

Sunday 17th January - is our Church Anniversary and Covenant Sunday. Rev Kate is holding Covenant Worship on-screen using Zoom. To take part click on the following underlined text at about 10.20 on the Sunday morning:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88318678475?pwd=SVN0emloaXp0Q292T3VnZHljQ1pwZz09>

Karen will help if you are unsure about using Zoom. Give her a call on 07894 312498.

Offering - We are most grateful to members who have continued filling their weekly offering envelopes as the church has ongoing commitments whilst the building is closed. We have recently had a quinquennial property report which highlighted a number of items requiring attention including roof repairs from damage caused by slates being thrown on the roof to the left of the building as you look at it. We know that this is vandalism as our roof is not slate but tiles. The annual fire safety check has been completed so we know that these two items alone will cost around £750. We also have our circuit assessment to meet with no rental income to help offset these costs. We are grateful to those members who have recently taken out standing orders through their banks to maintain their giving. If any members would like to make a standing order or if any members have envelopes ready for collection, please contact Peter Grout on 744935. Peter will be pleased to collect your envelopes or you can deliver if you prefer to 2 Steam Mill Lane, Ripley.

Church Stewards: Elaine, Pat, Brian, Chris B, David, Paul, Scott.

Church Secretary: Church Treasurer: Sarah.

To submit information or receive this newsletter by email please contact:

scott.handbury@talktalk.net or 01773 513591.

Our website: www.ripleymethodist.co.uk

Circuit website: www.mid-derbyshire-methodist.org.uk

RIPLEY METHODIST CHURCH **Mid-Derbyshire Methodist Circuit** **Minister: Rev Kate Strange**

Sunday 10th January

Hello everyone. Inside you will find a Bible Study from the Methodist Website from Epiphany 6th January. The commentary notes are written by Rev Una McLean, a Methodist minister from Cramlington, Northumberland.

As we are in Lockdown we are not meeting for worship.

Next Sunday 17th January is Church Anniversary and Covenant Sunday. Rev Kate is holding Covenant Worship on-screen using Zoom at 10.30am. Details are inside.

Dear Lord,

Thank you for everything you have done and provided for us. Thank you for the gift of Jesus and the sacrifice he made for us. As we begin another period of lockdown please bless those who are finding it more difficult this time. Also Father please be with those who are hurting, grieving or feeling unwell for whatever reason. Surround them with your love and lift them we pray. Thank you for the joy, happiness and laughter as well Lord and may this be widely shared as we look forward to a brighter future where we can gather together in your name to worship and glorify you. Amen.

Prayer Group

If you would like our prayer group to pray for any person or situation please contact 01773 512367.

Also if you would like to join the prayer group on WhatsApp.

Ripley Worship - Paul has worship videos on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXjjQ483ocbZn2g0RcQvAYQ/>
The latest video goes live at midnight on Saturday.

Bible Passage Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.

Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Text:

Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Commentary:

I guess we have all heard the joke that goes: "If the three wise men had been three wise women, the gifts would have been nappies, warm blankets and a casserole!"

Certainly, we don't know how many wise men, or Magi, or kings, or travellers there were. We make the assumption there were three because of the three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

These are not perhaps the gifts you and I would have chosen to take to a new-born and his family. But they are expensive and precious gifts.

Gold, of course, represents great wealth and is a gift befitting a king.

Frankincense, from a tree bark, was used in worship to allow prayers to ascend to God.

Myrrh was an expensive resin used in embalming the dead amongst other things.

The gifts symbolise wealth, worship and life itself.

As ever, this poignant story at the end of the Christmas celebrations causes me to stop and wonder what I will offer to God during this coming year. Will it be my finances and my possessions? Will it be my worship? Or will it be the whole of my life – all I am, all I have and all I can ever be?

To Ponder:

If you had visited the new-born Christ child, what gift would you have taken?

What gift will you bring to God this coming year?

Prayer Requests - Our Prayer Group has received this prayer request during the past week:

Please pray for the Mother-in-Law of a friend of Martin's. She's very poorly with COVID. Also for him and his wife who's just recovering from it.