

Children and family talk for 2nd January 2022

Good morning and Happy New Year! I hope you have all enjoyed celebrating Jesus' birthday last week.

- Now let's close our eyes. Think about the dark winter months with short days and cold mornings, then imagine the delight of warmer weather coming soon, and picture playing outdoors in the sun.
- Now open your eyes, emerging from darkness to light, what are you looking forward to in the coming weeks and months?

Our reading today is from Matthew 2 verses 1-12.

Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem when Herod was king in Jerusalem. One day, wise men from eastern lands came to speak to Herod, asking 'Where is the newborn King of the Jews? We have followed the Birth Star all the way here. We have come to worship him.'

Herod was frightened when he heard this and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of all the wise and religious scholars to find out where this Messiah was to be born. * 'The prophet Micah wrote that it was to be Bethlehem,' they told him. * Herod met again with the wise men, in secret. He found out more about their learning and in turn told them to go and search for the newborn king in Bethlehem.

Herod also asked the wise men to come back to him and tell him exactly where the baby was to be found, 'So that I too may worship him.'

So, the wise men set off again, following the same star, and it led them to Bethlehem, right to the Christchild. When they entered the place where



the child and his mother Mary were, their hearts were overwhelmed with joy. The wise men knelt down before him and worshipped indeed. Then they offered their precious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

But when it was time for them to leave, the wise men went home by a different route, because God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

Matthew 2.1-12

Now I know Christmas is over, but officially we are still in the Christmas season, so I'm going to suggest you go to this link and listen and join in singing this version of We three Kings by the Rend collective: <https://youtu.be/Tp83tnTSIOY>

The Wise Men had a long journey, guided by a star to eventually see the King that they wanted to worship. They had read about a new King in their history books – we can find what they read in our bibles in the Old Testament book of Micah, and they believed enough to set out on a journey to another land to see for themselves.

On the way they came across King Herod, who tried to trick them into telling him where the baby was. Fortunately, they were warned in a dream not to return via King Herod, who turned out to be a very bad man who wanted to kill Jesus. This must have been a difficult decision as to defy a King could have really got them into trouble, couldn't it.

Sometimes in life we have difficult decisions and journeys to make. Sometimes it takes a long while to get to where we want to go, and sometimes we take the wrong path, and have to start again.

As we start this new year, let's try to be like the wise men and set our hearts on what is really important, like following a star, let's follow Jesus and see where that leads us. It may be a long journey, being a Christian is not always easy, but if we keep at it, and listen to God, we can be guided by God and God will help us to make good decisions and get where we need to be.

Let's talk to God now;

Help us when we find it hard to hear your voice.

Open our hearts to your hope.

Protect us when we find things hard.

Energise us with your Holy Spirit as we go into the week ahead.

Amen.

Let's finish by saying the grace together:

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out your hands as if receiving a present)

The Love of God (Cross your hands over your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (hold hands together)

Be with us all, now and for evermore, Amen. (Bring thumbs together).

Below is the link for the activity sheet from Roots.

[activity-sheet-2-january-2022.pdf \(rootsontheweb.com\)](https://www.rootsontheweb.com/activity-sheet-2-january-2022.pdf)