



Pew News

St. Michael & All Angel's Anglican Church
15 Mell Road
Spearwood

spearwoodchurch.org

SUNDAY 7th Jan 2017 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

A warm welcome. Children are especially welcome. We do hope that you will find the worship uplifting and that your relationship with Jesus Christ is enriched through it.

If you have any questions about what we do here or about the Christian Faith in general I would be happy to make time to discuss them or any other issues with you.

Gluten free wafers are available for Communion, if you require these please speak to the service leader.

Revd Debbie

Prayer of the Day:

Lord God of the nations,
we have seen the star of your glory rising in splendour:
may the brightness of your incarnate Word
pierce the night that covers the earth,
signal the dawn of justice and peace,
and beckon all nations to walk as one in your light.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, in the splendour of
eternal light, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Lights of the world

Our Christmas celebrations are over. As we tidy up and restore our homes to what they were like before Christmas, we might look back at our festivities and ponder on what was so special about it.

Jesus made clear that He came as light for the world. He came to give life in all its fullness. He came to show God's character—full of love, compassion, forgiveness and mercy.

So if, as we put away our Christmas decorations, we think there is no more to be said until next Christmas, we have missed out on a vital part of the Christian message. For Jesus also said that we, His followers, were to be the light of the world.....'let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven'. (Matthew 5:14-16). We are now involved! Jesus calls us, as His disciples, to be like Him this coming year - lights of hope, love, joy, healing and peace in a world that badly needs it.

Dates for the Diary:

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Bunnings BBQ at Bibra Lake: 3rd February and 24th February (Spearwood)

New 2 You Sale: 3rd February 9.00 - 1.00pm (Hilton)

PRAYER AND THANKSGIVINGS

Please Pray for

- Peyton Bell, Maryvonne Neighbour and Lauren Treadgold as they prepare for Baptism and/or confirmation this month.
- Couples who are preparing for marriage
- The coming year, that we might catch Gods' Vision for our Community
- All who are travelling on our roads: for safety, patience and good will.

Epiphany

On 6th January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. But who were these wise men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were called kings - by a church father, Tertullian.

Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the 8th century, the magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

Where did the Wise Men come from?

Magi from the East – it isn't a lot to go on. The Magi had originally been a religious caste among the Persians. Their devotion to astrology, divination and the interpretation of dreams led to an extension in the meaning of the word, and by the first century the Magi in Matthew's gospel could have been astrologers from outside of Persia. Some scholars believe they might have come from what was then Arabia Felix, or as we would say today, southern Arabia.

Certainly, in the first century astrology was practised there, and it was the region where the Queen of Sheba had lived. She of course had visited Solomon and would have heard the prophecies about how one day a Messiah would be born to the Israelites and become their king.

Matthew's gospel (chapter 2) is clear that the Magi asked Herod: 'Where is the One who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.' So it is possible that in southern Arabia the Queen of Sheba's story of how a Messiah would one day be sent to the Israelites had

survived. Certainly, there are a number of other early legends that connect southern Arabia with Solomon's Israel.

To many people this makes sense: that the ancient stories of a Messiah, linked to later astrological study, prompted these alert and god-fearing men to the realisation that something very stupendous was happening in Israel. They realised that after all these centuries, the King of the Jews, the Messiah, was about to be born.

One more interesting thing that gives weight to the theory that the magi came from southern Arabia is this: if you study any map of Palestine as it was during biblical times, you will find that the old Arabian caravan routes all entered Palestine 'from the East'.

READINGS

This week

Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72;1-7, 10-14, Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12

Next week

Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

CONTACT DETAILS

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SPEARWOOD								
Date	Welcome	Reader	Prayer	Sacristan	LPM&LA	M/Tea	Musician	Counters
7th Jan	Len	June Lorraine	June	Lorraine	Lorraine Len	Maxine	N/A	
14th Jan	Karl	Bernard Ann	Lorraine	Lorraine	Len Audrey T	Len	N/A	