



6 January 2019
Epiphany

Minister: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail
Musicians: Marie Cannon (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)
Readers: Jessica Scott (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Here each Sunday we pray God's blessing over our buildings: thanks for the good that has happened through the week and cleansing for anything troublesome. May the Spirit touch all who come into our church home.



Being family, we watch out for, and care for, one another.

Settling in

Gathering with all the Saints Isaiah 60:1-3

E ara, kia marama; kua tae mai hoki tōu marama,
kua whiti te korōria o Ihowa ki a koe.

² Tērā hoki e hipokina te whenua e te pōuri, ngā iwi e te pōuri kerekere;
ka whiti ia a Ihowa ki a koe, ka kitea hoki ki a koe tōna korōria.

³ Ā ka haere mai ngā tauwiwi ki tōu marama,
ngā kingi ki ōu hihi, ina whiti mai.

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² 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.

³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Carol *The first noel*

Story: [Three Wise Camels](http://lostsheep.com.au) lostsheep.com.au

Prayer

God of the light and of the darkness,
open our eyes to the signs of failure
which reveal your presence
open our ears to your words
spoken in unexpected places
open our hearts to your love
shown towards us by those you have sent
to share our lives.

May our worship not interrupt true worship of you
may our agendas not leave out the Kingdom of God
may our planning not separate our confidence from our faith.

Kirsty Thorpe, in *Celebrating Women*, ed Hannah Ward, Jennifer Wild, Janet Morley

Symbol of God's Presence

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Wonder is the beginning of wisdom. Socrates

Kari Jo Verhulst writes:

Set aside, if you can, some of that Midrash we call Christmas and step into Matthew's world. Forget the manger, the Magnificat, shepherds, and an overstuffed inn—they belong to Luke. Try to get "We Three Kings" and your neighbor's illuminated front yard out of your head. Keep going back, past the medieval saints calendar telling how the Magi died as martyrs for the gospel. Beyond their names and faces, fixed in the seventh century.

Do this, says Verhulst, and you will

be surrounded by a plurality of traditions, crammed together in a mish-mash of relocated people from across the empire.



This is the context of today's reading, looking back to the significance of one child born in the midst of turmoil and injustice, who became known as the Messiah, the promise of God's world to come.

Reading and Reflection Matthew 2:1-12

How many wise men were there? What did you hear?

The wise men, Joseph, and Mary represent those who take notice of the signs of promise and look for a new order. Alternatively, Herod stands for the powerful who seek world order through cynicism, cruelty, and oppression.

Peter B. Price, *Sojourners*

W.B. Yeats imagined the wise men years later "being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied" (*The Magi*). This child, shown through their astrology to be the one to lead the world to the new order, was surely not to fail. What else could his death be but failure to prevail? Astrology is based on the myth that human destiny is under the control of supernatural astral forces. Not everyone believes in this kind of control but by far the predominant view is that some kind of control is crucial to making plans succeed. Taking control to achieve good, that surely would be God's way. A lot of our Christian language speaks like that. So surely the Messiah, the leader of God's new way, would stay in control no matter what.

But this whole Christmas-Epiphany thing is a paradox. Not in control: God in a manger, vulnerable. God in Christ, vulnerable, determinedly non-violent, genuine self-giving love in the flesh.

God's goodness is uncontrollable mystery. That's hard to grasp, even harder to stay with. It's easier to hold onto some level of control. Because won't it all fall apart if we let go? Let go and trust the heart of God?

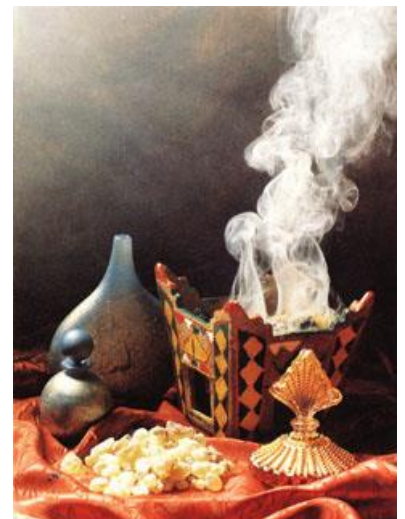
There's an interesting saying: "when it comes to giving, some people stop at nothing".

