the night-long vigil sung in the Russian Orthodox Church on the eve of great feasts.

Rachmaninov composed the work (and it comprises 15 pieces) at great speed, but even so, the Vespers are now seen as one of the great masterpieces of religious music.

This was no more so than in his beautiful setting of the 5<sup>th</sup> canticle, the *Nunc Dimittis*. Just 36 bars long, it begins with a rocking, undulating figure in the upper voices. A solo tenor enters as the voice of Simeon, and it ends with the basses moving down to a low B flat: 'a sigh of wonder and resignation on the threshold of eternal rest and peace,' one critic has called it.

Rachmaninov later recalled, "After I played the passage at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> canticle where the basses slowly descend to that low note, the conductor shook his head, saying, 'Now where on earth will we find such basses? They are as rare as asparagus at Christmas!' Nevertheless, he did find them." It was one of the composer's favourite pieces, and he asked for it to be sung at his funeral in the hope that it would send his 'ship of death gently towards the unknown region.'"

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February we shall hear these words as part of the Gospel on the feast of Candlemas. Simeon prays them because his cup is now overflowing. He has looked on the salvation of God. Music allows us to look on that glory and salvation also, and Rachmaninov, in his moving setting, has captured the calm trust of that moment, which shines out like the brightness of the light of Jesus.