



JANUARY 2026

Happy New Year ::first\_name::,

I hope this finds you beginning 2026 in good spirits and managing to stay warm with all this chilly weather. What a Christmas we had here in the parish, as my first one in-post as the Priest-in-Charge it exceeded my expectations, and I find myself going into this new year feeling energised and so grateful for all the people involved in making the myriad services happen throughout December. I would love to hear how Christmas was for you, and any feedback or encouragements you might have.

For now, there's just a couple of things to make you aware of as we navigate the often gloomy terrain of January. Here's what's coming up in this month's newsletter:

- **Rev'd Jenny Heinink** – Priest with permission to officiate in the parish.
- **The Bishop's Certificate** – the diocesan 20-week beginner's theology course is being hosted at St Peter & St Paul this year.
- **Treasure Island!** – the P&P Panto is almost upon us!
- **Epiphany Reflection** – The Season of Glory



### INTRODUCING REV'D JENNY HEININK



It is with great pleasure that I get to introduce to you *Rev'd Jenny Heinink*. Jenny is an ordained Priest in the Church of England, who has recently joined the parish with permission to officiate here. So, you will likely see her around and involved in services in one way or another (she's also a gifted pianist and has already lent her musical talents to some of our Christmas services).

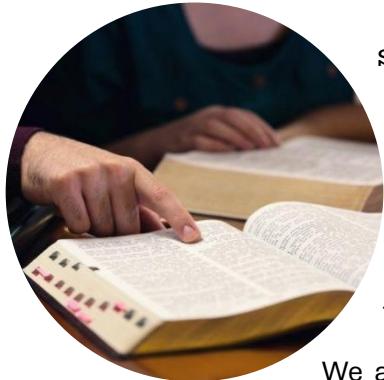
Teaching is in Jenny's blood. In her paid employment, Jenny was a Religious Education teacher and for many years has written and taught theological and biblical studies courses in various settings, including the equivalent to the Bishop's Certificate course (see below) in Chelmsford diocese. Upon her retirement as an Associate Priest of a church on the outskirts of London (to which she had belonged since the 1970's) Jenny and her husband Paul relocated to Battle at around the same time that one of their sons and his family moved to Hastings. Jenny and Paul are delighted to have joined the parish and look forward to getting to know you all.

So, if you see them around, please do give Jenny and Paul a very warm welcome!



## THE BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE

STARTS MON 26<sup>TH</sup> JAN



The Bishop's Certificate is an exciting opportunity for lay people across the Diocese of Chichester to deepen their understanding of Christian faith, explore their calling, and grow in ministry. Whether you're exploring leadership, preparing for a specific ministry role, or simply seeking to enrich your discipleship and deepen your faith, then this course is designed to support and inspire you.

We are particularly excited to be hosting the course on behalf of the Diocese for the Archdeaconry of Hastings at St Peter & St Paul. Not only that but Jenny Heinink and I will serve as part of tutoring team throughout the course.

The Bishop's Certificate is a 20-week programme that takes place across three terms throughout the year, **starting at St Peter & St Paul on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January at 19:30-21:00**. Participants will engage with Scripture, tradition, and reason, as we focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ. There are also three additional study days in which participants from across the whole diocese will come together at Bishop Hannington Church in Hove from 10:00-16:00 on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May, and Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November.

The course fee is £50 (and free for anyone unemployed). **But do hurry, time and space is limited so if you're interested please contact Jenny on [jennyheinink@hotmail.com](mailto:jennyheinink@hotmail.com)**



P&P PARISH PLAYERS PRESENT  
THE 2026 PANTOMIME



## THE P&P PANTO IS BACK! OH YES IT IS!

The P&P Parish Players have reassembled for another fun-filled performance in January 2026. In this parish, we take Jesus seriously, but we don't take ourselves seriously, and the P&P panto is perhaps the clearest indicator of that. It's a great opportunity to enjoy some laughter and light-hearted family fun and for a much more reasonable price than you'd find elsewhere.

This year we'll be transported to Treasure Island, joining Jim Hawkins, Long John-Silver, and all your favourite characters on a swashbuckling adventure.

There will be four performances at St Peter & St Paul this year:

- **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January at 7pm**
- **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 3pm and 7pm**
- **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 3pm**

**Tickets are just £5** and under 3's go free. Tickets can be purchased at our Sunday services, or you can text/call 07553814758 to book.



