

## Letter from the Vicar

### Wise Men, gifts and that star.

A grandma who had come to see her grandchild perform in the ABC Nativity in Thornton stopped me the other day. "Can I have a quick word Vicar?" Always a daunting opener. What could it be? A baptism request? a complaint? a pastoral problem? A deep theological conundrum? With a bit of trepidation I sat down next to her wearing my concerned, listening face. "The wise men brought gold, frankincense, you know the stuff Catholics set fire to and wave about in church, but what on earth is myrrh?" she asked.

Come on vicar, I thought to myself, think on your feet.

Well, do you know what it is?

The whole thing about the wise men is that they always get shown in the stable along with the shepherds (who are busy worshipping and dropping off a lamb as a pressie to Mary and Joseph, presumably so they can have a good Christmas dinner) and the lowing cattle, straw, manger, Mary, Joseph and Jesus of course and the star, twinkling through a conveniently placed open window. But I'm not really sure whether this picture is all that close to the real thing.

The story of the wise men is found in just one gospel, Matthew chapter 2 which states the 'Magi from the East came to Jerusalem and asked, "where is the one who has been born King of the Jews".' We don't know how many there were, early eastern traditions suggest that there were twelve of them, but most traditions have plumped for there being three, one for each gift presented. Legend has even named and described them, Caspar (young, beardless and of a ruddy complexion), Melchior (old, grey with a long beard) and Balthasar (black with a new beard), but there is no mention of their names or what they looked like in Matthew and neither is there mentioned that they were kings (they probably weren't).

It is also difficult to pin down the timing of the visit. There is a strong likelihood that it wasn't on that first Christmas night along with the shepherds. By the time they did visit, it seems that Mary, Joseph and Jesus were in a house. It actually could have been any time up to two years after

Jesus' birth as Herod's awful edict to slay the local children in the hope of getting rid of this new king, included children aged two years and under. Joseph and Mary were still resident in Bethlehem however, so I would imagine that the visit of the Magi did take place when Jesus was still a small baby. Jesus, of course, escaped the killings, heeding a message from an angel, they became asylum seekers in Egypt.

Just how the Magi found where Jesus was has also been a bit of a puzzle for me. They were likely to have been astrologer/astronomers (the difference probably being a tad more subtle than it is now) and the star they observed could have been a conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter which happened three times in 7 BC. Jupiter was seen as the 'royal' planet and Saturn was sometimes associated with the Jews so it is not hard to see why the magi would have set off for Jerusalem. It does seem a bit early though. Others have suggested it may have been a comet. But Matthew says that the star went ahead of them (so they could follow it) stopping over where Jesus was resident in Bethlehem. This made them very happy as we read in verse 10. How could a celestial body lead them to somewhere so precisely. These were not sailors looking for a land mass. Some suggest that the language is poetic and actually they had been sent to Bethlehem by Herod (true) but that they found where Jesus was by other unknown means. But maybe Star of Bethlehem cannot be naturally explained by science! Perhaps it was a temporary and supernatural light. After all, the first Christmas was a time of miracles

God has often used special, heavenly lights to guide his people, such as the glory that filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-38) and the temple (1 Kings 8:10) and that shone upon the apostle Paul (Acts 9:3). Such visible signs of God's presence are known as the Shekinah Glory, or dwelling place of God. This special light is a visible manifestation of divine majesty.

The great mystery of the visit of the magi is not the star however, but just why these non Jewish travellers from a far country were chosen to follow this path in order to worship the Messiah. The gifts they brought, as well as being appropriate gifts to bring a to a king, spoke of Jesus' person; gold for a king, frankincense for a priest and the embalming spice myrrh (to answer the question posed to me by a grandma at ABC) for someone who is to die. Myrrh speaks clearly of Jesus' reason for being here among us, ultimately to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Without Easter there's

no point to Christmas.

That same invitation to come and worship is given to us, to bring our gifts and to live lives that give honour and praise to the King. I pray that we can all do this in whatever 2012 has in store for us.

