

# Stoke Poges Church

St Giles' and St Andrew's



**Sunday 3rd January 2021**

Led by Natasha Brady

## Welcome to this All Age service

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah. 9:6*

### Let's gather ...

with a song

There is a Star

*Performed by Sarah Mackintosh; Listener Kids.*

and a prayer

**Lord of our journeys, help us this day to have eyes to see your leading, ears to hear your guidance, and a heart of courage, that we may journey faithfully and find your way even when the path may seem difficult and dark. Amen.**

### Treasure Hunt

Look carefully at Natasha's worship space. Hidden within are **four 'treasures'**.

They relate to today's bible story. See if you can spot them ...

**Answers coming soon!**

## Saying Sorry

Keeping your eyes open, imitate Natasha's actions as we say sorry to God together ...

*Make a fist*

We are sorry for the times we have got angry with other people.

*Point away from yourself with your index finger*

We are sorry for the times we have blamed others and seen things wrong in others without recognising how much is also wrong in us.

*Close up your hand and hold it close to your chest*

We are sorry for the times we have kept things selfishly to ourselves and not been prepared to give to those who need our help.

*Put your hand over your mouth*

We are sorry for the foolish words we have spoken which have hurt other people.

*Put your hand over your eyes*

We are sorry that we have deliberately chosen not to see the good things we could have done to help other people.

*Put your hand over one ear*

We are sorry for the times we have not listened to the cries of those who are poor or who suffer injustice.

Jesus says, 'If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest'. So we bring all that we are to Jesus - all our sins and our failure to love. Thank-you that you died for us so that we might be forgiven and start a new life in the power of your Holy Spirit.

## Song

Forever yours

*Performed by Martin Smith & Ayanfe Egede; © Smith United Limited 2020; Gloworks.*

## Reading

Matthew 2. 1-12

read by Margriet Wells

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem **2** and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.'

**3** When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. **5** 'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written:

**6**

' "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel." '

**7** Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. **8** He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'

**9** After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. **11** On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

**Treasure Found ...** have you found the **four 'treasures'** yet?

**Opening the word** a talk by Revd Natasha

**Song** Majesty  
*Performed by Martin Smith; © Smith United Limited 2020; Gloworks.*

**Intercessions** by Jamie Brady

Lord in your mercy

**Here our prayer**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

**Song**      I've got the joy joy joy

I've got that joy joy joy, joy  
Down in my heart - Where?  
Down in my heart - Where?  
Down in my heart  
I've got that joy joy joy joy  
Down in my heart - where?  
Down in my heart to stay

And I'm so happy, so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
( *down in my heart* )  
And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
( *what else you got?* )

I have the peace that passes understanding,  
Down in my heart - Where?  
Down in my heart - Where?  
Down in my heart

I have the peace that passes understanding,  
Down in my heart - where?  
Down in my heart to stay

And I'm so happy, so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
( *down in my heart* )  
And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart

I have the wonderful love of my blessed Redeemer way down in the depths of my heart  
Where?  
Down in the depths of my heart  
Where?  
Down in the depths of my heart

I have the wonderful love of my blessed Redeemer way down in the depths of my heart  
Where?  
Down in the depths of my heart to stay

And I'm so happy, so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
( *down in my heart* )

And I'm so happy so very happy  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart  
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart !!!

Performed by Listener Kids.

### **Go with God 24/7**

Keep a daily diary in which you note any unexpected situations or encounters with unlikely people, particularly if you feel God may be speaking to you through them. Reflect on these prayerfully over the following days (and if it helps, talk about them with a friend).

### **A final prayer**

Lord, as we continue our journey with you this week,  
as we seek to live out our faith every day,  
be with us, surprise with your love,  
nudge us when you want us  
to see or do something new –  
for Jesus' sake.

**Amen.**

**Thank you for joining us today. Keep safe  
and God Bless**

# Going Deeper

## Matthew 2.1-12

In which, wise men, following a star, come from the east with gifts for the newborn king. Initially they journey to the wrong place but King Herod's advisers direct them to Bethlehem, where they eventually find the baby Jesus and worship him, but God's guidance in a dream warns them to avoid Herod on their way home.

## A note on the passage

The wise men are strangers to the land of Israel and outsiders to the Jewish faith. Their title 'Magi' is also the root for our word 'magic'. They were probably eastern experts in observing the stars. It seems highly unlikely that they would know and understand all about the Messiah, the ultimate Jewish king. But they travel all the same. We, like them, are travelling through life and constantly seeking understanding.



Reflect on the wise men's journey and the meaning in your own journeying this week.

## WALK

The wise men set out on a journey to an unknown place. Go for a walk somewhere unfamiliar, you may wish to use The Woodland Trust 'find a wood'

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/find-woods) or you could go somewhere you know well but choose unfamiliar circumstances, e.g. after dark. Pray and reflect as you walk. Ask yourself what is refreshing about an unfamiliar journey and what is challenging. Look forward to the year 2021. Ask yourself these questions: What am I most hopeful about? What am I most fearful about? In what ways might God be guiding me in the year ahead?

