

Isaiah 61.10 - 62.3; Galatians 4.4-7; Luke 2.15-21

8.00am only

Galatians 4:4-7

But when the time was right, God sent his Son, and a woman gave birth to him. His Son obeyed the Law, so he could set us free from the Law, and we could become God's children. Now that we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. And his Spirit tells us that God is our Father. You are no longer slaves. You are God's children, and you will be given what he has promised.

8.00am and 10am

Luke 2:15-21

After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay. When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised. But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant. As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said. Eight days later Jesus' parents did for him what the Law of Moses commands. And they named him Jesus, just as the angel had told Mary when he promised she would have a baby.

January 8th 2012 Parish Communion Epiphany

Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

Isaiah 60:1-6

Jerusalem, stand up! Shine! Your new day is dawning. The glory of the LORD shines brightly on you. The earth and its people are covered with darkness, but the glory of the LORD is shining upon you. Nations and kings will come to the light of your dawning day. Open your eyes! Look around! Crowds are coming. Your sons are on their way from distant lands; your daughters are being carried like little children. When you see this, your faces will glow; your hearts will pound and swell with pride. Treasures from across the sea and the wealth of nations will be brought to you. Your country will be covered with caravans of young camels from Midian and Ephah. The people of Sheba will bring gold and spices in praise of me, the LORD.

Ephesians 3:1-12

Christ Jesus made me his prisoner, so that I could help you Gentiles. You have surely heard about God's kindness in choosing me to help you. In fact, this letter tells you a little about how God has shown me his mysterious ways. As you read the letter, you will also find out how well I really do understand the mystery about Christ. No one knew about this mystery until God's Spirit told it to his holy apostles and prophets. And the mystery is this: Because of Christ Jesus, the good news has given the Gentiles a share in the promises that God gave to the Jews. God has also let the Gentiles be part of the same body. God treated me with kindness. His power worked in me, and it became my job to spread the good news. I am the least important of all God's people. But God was kind and chose me to tell the Gentiles that because of Christ there are blessings that cannot be measured. God, who created everything, wanted me to help everyone understand the mysterious plan that had always been hidden in his mind. Then God would use the church to show the powers and authorities in the spiritual world that he has many different kinds of wisdom. God did this according to his eternal plan. And he was able to do what he had planned because of all that Christ Jesus our Lord had done. Christ now gives us courage and confidence, so that we can come to God by faith.

Matthew 2:1–12

When Jesus was born in the village of Bethlehem in Judea, Herod was king. During this time some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem and said, “Where is the child born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” When King Herod heard about this, he was worried, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. Herod brought together the chief priests and the teachers of the Law of Moses and asked them, “Where will the Messiah be born?” They told him, “He will be born in Bethlehem, just as the prophet wrote, ‘Bethlehem in the land of Judea, you are very important among the towns of Judea. From your town will come a leader, who will be like a shepherd for my people Israel.’ ” Herod secretly called in the wise men and asked them when they had first seen the star. He told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, let me know. I want to go and worship him too.” The wise men listened to what the king said and then left. And the star they had seen in the east went on ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They were thrilled and excited to see the star. When the men went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they knelt down and worshiped him. They took out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh and gave them to him. Later they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and they went back home by another road.

1 Samuel 3.1-20; Psalm 139.1-5,12-18; Revelation 5.1-10; John 1.43-51

1 Samuel 3:1–20

Samuel served the LORD by helping Eli the priest, who was by that time almost blind. In those days, the LORD hardly ever spoke directly to people, and he did not appear to them in dreams very often. But one night, Eli was asleep in his room, and Samuel was sleeping on a mat near the sacred chest in the LORD's house. They had not been asleep very long when the LORD called out Samuel's name. "Here I am!" Samuel answered. Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. What do you want?" "I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back to bed." Samuel went back. Again the LORD called out Samuel's name. Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "What do you want?" Eli told him, "Son, I didn't call you. Go back to sleep." The LORD had not spoken to Samuel before, and Samuel did not recognize the voice. When the LORD called out his name for the third time, Samuel went to Eli again and said, "Here I am. What do you want?" Eli finally realized that it was the LORD who was speaking to Samuel. So he said, "Go back and lie down! If someone speaks to you again, answer, 'I'm listening, LORD. What do you want me to do?'" Once again Samuel went back and lay down. The LORD then stood beside Samuel and called out as he had done before, "Samuel! Samuel!" "I'm listening," Samuel answered. "What do you want me to do?" The LORD said: Samuel, I am going to do something in Israel that will shock everyone who hears about it! I will punish Eli and his family, just as I promised. He knew that his sons refused to respect me, and he let them get away with it, even though I said I would punish his family forever. I warned Eli that sacrifices or offerings could never make things right! His family has done too many disgusting things. The next morning, Samuel got up and opened the doors to the LORD's house. He was afraid to tell Eli what the LORD had said. But Eli told him, "Samuel, my boy, come here!" "Here I am," Samuel answered. Eli said, "What did God say to you? Tell me everything. I pray that God will punish you terribly if you don't tell me every word he said!" Samuel told Eli everything. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD, and he will do what's right." As Samuel grew up, the LORD helped him and made everything Samuel said come true. From the town of Dan in the north to the town of Beersheba in the south, everyone in the country knew that Samuel was truly the LORD's prophet.

