

REFLECTION..... for the Epiphany on three astrologers.

The astrologers were amazed. They were living in an eastern country, spending time by studying the stars. A new star had come into view. It differed from the other stars. It was very low and very bright. It was moving from the east to the west. Where was it going? The star resembled a crown of gold, maybe the crown of a king. The astrologers decided to follow it. Someone in the west was to be anointed king, so best to take suitable gifts. They chose gold representing kingship, frankincense for his suffering and myrrh his burial. Even kings may have to put up with difficult situations.

The journey took them to the country where Herod ruled. Despite his reputation as a cruel king, he was particularly pleasant. His own astrologers had not given the right answers about the star, so that he encouraged the three astrologers to go on searching. Should they find this king, he would be delighted to know and welcome him, which was only polite. Would they kindly return this way so that he could go to visit him? Continuing their journey, the three astrologers followed the star which took them to an inn, to Joseph and Mary and the baby Jesus. They bowed down in respect and presented their gifts.

On thinking of returning home, one of them had the hunch that it would be best not to return to Herod. He might change his good behaviour. Best to get out as quickly as possible before Herod knew that they had left. Herod was furious. He ordered all the babies to be slaughtered who were in the vicinity of Bethlehem, which is called "the slaughter of the innocents", in the hope of catching Jesus.

What a relief for the astrologers to get home and to sit again under eastern skies by night, to look at the stars, remembering that wonderful star and the baby in the manger. It had altered their whole view of life. It took them on a spiritual journey to a Kingdom where the infant Jesus reigns as King.

Tony Hearle


The Methodist Church

Church Stretton

IN THE SHROPSHIRE & MARCHES CIRCUIT



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A WARM WELCOME TO YOU ALL IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.
IF YOU ARE VISITORS WE TRUST THAT YOUR HOLIDAY WILL BRING YOU JOY
AND REFRESHMENT OF SPIRIT. PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP
IN THE HALL FOLLOWING THIS SERVICE.

SUNDAY SERVICES

SUNDAY 19th JANUARY 2025

10.30 am Mrs Joyce Evans

COVENANT SUNDAY 26th JANUARY 2025

10.30 am Rev George Heinz – Holy Communion

WEDNESDAY 22nd JANUARY 2024

10.00 am to 12.00

Baby & Toddler Group – in church hall

2.30 pm – 4.00 pm

“Cuppa & Chat” – in church hall

“METHODIST VOICE” IN THE STRETTON FOCUS COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

It is time for our annual request for volunteers to write a piece (Max. 400 words) for the “Methodist Voice” section of the Church Stretton monthly community magazine . You may well have noticed a few gaps during 2024 , hopefully this can be avoided during 2025. A list can be found by the door to the church hall/church.

JOY WEBB HYMNS

During the service on Dec 29th I mentioned two hymns written by Joy Webb which are in Singing the Faith. They are **522 “Hard to make a prayer”** and **642 “When I'm feeling down and sad”**. Both are worth looking at.

Ann Cooke

FUTURE DATES FOR SERVICES AT THE SANDFORD

The dates we have arranged in 2025 are all Tuesdays and the services are due to start at 11am. They are January 28th; February 25th; March 25th; April 29th; May 20th; June 24th; July 22nd; August 26th; September 23rd; October 28th; November 25th; December 30th. If you come fairly regularly please make a note of the dates. Everyone is welcome to attend any of these services which we share with the residents. They usually take the form of a communion service.

Ann Cooke

“ENGAGING ISSUES”7.30 pm at URC Tuesday 21st January 2025

CANCER CARE.....PATCHY PAST , FAIRER FUTURE ?

Roger Wilson was diagnosed with cancer 25 years ago. As an “involved patient” he has penetrated the system and in his talk he will reflect on what he has seen and experienced . During much of this time he has worked for a better future for patients . He was awarded a CBE for services to healthcare.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN THE STRETTONS

This year our Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 18th – 25th January, asks us to reflect on the story of Martha's confession of faith in Jesus as narrated in John 11; 17-27. Please do your best to support if you can. Any questions/ queries please speak to Sue. Thank you.

Sue Hill

This afternoon, Sunday 19th at 4pm, United Service at the URC led by Rev Mark Rodgers and Rev Camilla Veitch

PRAYER TIMES:

Monday 20th URC..... 2.00 pm

Tuesday 21st St Laurence’s Church..... 9.15 am

Wednesday 22nd St Milburga’s..... 9.30 am

Thursday 23rd Methodist Church (In the Vestry)..... 10.00am

Friday 24th St Michaels Church All Stretton..... 9.00am

Saturday 25th Quakers at St Milburga’s..... 3.30pm

DATE FOR THE DIARY

CTiS next Open Forum 29th January 7.15pm for 7.30pm start at the Parish Centre. All welcome.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Almighty God , accept our praise and thanksgiving for what already unites Christians in the confession of and witness to Jesus, the Lord. Strengthen our hearts in expectation and hope as we work for unity and together seek the harmony of all creation. Hasten the hour when all churches will recognise each other in the one communion you willed, and for which your Son prayed in the power of the Holy Spirit. Hear us, you who live and reign now and forever.

Amen.