It could mean what it usually means idiomatically – there's nothing they'd not give. That is, a really generous person. But think about it, word by word. Some people stop at nothing, meaning they don't go beyond nothing, they don't give anything at all.

Not risking the uncontrollable mystery that enables us to give when we'd much rather keep.

Or probably the truth of it for us is that we're a bit of mixture, of giving and holding tight.

The Giving by Joy Cowley from *Psalms Down-Under*



Conversations around the Table

Hymn *Wise men came journeying*

Continuing the Conversation

Unison Prayer

We open now
to the way of the magi,
wise ones not afraid to journey
across the borders and boundaries
that mark the territory of the tribe
to what Spirit is doing in another country,
another tradition, and with other people.

We learn to lay our gifts before the Gift of God,
to follow the bright and beckoning star of our future
across deserts of unknowing,
mountainous obstacles,
and valleys of despair
to make an offering of our lives
to the “new thing” our God is birthing
in a land where we have never been.

And then, Holy One,
lead us back home on the path of the star-gazing sages,
choosing back roads and fresh vistas,
safe from Herod’s hoard and the passport-phobic.
Laden with spiritual gifts – new sounds, tastes, and sights
of the star-blessed stable where you were born
and the beckoning manglers where you are still being born –
we discover that “home” is an expanding house,
as large as the cosmos,
as close as our hearts. Amen.

The Traveller’s Homage, by Bruce Sanguin, in *If Darwin Prayed*

The World: Our Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Iran, Iraq, Syria

Lord’s Prayer

Loving the World as God Loves

Serving in the Week Ahead

As we work to create light for others, we naturally light our own way.

Mary Anne Damacher

Offering Hymn *We three kings*

Dedication

Loving and receptive God, who acted in the Bethlehem birth and who sustains the whole human family, we seek to be wise men and women. May our gifts be a sign, as were the gifts for the travellers of old, that wisdom is marked by offering to Christ our whole selves and substance.

Glen E. Rainsley, in *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*, adapted

Blessing

Go with the strength you have.
Go simply,
lightly,
gently,
in search of Love.
And the Spirit go with you.
Kia tau ki a tātou katoa...

Robyn McPhail, 06.01.2019

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 6 JANUARY 2019

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz **Church Office:** 09 407 8250

Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on Facebook

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Ministry Leadership Team: Bev Tayler, Alan Robinson, and Robyn

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KK Pastoral: Jessica Scott 09 407 5555 jomscott2@gmail.com

Bookings for the buildings (hire or church use): phone office or cornerstone@kkup.org.nz or wesleydale@kkup.org.nz

NEXT SUNDAY 13 JANUARY 2019

Musicians: Dave Hallam (KK) Clyde Foster (Kaeo)

Readers: Akisi Renner (KK) tba (Kaeo)

Door and Tea: Jan and Rilla **Communion Prep:** Bev and Bob Tayler

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17,21-22

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale **this Saturday** 12 January 2019 7.30am-12noon at Cornerstone. Contact person: Mary 407 1117.

BIBLE STUDY: Restart in February.

STUDY LEAVE: Robyn's study leave is interspersed with parish work, so she is available at times, at other times not. Contact Bev and Alan (Ministry Leadership Group 4016625, 4050688) with initial inquiries.

MEDIUM SIZED CARTONS (photocopy box size and larger but not too big): Robyn will happily relieve you of any spare cartons you have, useful for paper to go for recycling for books and for books to go to the book fair.

LAST TO LEAVE CORNERSTONE: please ensure all doors locked and alarm set

Hope Church will be back with us next Sunday – 13 January

We all live lives that are complicated and that at times, with infinite variation, feel overwhelming. But we know people in our immediate world who step beyond themselves, into care. If you know them up close, you know they are not saints or heroes—take note of that, and take comfort. Feel how when you extend a kindness, however simple, you are energized and not depleted.

Krista Tippett, *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living*