



22ND DECEMBER 2019

Katie Jenkinson writes...

As I have pondered the Christmas story this year, it is the role of the outsiders that has struck me most.

“Shepherds in the fields abiding” are not pretty people with crooks, surrounded by nice fluffy lambs. They are the bottom of the heap in their society, seen as unclean and unworthy to enter the temple. And suddenly, they are at the centre of the Christmas story. Visited by millions of angels, and the glory shines around them. The Shekinah glory of God has broken out of the temple and is now shining over outsiders, those on the edge, ignored and seen as irrelevant by their culture. And God invites them to come and see the Christ child.

Then there are the magi. We don't know how many of them there were, not necessarily three. They are not kings, or wise men. They were probably Zoroastrian priests. Not from the religious establishment of Jesus' day, but from way outside. Followers of another faith. They have never attended a synagogue; they don't know the Hebrew scriptures (messianic prophecy has to be explained to them when they visit Herod). They go to the wrong place first. Where else would a king be born, but in a palace?

But the magi are seeking. They don't even quite know what they are seeking. They are looking for a king. But this king is not in a palace, but lying in a manger, in a small town, not the capital city. They travel for many miles to worship this king. And when they arrive, they find they are offering their precious gifts to the God they did not know, but whose face they have now seen.

Maybe you are reading this today, and you're just visiting. Maybe you don't usually come to church. Maybe it's even your first time. Maybe you have come many miles, and you are here with family or friends. God says to you – you are welcome. Come and worship the King, come and worship the Christ child, come and meet me, says God. You are not an outsider, you are a child to whom I am calling. This Christmas, whether you are visiting for the first time, or have been coming to church for a long time, come and let the light of the Christ child shine in your heart today and forever.

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart

(Jeremiah 29: 13)”

Blessings, Katie

Notices

Monday 23rd December 1pm

Thank you very much if you have signed up to help with Christingle assembly!

There is still space for more helpers so please come along to the café here at Emmanuel and join the Christingle assembly line.

Tuesday 24th December

3pm Nativity

4pm Christingle

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Wednesday 25th December

10.30am Christmas Celebration



Starting on 7th January.

Speak to a member of leadership for more

Details.

ROTAS: If you need to check rotas please log on to Church Builder. If you need help with this or any other information about events, groups or who's who then please contact the church office. Details overleaf.

ECB DIARY

CAFÉ NOW CLOSED UNTIL 8th JANUARY

SUN 22nd DECEMBER	10.30am	All Age Worship, Communion Leader: Erika Biscoe Preacher: Ian Biscoe
	7.00pm	Evening Service (Refreshments at 6.30pm) Preparing for Revival, Prayer and soaking session Leader: Ian Biscoe

SEE CHRISTMAS SERVICES OVERLEAF

SUN 29th DECEMBER	10.30am	Informal Worship, All Age Leader: Ian Biscoe Preacher: Erika Biscoe *NO EVENING SERVICE *
SUN 5th JANUARY	10.30 am	Informal Worship, All Age Epiphany, The Magi Leader: Ian Biscoe Preacher: Erika Biscoe
	7.00pm	Evening Service (Refreshments at 6.30pm) Spiritual Gifts, Wisdom Leader: Erika Biscoe Preacher: Ian Biscoe

NEXT NEWSLETTER 12TH JANUARY

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All notices to Admin Team by 7pm Wednesday