Revelation 5:1–10

In the right hand of the one sitting on the throne I saw a scroll that had writing on the inside and on the outside. And it was sealed in seven places. I saw a mighty angel ask with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” No one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or see inside it. I cried hard because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or see inside it. Then one of the elders said to me, “Stop crying and look! The one who is called both the ‘Lion from the Tribe of Judah’ and ‘King David’s Great Descendant’ has won the victory. He will open the book and its seven seals.” Then I looked and saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne that was surrounded by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if it had once been killed. It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent out to all the earth. The Lamb went over and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. After he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders knelt down before him. Each of them had a harp and a gold bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people. Then they sang a new song, “You are worthy to receive the scroll and open its seals, because you were killed. And with your own blood you bought for God people from every tribe, language, nation, and race. You let them become kings and serve God as priests, and they will rule on earth.”

John 1:43–51

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. There he met Philip, who was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. Jesus said to Philip, “Come with me.” Philip then found Nathanael and said, “We have found the one that Moses and the Prophets wrote about. He is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.” Nathanael asked, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Philip answered, “Come and see.” When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said, “Here is a true descendant of our ancestor Israel. And he isn’t deceitful.” “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, “Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.” Nathanael said, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God and the King of Israel!” Jesus answered, “Did you believe me just because I said that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see something even greater. I tell you for certain that you will see heaven open and God’s angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man.”

Genesis 14.17-20; Psalm 128; Revelation 19.6-10; John 2.1-11

Genesis 14:17–20

Abram returned after he had defeated King Chedorlaomer and the other kings. Then the king of Sodom went to meet Abram in Shaveh Valley, which is also known as King's Valley. King Melchizedek of Salem was a priest of God Most High. He brought out some bread and wine and said to Abram: "I bless you in the name of God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. All praise belongs to God Most High for helping you defeat your enemies." Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything.

Revelation 19:6–10

Then I heard what seemed to be a large crowd that sounded like a roaring flood and loud thunder all mixed together. They were saying, "Praise the Lord! Our Lord God All-Powerful now rules as king. So we will be glad and happy and give him praise. The wedding day of the Lamb is here, and his bride is ready. She will be given a wedding dress made of pure and shining linen. This linen stands for the good things God's people have done." Then the angel told me, "Put this in writing. God will bless everyone who is invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." The angel also said, "These things that God has said are true." I knelt at the feet of the angel and began to worship him. But the angel said, "Don't do that! I am a servant, just like you and everyone else who tells about Jesus. Don't worship anyone but God. Everyone who tells about Jesus does it by the power of the Spirit."

John 2:1–11

Three days later Mary, the mother of Jesus, was at a wedding feast in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited and were there. When the wine was all gone, Mary said to Jesus, “They don’t have any more wine.” Jesus replied, “Mother, my time hasn’t yet come! You must not tell me what to do.” Mary then said to the servants, “Do whatever Jesus tells you to do.” At the feast there were six stone water jars that were used by the people for washing themselves in the way that their religion said they must. Each jar held about twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus told the servants to fill them to the top with water. Then after the jars had been filled, he said, “Now take some water and give it to the man in charge of the feast.” The servants did as Jesus told them, and the man in charge drank some of the water that had now turned into wine. He did not know where the wine had come from, but the servants did. He called the bridegroom over and said, “The best wine is always served first. Then after the guests have had plenty, the other wine is served. But you have kept the best until last!” This was Jesus’ first miracle, and he did it in the village of Cana in Galilee. There Jesus showed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

Deuteronomy 18.15-20; Revelation 12.1-5a; Mark 1.21-28

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

Instead, he will choose one of your own people to be a prophet just like me, and you must do what that prophet says. You were asking for a prophet the day you were gathered at Mount Sinai and said to the LORD, “Please don’t let us hear your voice or see this terrible fire again—if we do, we will die!” Then the LORD told me: Moses, they have said the right thing. So when I want to speak to them, I will choose one of them to be a prophet like you. I will give my message to that prophet, who will tell the people exactly what I have said. Since the message comes from me, anyone who doesn’t obey the message will have to answer to me. But if I haven’t spoken, and a prophet claims to have a message from me, you must kill that prophet, and you must also kill any prophet who claims to have a message from another god.

Revelation 12:1–5a

Something important appeared in the sky. It was a woman whose clothes were the sun. The moon was under her feet, and a crown made of twelve stars was on her head. She was about to give birth, and she was crying because of the great pain. Something else appeared in the sky. It was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and a crown on each of its seven heads. With its tail, it dragged a third of the stars from the sky and threw them down to the earth. Then the dragon turned toward the woman, because it wanted to eat her child as soon as it was born.

Mark 1:21–28

Jesus and his disciples went to the town of Capernaum. Then on the next Sabbath he went into the Jewish meeting place and started teaching. Everyone was amazed at his teaching. He taught with authority, and not like the teachers of the Law of Moses. Suddenly a man with an evil spirit in him entered the meeting place and yelled, “Jesus from Nazareth, what do you want with us? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are! You are God’s Holy One.” Jesus told the evil spirit, “Be quiet and come out of the man!” The spirit shook him. Then it gave a loud shout and left. Everyone was completely surprised and kept saying to each other, “What is this? It must be some new kind of powerful teaching! Even the evil spirits obey him.” News about Jesus quickly spread all over Galilee.