



**Skinner Street
United Reformed Church
Poole January 2025**

Guided by the Holy Spirit we aim to show the love of God the Father for everyone by sharing the work of his Son, Jesus Christ, among our neighbours in Poole and the wider world.



CCL544280

The Magi Visit the Messiah

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2: 1-2 (NIV)

Dear Friends

As we enter the time of Epiphany, if you grew up in church like I did, you may have been involved in a Christmas reenactment depicting the Nativity, the tableau always contained the three Wise Men as well as the Shepherds. so I thought we could look at who the Magi are and why they matter.

While we cherish these memories of childhood, we believe the Magi were not actually there at the birth of our Lord, but they were so significant in His birth that their later arrival was included in Matthew's gospel. Matthew is the only gospel to tell of the Magi.

Over time, Christian tradition and storytelling has added bits and pieces to the account, including certain details about who the wise men may have been. These bits of speculation have been passed down over the generations, however, these details about the Magi are not always based on the biblical account.

From the Bible we learn that they were called Magi, which means "wise men" in Greek (Matthew 2:1). These men were probably astrologers as it was their study of the sky that led them toward Jesus (Numbers 24:17, Matthew 2:9).

They told King Herod they were seeking the new "king of the Jews" (Matthew 2:2). However it is assumed that they did not realise what type of king Jesus would be.

They came from the East when they sought Jesus, during the time of Herod, who reigned from approximately 37BC – 4BC which means they likely came from somewhere in modern-day Iraq, Iran, or Saudi Arabia.

They brought gifts fit for an earthly king and came to pay homage to him (Matthew 2:2,10-11). Matthew 2:1 tells us they arrived in Jerusalem AFTER Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

We know their names. Traditionally, they have been named Balthasar, Caspar, and Melchior.

Despite stories added by tradition, there are valuable lessons these mysterious characters of the Nativity story can teach us.

They Sought a King That Didn't Belong to Them

This group of foreign Gentiles set out on a considerable journey to meet and honour a king who was to be born. They were probably astrologers who were searching the stars for prophecies and omens. Their theology was idolatrous; however, they sought Jesus anyway. Likewise, many Christians, accidentally stumble their way to Jesus.

They Bowed and Worshipped

The Christmas story provides profound and inclusive accounts of worship. Jesus was worshipped by the lowly (shepherds) and the prominent (Magi). Both came to celebrate and honour the newborn king. The Magi recognised the differences between Godly kingship (Jesus) and worldly kingship (Herod), which is why they did not honour Herod's instructions to go back to him. Like the wisemen, Jesus calls people from all nations to follow Him,

They Gave Generously

They brought the rare and expensive gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh as gifts for Jesus. They chose to visit a king they did not know or owe their allegiance to, a journey that likely took months. They gave their time and possessions to Jesus, just as we are called to give of our time and talents.

They Were Obedient

They probably had access to scrolls telling of the Messiah's coming, through whom God would deliver His people. These foreigners, who had their own king, obediently followed what they knew of the Torah and came to see the new king. They obeyed the Angel warning them to go back by another route and not to go back to Herod.

The Magi were among the first people to worship our Lord and Saviour after he was born. Jesus is calling us to respond to his invitation so we can know Him. Let us pray, that whether we are near or far from Jesus, we will react as the Magi did - in joy, worship, and obedience.

With every Blessing for a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year

Shirley (Marden)

WORSHIP IN JANUARY Sundays at 10.30am

5th Your Favourite Carols

12th Revd Dave Harkison **Holy Communion**

Servers: Janice Williams and Shirley Marden

19th Mrs Tricia Knapp

26th Mrs Mandy Hibbert

Coffee and fellowship after the services on 5th and 19th January

DUTY ELDER and VESTRY PRAYER

5th Shirley Marden

12th Janice Williams

19th Chris Proudley

26th Muriel Coombes

DOOR STEWARDS

5th Vera Brown

12th Wai Ching

19th Alan Knapp

26th Jill Campbell-Dykes

THURSDAY PRAYERS 10.15am *(Followed by coffee and fellowship)*

2nd Patricia Arnold

9th Chris Proudley

16th Gail Nuttall

23rd Shirley Marden

30th Rev Sally Taylor

Diary for January

Thurs. 2nd after prayers – Take down the Christmas decorations

There is a monthly Monday evening service and weekly Wednesday morning prayers led by Revd. Sally Taylor. Details from Sally or an Elder



