



# Team Parish of Christ the King St Aidan's, Brunton Park Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023 Epiphany

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of Epiphany and the moment that the Magi arrive at Jesus' home to offer their gifts – not at Christmas despite our nativity plays, but around two years later! We know very little about these mysterious figures, all that we're told is that they came from the East and followed a star. So this Epiphany, I'd like to take their mystery and use it to imagine ourselves into their place.

And I'd like to start, before this morning's passage, back in their home in the East, and ask what would send men like this on such a journey. And surely, it was because they were searching for something. I imagine them with the kind of restless hearts that have sent men and women into the unknown throughout history. The kind of searching mind, and questioning spirit, that longs for truth and meaning. The kind of curiosity and inquisitiveness that will look and think and puzzle until it finds its way to an answer. I imagine the kind of person who saw the sign of a star in the sky and needed to find its full meaning, to follow to the very end of where it led.

And surely it's this same restless heart that leads us on our search. It's that same desire to find a path to follow through life. The need for a sign that can offer some direction in an often chaotic world. We each of us have some part of this drive within us. It may not send us across continents, but surely it fuels our questions and shapes our longing for understanding. And it's why, I think, many of us find ourselves in church. Because we're searching for that key that might unlock some of the mysteries of life. We're looking for that insight that will answer our questions, and make some sense of the world. So perhaps we might see something of ourselves in these wise men, as they spot a star rising in the night say, before they even set off on their journey.

But then, I'd like to skip ahead, past the well-known story, to imagine their journey home, and ask how they left Bethlehem after they'd laid their gifts at Jesus' feet. And perhaps, as they travelled home, they discovered that instead of answers to questions, what they had really been searching for was a relationship with a person. Instead of a solution to the riddle of life, what they'd really needed, was an encounter with the living God. Perhaps they went home having found truth and meaning, not in the form of an answer, but in the form of a child. Not in words, but in the Word made flesh. Not in solutions, but in the presence of God with us. And perhaps we too might discover that in our search for meaning and our longing for truth, our restless hearts can find their rest, not because we've solved the mystery, but because we've met the mystery and it has the face of Christ. And perhaps that's enough for the journey.

## **Isaiah 60.1-6**

Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.  
Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.  
Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.  
A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

## **Matthew 2.1-12**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:  
"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

## TODAY

**9:30am: Epiphany:** Rev'd Gerard Rundell presides over or family service with readings from Isaiah 60.1-6 and Matthew 2.1-12

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**Wed** 10.00am, Church: **BCP Midweek Eucharist**

**Thurs** 2pm: **Film Club: The Duke**

**Sat** 10am-12pm, Community Room: **Saturday Café**

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup>** 9:30am **Epiphany 2:** Ordinand Clair Lewis presides as Rev'd Gerard Rundell preaches from Isaiah 49.1-7 , Corinthians 1.1-9 , John 1.29-42

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Fri 20<sup>th</sup> 1:15pm: **Funeral Service of Margaret Pitkethly**

Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm: **Chat and Craft**

Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr 2:00pm: **Prayer and Praise**

8:00pm: **Men's Group:** Talk by David Down 'Good Lord, Mayor'

Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> 2:00pm: **Chat and Craft**

## NOTICES

**SUNDAY SERVICE** – today's live broadcast link <https://bit.ly/Epiphany8Jan23>

**CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS** – thank you to everyone who has supported and donated to our recent collections, these are the amounts: Crisis £275, Medicins Sans Frontieres £275, Saturday Cafe: Retina UK. Parkinsons UK, Myaware, Swiss Kenya Development (Orphanage) £350 each, Children's Society £225 includes £100 from Chat and Craft, Salvation Army £150 from Carols on the Green, Gifts for Ukraine Children £1100. Thank you to everyone for their generosity and support.

**ZOOM CODES** – all our Zoom sessions will use only the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7573778713?pwd=NGVjcTRLQjBEaStqYjFDSm1KOURtQT09> Meeting ID: 757 377 8713 Passcode: StAidan

**BOOKING ZOOM MEETINGS:** if you would like to use the St Aidan's Zoom account for a church meeting, please contact Janice

**USED STAMPS** – if you have any used stamps, please save them and put them in the box at the back of church to raise fund for St Oswald's Hospice.

**CHURCH OPENING** – church is now open during the day, every day. Please come in at any time for some quiet time or prayer.

**FOOD BANK** – any items placed in the box at the back of church will be donated to Kenton Foodbank who are appealing for donations.

**DONATIONS** - to make a donation to St Aidan's, please use the following link

<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/8a599239-a9bd-4136-8b4b-1dcabb0a2c65>

**For Our Prayers: St Aidan's Cycle of Prayer**

**For the church** – St Nicholas' Cathedral. Churchwardens and all in-volved in looking after our building.

**For the community** – Groups using our Community Room and the Community Centre

**For the world** – for Ukraine, Pakistan and all countries facing hardship and conflict. For our own national and political life

**For those in need** - Gladys Johnston, Esther Wooler, Joan Miller, Lindsay Miller, Alan Gregg

**For those who have died** – Barry Warmesley, Margaret Pitkethly and on their anniversaries – Howard Stansby, Robert Tullin, Eva Burgon, Jean Bates, John Reed, Lena Fenning, Crosby Humphrey



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