

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 8, 2017

*Arise! Shine! For thy light has come;
O come let us worship!*

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer:

✠ Psalm 66 | Isaiah 49:13-23 | St. Luke 3:15-22

9:00 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist

Introit: Psalm 100:	page 457
The Gloria:	page 86
The Collect and Epistle:	page 123
Gradual – Surge Illuminare:	page 28
The Holy Gospel:	page 123
The Creed:	page 71
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in thy mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
Post-Communion Prayer:	page 85

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School: Parish Hall

Including the Construction of the Tower of Babel!

Time with Fr. Stockall

*Please join us in the Parish Hall following the
10:30 Celebration for our monthly **Shared Meal**.*

✱

From the Rector

The term *magi*, which comes to us as wise men, originally referred to members of the priestly class of the Medes and the Persians; those who were said to have had the power to interpret dreams, including astrologers and soothsayers. And while Scripture generally speaks of such things in negative, even harsh, terms, we find the *magi* in Matthew's Gospel as sympathetic characters: as those who serve as God's messengers to a far-wider community of the remarkable news of the birth of this new king.

That there were three *magi* is a matter of conjecture; we make the assumption based solely on the number of the gifts. That we sometimes call them kings, as the hymn we often will sing at this time of year does, may have more to do with poetic license than it does with translation. But for all of the questions that the remarkable story of the visit of the mysterious *magi* to the Christ Child may raise, it is at heart a story of God's providence: God bringing together so many elements, good and bad: wise men and the star, Herod and his fears, a young child and his wondering parents, and gifts of immense value both materially and symbolically, in a story that continues to touch our hearts and imaginations.

But the story is intended, I think, to do more than just touch us. It's also intended to shape us: to shape our day by day walk with Christ; and to shape, as well, our daily walk with each other. Recall, if you will, the final verse of a lovely poem by Christina Rossetti, a poem that we sing each year at Christmas as a carol:

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would give a lamb.
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet, what I can I give him; give my heart.

As we know, the story of the gifts brought by the wise men has long been interpreted as symbolic of who this child is and of what he has come to accomplish. The gold is symbolically the gold of royalty: the new-born King of the Jews, as the wise men speak of him to Herod; the frankincense is the frankincense of divinity; and the myrrh is the spice of death: one of the spices that will be used to anoint his body for its burial on the day that it is taken down from the Cross: 'King and God and sacrifice' as we sing.

But by another interpretation, the gifts of the wise men point not so much to the child as they do to us: when applied to us and to our lives, the gold becomes the gold of our costly service; the incense becomes the sign of our homage and worship; the myrrh the spice of lives of discipline and sacrifice.

The story of the wise men, and the gifts that they bring to the Christ Child, is a challenge for us to identify the gifts that we might lay before him. So as we start a new year of Grace, we are challenged by the mysterious story of the wise men and their equally mysterious gifts to ask ourselves some very important questions: what are the gifts that God has given to us: the talents, the abilities, the aptitudes, and the events, both tragic and joyful, that have happened to us? What are the kinds of gifts that have shaped you, your family, and community?

God has given each of us an abundance of gifts: and the first step for all of us is to explore what we're uniquely gifted to do. Gratitude for God's gifts should be the way in which we start and finish each day. But the second step is to find ways of laying those gifts before the Christ Child: to explore every possible way that God is calling us to share those gifts, not for our own glory but for His glory and for the welfare of His people.

During Epiphany the Church recalls the gifts that the wise men brought to Christ. But real wisdom is found whenever we discover the unique blend of gifts that God has given to each one of us, when we accept those gifts, and when we offer them back to Christ. What are the gifts that God has shared with you? And how might you find peace and wholeness and joy in sharing them freely, lovingly, compassionately, patiently, with each other?



Please join us following the 10:30 a.m. Celebration of the Holy Eucharist for our monthly *Shared Meal*. Members of both congregations are warmly encouraged to gather with their sisters and brothers in Christ as we share the peace and joy which are have in Jesus Christ.

Memorial Prayer Books: we have a small number of pew editions of the Book of Common Prayer available as memorial gifts. If you would like to place one or more in memory of a loved one, please speak to the Rector. The cost for each prayer book is \$20.

St. Mary's weekly Bible Study "Faithful and True: a Look at the Women in Holy Scripture," resumes this coming *Friday at 10:00 a.m.* at the Rectory. Everyone is warmly invited to join us; and if your schedule only permits you to attend occasionally, please plan to join us when you can.



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

JANUARY 11: IN THE OCTAVE OF EPIPHANY

6:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

7:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

JANUARY 14: THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

5:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

JANUARY 15: THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

9:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

The Anglican Church of Canada
The Diocese of Fredericton
THE PARISH OF ST. MARY (YORK)



Short is the story, which happened long ago
In the town of Bethlehem, the land of the Lord.
When his time came to be born, to be born as you and me.
There was no room from him, to be born as you and me.
Then his beautiful mother, her longing to rest,
Joseph her spouse prepared a place to rest.

**Then on the earth and in the sky, the time stood still,
the time stood still, and then we heard a baby cry,
baby cry, a baby cry.**

Rita Joe, 1932-2007

Priest and Rector

The Revd. Canon Kevin M. Stockall, B.A. (Hons), M.Div.

Rectory: 770 McEvoy Street, Fredericton NB E3A 3B7

454.0245 (rectory) | 472.4661 (office) | 461.7685 (cell) | kevin.stockall@bellaliant.net

Visit us at: <http://www.stmarysfredericton.ca/>

Honorary Assistant

Fr. David Mercer

Organist

James O'Neill

Pastoral Assistant

Rick Bungay