*Andy*

## **JANUARY PARISH DIARY**

### **SUNDAY 1ST THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS**

	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Tuesday 3rd	11.00 a.m.	Holy Communion at Crossley House
Wednesday 4th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion at St. James's
Thursday 5th	9.30 a.m.	Morning prayer

\*\*\*\*\*

### **SUNDAY 8TH EPIPHANY**

	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	1.00 p.m.	Quiet Afternoon
Tuesday 10th	7.30 p.m.	Adult tap dancing
Wednesday 11th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	11.30 a.m.	Ings Way Lunch Day
	6.15 p.m.	Cub Scouts
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 a.m.	Morning prayer
	6.00 p.m.	Beaver Scouts
	7.30 p.m.	Scouts

\*\*\*\*\*

### **SUNDAY 15TH 2ND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY**

	9.30 a.m.	Parade Service & Holy Communion
Tuesday 17th	7.30 p.m.	Adult tap dancing
Wednesday 18th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion at St. James's
	6.15 p.m.	Cub Scouts
	7.30 p.m.	PCC meeting in Vestry
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 a.m.	Morning prayer
	6.00 p.m.	Beaver Scouts
	7.30 p.m.	Scouts
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	12.00 p.m.	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service

SUNDAY 22ND 3RD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Tuesday 24th	7.30 p.m.	Adult tap dancing
Wednesday 25th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6.15 p.m.	Cub Scouts
Thursday 26th	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
	6.00 p.m.	Beaver Scouts
	7.30 p.m.	Scouts
Saturday 28th	2.00 p.m.	K:Ings Way Kids' Club party

\*\*\*\*\*

SUNDAY 29TH PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE  
TEMPLE/CANDLEMAS

	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
Tuesday 31st	7.30 p.m.	Adult tap dancing

\*\*\*\*\*

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from 18th to 25th January 2012. This year's theme "*We will all be changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:51-58) has been chosen by a group of representatives of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Old Catholic and Protestant Churches active in Poland, as they reflect upon their own experience how, as a nation, they have been changed and transformed by the many upheavals of their history and sustained by their faith.

As always, Churches Together in Allerton and Fairweather Green have organised a series of services and lunches to mark the week. The services start at 12 noon, (except on Sunday 22nd) and are followed by a lunch. Dates known so far:

Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January:	St. Peter's, Allerton Road
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Bethel Baptist Church, Sandy Lane
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan	St. Saviour's
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Allerton Congregational Church (12.30 lunch, followed by short service)

## **The Geneva Bible.** Part 2 (*Continued from last month*)

*Ian Mc Alpine.*

The annotations which were so integral to the Geneva Bible were extremely Protestant in character, and were disliked by many senior members of the Church of England. In 1568 the Anglican Church authorised a new translation, which came to be known as the 'Bishops' Bible' because of the large number of Bishops involved in it. It was revised in 1572 and remained in print until the early 17th century but never displaced the Geneva. It was extremely large and expensive, was intended mainly for use in a pulpit and lacked the popular appeal of the Geneva which was small, relatively cheap and had copious notes. However by the early 17th century the need for a less strongly Protestant replacement was again felt. In 1604 King James I (1603 - 1625) convened the Hampton Court Conference which set in motion the Authorised Version which appeared in 1611. Even after the AV appeared in 1611 the Geneva remained the Bible of the people, remaining in print until at least as late as 1644.

It was the Bible used by William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, John Milton and John Knox. And John Bunyan, the author of 'Pilgrim's Progress' was still using it long after 1611. It was one of the Bibles taken to America on the Mayflower in 1620, was used by many early nonconformists, and it still appealed to Cromwell's soldiers during the English Civil War in the 1640s.

The details taken from Revelation Chapter 6 (on next page) reveal how much the King James Version owed to the Geneva. The differences in the 1611 text are shown in italics. The two translations are remarkably similar and it seems likely that the extreme Protestant nature of the notes rather than the actual translation of the Geneva provided the impetus for the KJV. Although the Geneva Bible is little known today it was very influential in the history of Bible translation and should be better remembered. Original copies are expensive today but facsimile reprints of the 1560 edition are still available at reasonable cost from Hendrickson, an American Bible publisher.

