



"We FIVE Kings..."

Let's go with the popular Carol, and call them Kings. After all, they are still from the Orient or East, and they do follow "yonder star". Magi is my preferred term, because it more fully captures that astrology, and suggests that these exotic visitors are 'magi-cians'. Yet the title 'kings' helps us realise that there are two other kings in the second chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel – Herod and Jesus.

Herod is the Rome-alone-appointed, legitimate provincial king. No wonder he is threatened, personally & politically, by the (somewhat unwise) question; "*Where is the one born king of the Jews?*" Herod's four-fold response is tyrant-typical.

1) ALLIES

The chief priests & scribes, appointed by the Roman Governor, cite Micah's prophecy. A ruler will come from Bethlehem (where David



was anointed), who will; "*shepherd my people*".

2) SPIES

The magi are despatched to Bethlehem as spies for Herod; "*Go & search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me...*"

3) LIES

"... so that I too may go and worship him" is how the previous verse of scripture concludes. Yet we, the readers, know that Herod wants to kill Jesus, not pay homage. And so the Magi **comply** with power – they find the child; prostrate themselves; present gifts. And the Magi **resist** power – they return home "by another way" after being warned in a dream.

4) INFANTICIDE

Thwarted tyrants lash out at those closest to them, especially the defenceless. Taking life in order to annihilate all threats. Ruthless. Vicious. "...he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem & its vicinity".

Allies. Spies. Lies. Infanticide. The strategies of tyrants then... and now. All will not be well in this clash of sovereignties between the empire of Rome and the empire of God. God will not be able to prevent Herod's murder of the infants. Later, Jesus too will die. The promised establishment of God's empire has not (yet) been completed in full.

And yet... '*until the death of Herod / after Herod died*' is how the story continues. Just as in Psalm 2, God laughs tyrants into oblivion. The "other way", the way of the (Good) Shepherd, the way of the three Kings (Magi), requires perseverance, faithfulness, courage and community. Does our encounter with Jesus mark a turning point for us? **rev'd david.**

JANUARY Services

SUN 4th : Epiphany

0830 | BCP Communion | Hoby

Simple, traditional language service.

1030 | Worship Service | Rotherby

Informal style with some interaction.

SUN 11th : Epiphany 1

1030 | Covenant Service | Frisby CHAPEL

Recommiring to God and to one another.

SUN 18th : Epiphany 2

1030 | Contemp'y Communion | Ragdale

Inclusive Church liturgy with 'justice' focus.

SUN 25th : Epiphany 3

1030 | Faith in Nature | Hoby CHAPEL

Engaging with God's heart for this planet.

1500 | Evening Prayer | Kirby Bellars

Traditional language interspersed with hymns.

WEDNESDAY Activity

0930 | Alternating Pattern | Frisby CHURCH

1st & 5th = Communion

2nd & 4th = Morning Prayer

3rd = Healing Communion

1430 | New Life Group | ROTHERBY

Bible... Prayer... Life... Care...

contact : elizabeth.smith255@btinternet.com

2100 | Night Prayer | ONLINE

Wed 7th Jan (Epiphany) only

login details : david.harknett@btinternet.com

FEBRUARY Services

SUN 1st : Candlemas

0830 | BCP Communion | Hoby

Simple, traditional language service.

1030 | Worship Service | Rotherby

Informal style with some interaction.

SUN 8th : Epiphany 5

1030 | Contemp'y Communion | Ragdale

Recommiring to God and to one another.

SUN 15th : Transfiguration

1030 | Creative Church | Frisby CHAPEL

Inclusive Church liturgy with 'justice' focus.

WED 18th : ASH WEDNESDAY

0930 | Communion w. Ashing | Frisby ST. T

SUN 22nd : Lent 1

1030 | Faith in Nature | Hoby ALL SAINTS

Engaging with God's heart for this planet.

1500 | Evening Prayer | Kirby Bellars

Traditional language interspersed with hymns.

'Farewell'

**Sheila CURRER / Brian FOSTER / John BILLINGS
(Frisby)**

'Union'

Sunday 19th October

Elliott BROWN & Hannah TISDELL (Brooksbys)

Friday 24th October

Gregory CLAYTON-CLANN & Rachel READ (Br)

'Welcome'

Feb '26 ... Alice NADOLSKI (Gaddesby)

Mar '26 ... Sophie CUFF (Frisby)

A Christmas Message from the Bishop of Leicester and the Bishop of Loughborough



**“God turning up when we least expect it. /
This is good news ... God is with us!”**

In their Christmas Message for 2025, Bishop Martyn and Bishop Saju invited us to stop, look and really notice the people who show up in the Christmas story.

They reminded us of the surprises of the Christmas story and that those who appear in the story are not the powerful or privileged, but rather the humble, marginalized & diverse. Christmas – notably Christ – is for all of us.

“Look, who shows up, at Christmas!”

Watch it below, four minutes long.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PjAHstc4S9Ulfahp6DSyzb4gQtjjQI7o/view?pli=1>

A Christmas Message

from the Bishop of Leicester
and the Bishop of Loughborough



~ Growing with Hope ~
~ Serving with
Compassion ~
~ Transforming
with Humility ~
~ *enabling children
to flourish & succeed* ~

Gift bags were given to 75 Staff in 4 schools, & Senior Staff in a 5th school. Speaking love and blessing after a long, dark, demanding term.

~ Angel Card

with scripture & greeting

~ ‘Follow the Star’

12 days of Reflections

~ Beeswax Candles

15 min meditation time

~ Brownie Bites

GF luxury edibles!



In the new year, Christians who invest in their local school will gather to reflect, pray & plan. Encouraging & learning from one another.

And Finally...

BELTON HOUSE : Library

One of the largest libraries (+20,000 books) in the care of the National Trust. Located in the Library, Study & attic rooms, the collection contains many rare and important books.

My eye was caught by this line of named, royal Prayer Books. Starting with Edward VI, the young Protestant (1522), it includes Charles II (1662), the format used still today.

Which old books, possibly family heirlooms, nurture you in your faith journey? Is it a (auto-) biography? Something liturgical? Perhaps prayer-full? Or, simply, the holy, life-changing scriptures, in an old, worn bible?



ADVENT?

A time to remember Jesus' birth & anticipate his second coming.

NEW YEAR?

Looking FORWARD by looking BACK to the 4 Advent themes.



6-6.30pm on Mon 5th or 10.45-11.15 on Wed 7th or 7.15-7.45am on Fri 9th

~ Bible Project video ~ Conversation & Reflection ~ Silence & Prayer ~

=> to ground us & to grow us <=

Join Zoom Meeting | Meeting ID : 844 2990 6409 | Passcode : NewYear

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/84429906409?pwd=Bj0OW8uimNQa5WMNA4P2EI82T25VT1.1>