

Words of Light and Hope
from Jane McLarty

With Christmas day behind us (however we might feel about that) we enter the months that can be the worst, in terms of weather: 'as the days lengthen, so the cold strengthens' as the somewhat sinister proverb has it. Yet in keeping with our theme, there are words of hope even within this saying – the days are lengthening, little by little, and in a matter of weeks we will see the signs of spring, the first snowdrops, the first crocuses. And in fact of course we are still in the Christmas season, travelling in imagination with the Magi on their way to see the King, born not in a palace as they expected but in a stable. And so Christ overturns human expectation, and continues to do so. It is not in the end power or eminence or fame that saves us, but the love that goes to the darkest places to bring light, the barren places to transform winter into spring.

RS Thomas *The Coming*

And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look he said.
The son looked. Far off,
As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, a river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.

On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The sky. Many People
Held out their thin arms
To it, as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.



REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY
TEAM CHURCHES



Pew Notes

Wishing you all a blessed year
ahead filled with peace, hope
joy and God's love.

Next Week's Services: Sunday 8th January 2023, Epiphany

9am	Holy Communion	St Andrew's, Thurning
9am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Bylaugh
10.30am	Methodist Covenant Service	Methodist Church, Reepham
10.30am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Gt. Witchingham
10.30am	Word and Praise	St Margaret's, Lyng

The Rev'd. Helen Rengert, 01603 879275 revdhelenrwv@gmail.com

The Rev'd. Keith Rengert, 01603 879275 revdkeith@gmail.com

The Rev'd. Judith Sweetman, 07484862962 (*Friday to Sunday*)
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The Rev'd. Richard Turk, 07721 035009 revdrichardrwv@gmail.com

Email parishofficerwv@gmail.com to submit articles or join the mailing list.

FACEBOOK: Reepham & Wensum Valley Events

WEBSITE: www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk

Pew Notes are available to download from the RWV website and the E-newsletter

**If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact your Parish
Safeguarding Officer. Details in the church porch or on the RWV website.**

**Readings for 1st January, First Sunday after
Christmas**

Numbers 6:22-27 (NRSVA)

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,
The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Psalms 8

Domine, Dominus noster

- 1 O LORD our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!
- 2 Out of the mouths of infants and children *
 your majesty is praised above the heavens.
- 3 You have set up a stronghold against your
 adversaries, *
 to quell the enemy and the avenger.
- 4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your
 fingers, *
 the moon and the stars you have set in their
 courses,
- 5 What is man that you should be mindful of him?
* the son of man that you should seek him
 out?
- 6 You have made him but little lower than the
 angels; *
 you adorn him with glory and honour;

- 7 You give him mastery over the works of your
 hands; *
 you put all things under his feet:
- 8 All sheep and oxen, *
 even the wild beasts of the field,
- 9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
 and whatsoever walks in the paths of the
 sea.
- 10 O LORD our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!

Galatians 4:4-7 (NRSVA)

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 2:15-21 (NRSVA)

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.