Geneva Bible	King James Bible
<p>And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun was as black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon was like blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her green figs, when it is shaken of a mighty wind. And heaven departed away, as a scroll, when it is rolled, and every mountain and isle were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in dens, and among the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?</p>	<p>And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun <i>became</i> black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon <i>became as</i> blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, <i>even</i> as a fig tree casteth her <i>untimely</i> figs, when <i>she</i> is shaken of a mighty wind. And <i>the</i> heaven <i>departed</i> as a scroll when it is rolled <i>together</i>; and every mountain and <i>island</i> was moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves <i>in the dens</i> and <i>in</i> the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the <i>face</i> of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who <i>shall be able to stand</i>?</p>

**January 1st: The Naming of Jesus: Have you ever wondered where the name ‘Jesus’ comes from?**

The name Jesus is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, ‘Yehosua’, or Joshua. Or there is the Hebrew-Aramaic form, ‘Yesua’. In Greek, it became ‘Iesoûs’, and in Latin it became ‘Iesus’.

The meaning of the name is ‘Yahweh delivers’ or ‘Yahweh rescues’, or ‘Yahweh is salvation’. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:26-33 told Mary to name her baby Jesus: “because he will save his people from their sins” © Parish Pump

## **Proofreading is a dying art, wouldn't you say?**

These newspaper headlines didn't quite make it!

1. Man kills self before shooting wife and daughter
2. Something went wrong in jet crash, expert says
3. Miners refuse to work after death
4. Juvenile court to try shooting defendant
5. War dims hope for peace
6. If strike isn't settled quickly, it may last awhile
7. Cold wave linked to temperatures
8. Enfield (London) couple slain; police suspect homicide
9. Red tape holds up new bridges
10. New study of obesity looks for larger test group
11. Kids make nutritious snacks
12. Hospitals are sued by seven foot doctors

### **See, Amid the Winter's Snow**

See, amid the winter's snow  
Lots of cars that just won't go;  
It is not the drivers' fault –  
Councils have run out of salt!  
Here, we sit the whole night long!  
Where have all the snowploughs gone?  
If we'd known we'd be delayed  
We'd perhaps have brought a spade!

Say, ye cheerful children, say  
Why aren't you in school today?  
'We are skating round and round  
'Cos the heating's broken down!  
'Yes, the heating's gone beserk!  
'Mum has missed a day at work!  
'Though she's cross and seems on edge,

'We can ride upon our sledge!'

Sages on the weather show  
Said the sun would surely glow,  
And, said they, we may be sure  
Of a glorious day in store!  
But they missed a detail, small  
And the snow did thickly fall!  
But the met-men feel no shame –  
Their computer takes the blame!

*Nigel Beaton*  
© *Parish Pump*

### **Foot in mouth**

The vet in a small town was also in charge of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"Do you require his services as a neighbourhood watch, or as a vet?" she asked. "Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's an intruder in it."

© *Parish Pump*

### **Keeper of the Spring**

The following story was a favourite of the late Rev Peter Marshall, who for several years served as the chaplain of the US Senate.

An old man who lived near an Austrian village high in the Alps was hired by his village council to clear away the debris from the pools of water high up in the mountain crevices. These pools fed the spring that flowed through the town. So faithfully, year after year, the old man patrolled the pool, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt. In time the village became a popular attraction. Swans and ducks floated along the sparkling spring, the mill wheels of various businesses turned day and night, farms were irrigated, and the view of the spring from restaurants was picturesque beyond description.

Then one evening the town council met to review the budget. Someone queried the salary paid to the obscure keeper of the spring. Others joined in: "He is a waste of money. Drop him." And so they did.



For several weeks, nothing changed. Then in early autumn, the trees shed their leaves. Small branches snapped off and fell into the pools. Down in the village, they soon noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the water. Soon a slimy film covered sections of the stream. The mill wheels got entangled with twigs. Soon the stench of rotting vegetation in the water drove away the swans and ducks and the tourists.

In a panic, the village council met. They set off to visit the old man, and pleaded with him to keep the spring clean again. Within a few weeks, the village's 'river of life' began to clear up. The water ran pure and clear, the birds returned, the mill wheels turned, and even the tourists came back.