## WATCH

The wise men undertook an epic quest to find Jesus. 'The quest' is a common theme in many stories, reflecting our human need to discover meaning, to find or create what is lacking, or to overcome evil with good. Choose a film to watch that encapsulates this theme, e.g. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* [PG-13], *Moana* [PG] or *Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey* [U]. Watch the film with these questions in mind: What starts this quest off? Is it a lack of something, or a threat, or a sense of calling? Where are the 'threshold' moments in this story? – the moments when things really change, when there is no going back or when something suddenly releases so that the quest can go forward. Is there something in your life that is like a quest?

## DAILY PRAYER

Each morning this week, take a moment to think of what lies ahead that day. You could say this prayer:

Lord, guide me today. Help me to find you as I...

## BAKE

**You will need:** 500g puff pastry, a rolling pin, a baking tray, a bowl, a wooden spoon, 100g ground almonds, 75g sugar, 50g butter, 1 egg, a dried bean, a fork, a knife; access to an oven.

- Bake a galette des rois, or kings' cake. Traditionally, a bean called a fève is hidden inside the cake. Whoever found the fève traditionally got to be 'king' for the day.
- Divide the pastry in two and roll each part into a circle. Place one of them onto a baking tray.
- Mix the almonds, sugar, butter and egg until smooth then spread it evenly across the circle of pastry. Then place a dried bean on top.
- Lay the second circle of pastry on top and press down the edges with a fork. Use a knife to carve a criss-cross pattern on top.
- Bake for half an hour at 210°C/190°C fan/gas mark 7.
- Share your cake with others, and when someone finds the fève, talk about the joy of finding something special.

## MAKE

**You will need:** paper and pens.

- Sometimes we can find direction for our lives by looking back at where we have been. Make a 'map' of around six important moments in your life. Allow time and creativity to write or represent them in some way on the paper, making a timeline.
- When you have some points on your 'map', think about them and

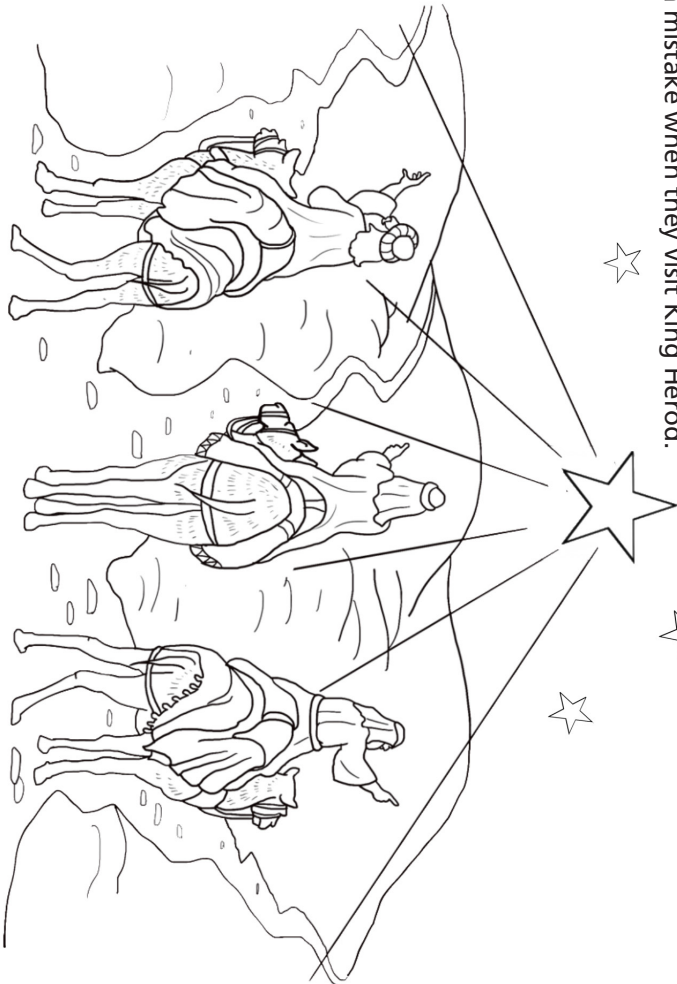
your journey so far. Are there any links between events? Do any themes emerge? Are these positive or negative experiences, or a mix? If you could add a 'next event' to your own life map, what would it be?

- If you are doing this with your household, you may like to share bits of your 'map' with each other, but be careful to honour each contribution and to respect each other's privacy. Can you make a joint 'household map' with events and memories that you share together?



## Matthew 2.1-12

The wise men search for a baby king, but make a mistake when they visit King Herod.



The wise men need God's direction on their way to find baby Jesus.



Draw what helped the wise men to find Jesus.



Can you find these hidden words?

- Bethlehem
- frankincense
- gold
- Herod
- Mary
- myrrh
- search
- star
- worship

c	w	m	t	d	o	r	e	H	f	l	c
g	m	o	j	e	a	c	j	e	h	a	t
m	o	e	r	s	o	k	s	c	e	B	c
e	z	z	h	s	o	f	r	s	e	r	p
M	a	r	y	g	h	a	c	t	h	a	g
s	s	s	x	s	e	i	h	o	r	t	o
m	d	y	s	s	w	l	p	j	r	s	l
n	y	e	y	e	e	y	s	c	y	u	d
n	m	p	o	h	z	n	a	u	m	n	u
e	s	n	e	c	n	i	k	n	a	r	f
i	c	m	i	w	n	d	n	o	p	y	c



Help the wise men to find their way to Jesus.



