

SERMON NOTES Sunday 8 January

sunnysidechurch

Bible passage: Matthew 2.1-12 Epiphany

Introduction

Epiphany

- not the end of Christmas but a new beginning
- means appearance or revelation. We celebrate the beginning of the revelation of God in Jesus.

Visit of the Magi: themes to reflect on

- Journey the wise men took – our journey with Jesus
- Wise men found Jesus in Bethlehem not Jerusalem – Jesus in the ordinary parts of our lives
- Gifts the wise men brought – what we can offer

Herod: 'search carefully for the child' (v8)

- Herod alarmed and threatened by news of Jesus, but God can use bad guys as well as good
- Relatively easy for the wise men to find Jesus but harder for us as we cannot physically see him
- Invitation for us to search carefully for Jesus this year in the joys and sorrows of life
- Search is a verb. We need to intentionally seek Jesus and then we will experience epiphany again and again
- Lifechanging impact of seeing Jesus in unexpected places

Conclusion

None of us knows what 2023 will bring but can know that Jesus will be dwelling among us. This promise may not change our circumstances, but it will change us. As we seek him and know him, we will be led to worship.

Some Questions for Discussion

1. Where have you seen Jesus this Christmas?
2. Read Matthew 2.1-12. What strikes you about this reading?
3. 'search carefully for the child'. What might it look like for you to search carefully for Jesus?
4. Where might you see Jesus this week? It may be in unexpected places!
5. Why might knowing Jesus is with us change us even if it doesn't change our circumstances? Can you think of examples where this has been true for you?
6. 'On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him.' (v11). How might you be inspired to worship Jesus as you see him?
7. Angela reminded us of the words in John's account of the birth of Jesus:

'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.' (John 1.14)

Why not let these words inspire you to worship God and ask him to help you search carefully for him in the days ahead?

Sermon: Angela Such
Notes: Revd Rebecca Fardell