Are there leaves of anger, twigs of resentment, or a silt of unforgiveness clogging your spring of living water? Just as little by little the stream became contaminated by debris, so our spirits can become obstructed by the 'small sins' of daily life. Let's allow our Keeper of the Spring to do his job in renewing and cleansing us, so that we can 'run free' and bring blessing to others

### **For eternity**

A Catholic, a Baptist, and an Anglican all died and went to heaven. St. Peter led them through the Pearly Gates to a hallway lined with doors. These, he explained, led to the places where each would spend eternity.

For the Roman Catholic, Peter pointed to a heavily carved dark wooden door and said, "Step right in there." The Catholic opened it to find a chapel with stained-glass windows and candles. He gasped with delight, "A church!" and rushed inside, knelt and started to count his rosary.

Peter turned to the Baptist and pointed to another door. The Baptist opened it to find a canvas tent filled with people singing and waving their arms to a lively band and guitar playing pastor. "A praise meeting!" He rushed in and joined the crowd.

Finally, Peter turned to the Anglican, and guided him to a quiet brown wood door. Inside was a large table with people seated around, shuffling papers and looking faintly bored. The Anglican clapped his hands to his face in happiness. "A PCC meeting!"

**All my hope**  
*By Richard Bailey*

There are hymns, or often just lines in a hymn, that have such an impact that I can find the hairs on the back of my neck tingling. There are lines that do that in Robert Bridges' hymn, "All my hope on God is founded". Singing it to the magnificent tune "Michael", written by Herbert Howells after the early death of his son, adds to that sensation.

The words that move me so much are those found at the end of the third verse - *Evermore/from his store/new-born worlds rise and adore.*

They simply encapsulate that huge, almost heart-breaking sense of wonder at the Creation. We know that as we look out across the universe, stars are dying and the worlds around them (if they have any) are going into oblivion. At the same time, new stars, and therefore the possibility of new worlds, are coming into being. And all this is a demonstration of the fecund creativity of God.

***Not for the first time***

Of course, the Psalmist had been there before: *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork ....*

But when I turn to a hymnbook that omits this verse, and therefore those words, I feel slightly bereft. This is the case with "Mission Praise", where verse 3 is entirely omitted. When I open "Hymns Old and New", I am relieved to find that the verse is printed there. But when I look more closely at the two hymn books, I see that Mission Praise prints verse 4, while Hymns Old and New omits it. Yet verse 4 ends with another set of magnificent words: *Love doth stand/at his hand;/joy doth wait at his command.*

I can see no valid reason for either omission. The hymn cries out to be used in full, without editorial intervention.

It isn't that I want to indulge my emotional feelings at the words. It is more that Robert Bridges captures important aspects of our faith in memorable words and, for me, married to that marvellous tune "Michael", they

become fixed in our minds. Would it be too much to say that taking the last three lines of each of the five verses would make a Credo in which the marvel, and the majesty, and the wonder of God's creation and love would be perfectly expressed?

*NB: It is interesting to note that, if internet information is to be believed, Robert Bridges' hymn is "based on" a German hymn by Joachim Neander (1650-1680), who also wrote "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation". The story goes that "Joachim Neander was born in Bremen, the son of a Latin teacher. His grandfather, a musician, had changed the family name from the original Neumann ("New Man") to the Greek form Neander following the fashion of the time.*

*"In 1671 he became a private tutor in Heidelberg, and in 1674 he became a teacher in a Latin school in Düsseldorf, one step before becoming a minister. While living there, he liked to go to the nearby valley of the Düssel river, nature being the inspiration for his poems. He also held gatherings and services in the valley, at which he gave sermons. The valley (German that modernised to tal) was renamed in his honour in the early 19th century, and became famous in 1856 when the remains of Homo neanderthalensis - Neanderthal Man - were found there.*

*"In 1679 Neander became a pastor in Bremen. One year later, at the age of 30, he died of tuberculosis."*

(This article was originally published in "Not Out!", the magazine for retired clergy in Bradford Diocese.)

### **Notes from the PCC**

The PCC met on Tuesday 6th December to look at various items.

Several years ago, we were clustered together with St. James's, Thornton and St. Peter's, Allerton. We have established strong links with St. James's and share a vicar with them; St. Peter's have not really come into the cluster. The Diocese is therefore looking at creating a united benefice of St. Saviour's and St. James's, which will mean we are still independent churches and can keep our own styles of worship, PCC etc. but will share

a vicar. We have asked for a meeting with the Archdeacon to discuss the implications of this and ensure he is aware of our thoughts.

