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WEEKLY LETTER

3 January 2021

Isaiah 60.1-6: Psalm 72.1-15:
Ephesians 3.1-12: Matthew 2.1-12

The Epiphany – (revelation of Christ to the world)

Today we have a sublime story where the Wisemen (astrologers from the East) gasp in admiration at what they see, and perhaps if we can see ourselves there, we too could be caught up in the stunned silence! For Matthew really has caught an enchanting moment where everybody around the Christ Child is utterly silent. You could probably hear a pin drop as the Magi kneel in adoration, offering their gifts to Jesus who also lies silently. It really is a beautiful scene, and probably better understood by artists and poets. Perhaps this is a moment to quietly re-read Matthew 2.1-12, and capture the silence of eternity as the men from the East kneel in awe of what is before them?

I don't know how the life of Jesus of Nazareth attracted such brilliant writers, but as with the other three, Matthew shows that not only does he have a wonderful ability to create scenes of wonder, but also the skill in contrasting two radically different Kings.

The Wise men visit both the Kings, one is adored and cherished by everyone in the manger, (though Jesus must have been puzzled by the gifts, as they were definitely not from the Bethlehem Mothercare!); while in the Palace we find the King seething with jealousy, and in his usual cold blooded cunning and single minded way planning how he could ensure that the child in Bethlehem will be murdered, (this King is intent on mass murder to ensure his Kingdom is never challenged), while in Bethlehem a baby lies in a manger, whose sole aim will be to liberate people and glorify God.

So, I hope today, you will find time to not only enjoy the silence of the Manger, but also say your prayers of adoration and thankfulness.

Stephen

Church News

Sunday Morning Worship will be led by Rev Dr Robert Pope, and we will celebrate Communion.

In the midst of a pandemic - A sign of the times

When we're in times of trouble, Lord, take our hands.
When daily life is full of confusion, Lord, give us some clarity.
When our way of life is taken from us, Lord, show us a new way.
When we have lost our freedom, Lord, give us patience.
When sickness prevails all around us, Lord send us your healing.
When those who care are at such risk, Lord, bless their auras.
When you call, Lord, let us hear and answer.
When you come again, Lord, let us be ready.

(Ann Hyde – URC Prayer Handbook 2021)