Happy New Year

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” *Jeremiah 29: 11*

WELCOME TO JANUARY 2025 NEWS FROM THE TREASURER

As I wrote in December, I am already looking forward to January, a new year and new ambitions, challenges to keep us focused on the work we do at Skinner Street. We always say 'Didn't the year go quickly? It seems like only yesterday 2024 came in, etc., etc., but it does ring true! We are in January 2025, a quarter through this century.

Many things have happened at Skinner Street during 2024, and all pretty good!

The Church Community Garden, a partnership between the Church and Sally Taylor of the Poole Missional Community has inspired us and many others. The outside of Skinner Street is looking 'sooo' much brighter, cleaner and welcoming. A huge THANK YOU to the many who have made this happen. We are very grateful to BCP who, through a fund, Community Infrastructure Levy, (a fee paid by all development projects in the area) enabled these great improvements. Skinner Street Church funded the repainting of the Portico and repainting of the hall and Parlour windows, thanks to some very kind donations from loyal friends.

All this has inspired us to improve the built facility so that we can offer spiritual guidance and fellowship to those who need this or just friendship and support. Our Sunday congregation is slowly growing. The Sanctuary is also more in use, with a monthly Monday evening service, weekly Wednesday morning prayers and our regular, weekly Prayer Meeting followed by coffee.

The hall and Parlour are providing good places for many local groups, from Juggling to Walking Hockey to Hard of Hearing and the very popular Tuesday Pop In.

These many activities also help with our income, which is keeping up with (ever increasing) costs. After the lockdown and replacement of the hall heaters, our finances were very low. Thankfully, we are now in a much more solid position. Of course, costs will rise during the year and we will be increasing the monthly amount paid to the URC for Ministry and Mission.

Our Church activities continue and the Carols with Candlelight on 15 December was a very moving service, with a great theme (thank you Tricia) and excellent singing to the organ (thank you John W). The collection taken amounted to £208.00 and will be sent to the Chestnut Nursery, a plant nursery who help those who are neuro diverse.

We are moving with the times in other areas. The car park will be monitored by ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) so the windscreen permits, our 'friends' for so many years, are no longer required BUT you do need to register your number plate with me (grn23g@gmail.com) and Devere Parking (deverepark@hotmail.co.uk). Donations to those who use us occasionally are most welcome! Regular, local residents and those working in the area, still pay monthly, which is a very important income stream for the church. Our user group members will need to tap in their car number when they come into the hall, on the iPad, just inside the door. It will be 'live' by the time you read this! Thank you to Devere who have installed this for us, free of charge.

The Skinner Street website has been upgraded too. Do take a look. We hope to keep it relevant and up to date. Thank you to Rob Brown of BrownBoth who has carried out this work for us.

I wish you all a Peaceful and Healthy 2025. Gail Nuttall

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Pastoral Notes

Thank you to long term members who cannot worship with us but kindly sent Christmas Greetings, thank you. We remember you in our Prayers. Please let us know if you would like a visit or need anything as we are willing to help.

You are welcome at the after church tea/coffee on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month and of course on Thursday mornings, prayers at 10.15 followed coffee\tea from 10.30.



The Journey Of The Magi TS Elliot

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sorefooted, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
and running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you might say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

Deadline for February newsletter Thursday 23rd January

For church matters or to discuss arrangements for a Baptism, Wedding or
Funeral: Shirley Marden 07980 923217
For Hall Lets and Carpark: Gail Nuttall 07774 283179