There is to be a big evangelism event in Bradford Cathedral on the 18th, 19th and 20th May next year, run by Revd. Robin Gamble and Revd. Sue Hope. The aim is to invite people who are on the fringes of church life, but not fully involved, to one of the events. We discussed this and other ways of trying to attract people to church. Andy is hoping to get together a small group of people to discuss ideas after Christmas - so please have a word with him if you are interested.

The new K:Ings Way Club which will replace Junior Church is taking shape. It was felt, however, that the launch party on January 7th was a little too soon after Christmas and it will be difficult to get the publicity out to the schools without it getting lost in the Christmas rush. Consequently, the party will now be on **Saturday 28th January** from 2.00 to 4.00 p.m., with the sessions starting on the following Thursday. We apologise for the confusion, and hope it will not cause too much inconvenience.

Thank you to all who supported our Christmas Fair, which was a very happy and successful event. We made around £700 for church funds but, more importantly, were able to welcome lots of people into our building who would not normally come in. We hope they enjoyed their afternoon and may feel encouraged to join in some of our Christmas services and other events through the year.

*Hilary Davis,*  
*PCC Secretary.*

### **Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes**

After several weeks of frantic activity, the local depot at Guiseley was able to send out over 10,000 shoeboxes from our region to children all over the world in time for Christmas. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this splendid effort and brought a little cheer into the lives of children who have very little and who would otherwise have had a very bleak Christmas.

## **K:Ings Way Club **Change of Date!****

As we reported in last month's magazine, Junior Church as it was is no more and has been replaced by the exciting new K:Ings Way Club on Thursdays from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m. in the church hall. There will be a grand opening party on **Saturday January 28th** from 2.00 to 4.00 p.m. for all children of primary school age. There will be art, craft, games, snacks, songs and fun - so come along and join in! The first full session will be on Thursday 2nd February at 4.30 p.m.

### **"Behold, I Stand at the Door and Knock"**

#### **A Quiet afternoon for Epiphany**

Sunday January 8th

Lunch at 1.00 p.m. (no charge)

Quiet times begin at 1.45 p.m.

Finish: 4.15 p.m.

All Welcome

## Laid to Rest

Phyllis Mooney

29th November 2011

### January Roll of Remembrance

1st	Grace Barnett	(1972)
2nd	Sarah Jane Tonge	(1953)
3rd	Tony Hayes	(1997)
4th	Frances Dare	(1969)
	Clarence Cooper	(1969)
5th	Elsie Davis	(1984)
	Charles Edward Cooper	(1945)
	Alice Robinson	(2001)
6th	John Hodgson	(1957)
	Rebecca Wigglesworth	(1968)
7th	Donald Arthur Jackson	(1986)
11th	Walter George Hartley	(1961)
14th	Arthur Jones	(1960)
17th	Edith M. Jones	(1951)
18th	William Sadler Stannard	(1978)
19th	Harry Butterfield	(1968)
20th	Gladys Gwendoline Richards	(1980)
21st	Alice Ferguson	(1981)
	Winifred Dare	(1985)
22nd	Bernard Norton	(1992)
23rd	Ritty Hill	(1966)
	Jack Blackburn	(1996)
26th	John William Barratt	(1939)
	Albert Hammond	(1970)
27th	Harold Potts	(1982)
29th	John Ayres	(1971)
	Hilda Dennett	(1978)
	William & Emily Spence	(1998)
30th	William Dennett	(1978)
31st	Doris Gibson	(2001)

**ST. SAVIOUR'S PARISH CHURCH  
FAIRWEATHER GREEN  
BD8 0LU**

Website: [www.stsavioursfwg.org.uk](http://www.stsavioursfwg.org.uk)

Church Phone (in Kitchen)

487084

Priest-in-  
Charge:

Revd. Andy Greiff  
The Vicarage, 300 Thornton Road, Thornton  
e-mail: [Andrew.greiff667@gmail.com](mailto:Andrew.greiff667@gmail.com)

833200