That's all for now, thanks so much for taking the time to read this newsletter, and for the part you in play - however great or small - in making this parish what it is.

Keep reading for my short reflection on *Epiphany: The Season of Glory*.

Grace & Peace,

Toby



*Rev'd Tobias Lancaster*  
Priest-in-Charge  
St John's Hollington, with St Peter & St Paul, Parkstone Road

[www.stjohnswithpandp.org](http://www.stjohnswithpandp.org)



## EPIPHANY THE SEASON OF GLORY

Epiphany is probably one of the most overlooked and underappreciated seasons in the Church's liturgical calendar. It is most often associated with the enigmatic "Magi" as the Scriptures call them, however, as the ever-sagacious Fleming Rutledge observes in her small but masterful book on the season of Epiphany, we actually know very little about them. She writes,

"Only Matthew tells of the Magi; the shepherds and angels are only in Luke. It is remarkable that Matthew focuses exclusively on these unusual visitors when describing the events of Jesus' birth ... Matthew is reticent where later tradition has been extravagant. We have no idea how many Magi there were, let alone their names, races, or characteristics."

It strikes me as a curious oddity that the extra-Biblical legends we apply to these Magi, would serve to elevate their importance by referring to them as “Wise Men” and “Kings”. Without wanting to deprive this tradition of its richness, the Magi were most likely pagan astrologers of marginal importance at best. Matthew’s reticence to supply any more biographical details about them proves that though they are important characters, it is not their appearance, or their supposed glory that is the focus of *Epiphany*.



The name of the season comes from the koine Greek *epihspaneia*, which means something like *manifestation*. Obviously, the thing being “made manifest” here is Jesus of Nazareth, who is *Emmanuel* God with us (Isaiah 7:14), which is to say that what is being revealed in the birth of this first century Palestinian Jew is nothing other than God Himself – which is pretty scandalous stuff when you come think about it. Everyone thinks their own children are the perhaps the cutest of all babies when they’re born, and some might go as far as to say they are “God’s gift”, but I suspect very few will claim that they are *God Himself*. Sometimes the scandal of this “manifestation” is hidden right under our noses in carols

that have become so familiar they suffer a bit of semantic satiation. But when you slow down enough to pay attention to what is being sung in a carol like *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*, these aren’t just quaint platitudes about a sweet baby boy that we’re singing:

*Christ by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord...  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th’incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.*

This is a gargantuan theological and philosophical claim about everything there is: God, the universe, the meaning and purpose of life, you, and me. The word perhaps best suited to describe the immensity of this manifestation is *glory*.

“Glory” is a word found throughout the Scriptures, it crops up time and time again to describe God’s attributes, which dazzle like a bright star in the night sky. In our modern parlance however, we tend to think of “glory” as akin to fame, or great wealth and power, or military might. It’s a perpetual habit of human beings to ascribe glory to those we perceive as “wise” or regal. It baffles me that some might even describe the maniacal demagogue currently lurking in the recently refurbished and dripping-with-gold oval office of the White House who masquerades as ‘The Leader of the Free World’ as in some way “glorious.”

But that kind of gratuitous and all-too-human “glory” falls far short of the *glory of God*. According to the witness of the Scriptures, God’s glory – the manifestation of His attributes – is made manifest through His everlasting compassion, mercy, love, and grace; these, and not money, wealth, power, and fame, are the dazzling qualities of God. And the glory of God is supremely manifest, in the incarnation of Jesus.

When God comes to be “our Emmanuel”, He does not arrive throwing His weight about, flaunting His prowess, or adorned in wealth and power. His glory is manifest dripping with blood, and covered in vernix, afterbirth, and breastmilk. He comes not wrapped up in fine clothes, but wrapped in cloths like you’d find on a mummified corpse. And here, at the manger, we see the clues to that which the season of Epiphany – and all the seasons – is ultimately preparing us, the hinge of the church calendar, Good Friday – when this baby, now fully grown, would *fully* manifest the *glory of God* by giving His life over to death, pinned up on a Cross, that we might live.

So, this *Epiphany* season, we should allow ourselves to be reoriented from the dizzying and dazzling spectacles of “power” and “glory” that some in our world use to try and draw attention to themselves. We should allow this season to reattune us to the small, seemingly insignificant, and always unexpected ways in which God chooses to manifest his glory – His compassion, mercy, and love – in Jesus Christ.

Amen.