

Hello everyone,

With the Christmas decorations now packed away for another year, we are already two weeks into 2025. Let us give thanks for this New Year and pray that it is a good year, bringing resolution and peace to areas of conflict in our churches, our communities, and our wider world. So much uncertainty remains in so many aspects of our lives but one thing is certain: whilst we do not know what the future holds, we can know the One who holds the future, right there in His hands.



### Services this week:

This Sunday there will be 10.00am services of Holy Communion at Appleby and Donisthorpe, and Morning Worship at Measham and Packington. Kids Kingdom Sunday School also meet at Appleby from 9.45am.

### Looking ahead:

Another busy Wednesday with:

- Midweek Communion at 10.00am at Packington;
- Coffee & Chat in Swepstone Church Hall at 10.30am to 12.00noon;
- Activeage meet again at 11.00am in Measham Church Hall;
- and Community Lunch in Appleby Church Hall at 12.30pm.

Kids Kingdom Baby & Toddler group meet again on Thursday morning from 9.00am to 11.00am in Appleby Church Hall.

Packington's 'Come and See' for school years 7-9, is later on Thursday at 3.45 to 5.00pm in church.

Next Sunday (19<sup>th</sup>) there will be services of Holy Communion at Normanton, Norton, and Swepstone, a lay led service at Donisthorpe, and Breakfast Church at Measham.

### Woodfield Team prayer

*God our Father, you long to draw all people into your love.*

*Increase in number your church throughout the Woodfield Team; deepen us as followers and learners of Christ; and give us courage to share the good news of your kingdom.*

*We pray this in the power of your Spirit, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

## Collect for Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January - the Baptism of Christ

Heavenly Father,  
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:  
may we recognize him as our Lord  
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
**Amen**

## Reading for 12<sup>th</sup> January - Luke 3.15-17,21-22 New International Version (UK)



<sup>15</sup> The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. <sup>16</sup> John answered them all, 'I baptise you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'

### The baptism and genealogy of Jesus

<sup>21</sup> When all the people were being baptised, Jesus was baptised too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened. <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'

### Prayers for today:

We pray:

Eternal Lord, you are our creator and sustainer. We bring before you the needs of our church, our world, our communities, and ourselves:

- We cannot see all you have in store for us, help us to hold on to your promises, declared to the whole world through Jesus Christ, your Son. Help us to trust your plans for us and to be thankful for your steadfast love and guidance.
- Father God, we pray for the whole family of your church here in the Woodfield Team. May all your people be built up in faith and demonstrate in their lives the gospel of Jesus Christ. Give us a fresh vision that leads to action and strengthen us to serve you in the places where we live.

- Faithful Lord, drive away despair from our politics, revive our dreams of justice and truth, restore our passion for what is good and right. We pray for all those who lead our nations of the world and for those in authority that they may always work for peace and for the good of their people. Grant us and them the courage of John the Baptist that we may constantly seek the truth and speak out in the face of injustice and wrongs.
- We remember those who cry out for peace as they work in their communities and across the world to end conflict. We pray for those who speak up against systems of power, as they seek to transform economics and politics for the good of all. May this New Year bring peace to those parts of the world where it has been absent for far too long, especially in Israel and Gaza, and in Ukraine.
- Compassionate God, bring healing in mind, body and spirit to all who are troubled. In lives afflicted by pain, illness, distress or grief bring comfort, hope and the courage they need for today and every day.
- For those who are mourning, lead them gently through this time of darkness into the light and peace of your enduring love. We remember before you those who will not journey into this New Year and we thank you for the gift of hope beyond death that you have given us through the life, death and resurrection of your Son.
- Gracious God, as we begin a New Year, remind us of the things that are truly important and worthwhile. Help us to live in the goodness that comes from doing what you want us to do. Help us to put aside anxiety about the future and the past, so that we might live in peace with you now, one day at a time.

**Amen.**