

# Countryside Trinity Church

## Pastor's Corner

Happy New Year Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

My hope and prayer is that you had a blessed Christmastide and that, like me, you are entering this New Year with hope and prayer. The hope is that God will increase in each of us the grace, the joy, and the love we need to meet the challenges of living in these days. The hope is that we will have the courage to ask of ourselves and each other the hard questions that need to be addressed as this congregation moves toward the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee and the calling of a new installed pastor to lead this congregation into the future that God alone has planned. Finally the hope that we will have the steadfastness and conviction of heart, mind and soul to find new ways to reach out to our community with the love of Jesus Christ and do the hard work of building relationships with a "people yet unknown" to us.

In his letter to the church in Rome, the Apostle Paul wrote, "*Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.*" (Romans 12:12) Indeed if we live into those hopes that I just shared there will be some suffering—suffering in that to live into these hopes—things will have to change. We will all have to make adjustments to the way we do things in our lives, and we will all be pushed beyond our "comfort zones" and most of us struggle with that. In one episode of the "Big Bang Theory", Sheldon states, "You know they call it the comfort zone for a reason, we all like being comfortable!" Yet scripture attests that God's ways are not our ways and in order to follow God fully and faithfully—we all must leave those comfort zones for a promised land.

To live into the hopes we have for the year 2018, to have the depth of faith to carry us through the days of rejoicing and the days of sorrow, the days of success and the days of struggle—we will all need prayer. Again the apostle writes, "*And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight, to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.*" (Philippians 1:9-12) I know there are many people who start the New Year with resolutions. Folks will resolve to lose weight, to get a better job, to be less angry, as well as a host of other life-style changes they wish to pursue. Most of them will be good I hope, but I am asking that you add just one more to your list. It is a simple one, to pray at least once a day for your church and its leaders that we may "determine what is best" and pursue it to the glory of God. Over the years I have been blessed to hear folks in the church commend me on a sermon or program I led, or thank me for a visit I made. These comments have always meant a great deal as I have felt supported. The comment that most humbles and encourages me for ministry, is to hear that folks have been praying for me or praying for the Elders and Deacons or praying for the church and its ministry. I say this because I know that God listens to our prayers. I say this because I know that Jesus, hearing our prayers, intercedes on behalf of his brothers and sisters. I say this because I believe the Holy Spirit is moving in and through and among us when we pray, making us stronger and more convicted in our faith. So I invite you, I urge you, in this New Year, pray for me, for the Elders and the Deacons, for your friends in Christ who make up Countryside Trinity, that together we may be bearers of the light of Christ in our world, or at least in our little part of Saginaw Township.

Blessings to all of you for a happy, healthy and hopeful New Year!  
Pastor Dave



### **AMAZON SMILE REWARDS**

Please remember to go online to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Countryside Trinity Church as your charity to support when shopping at Amazon all year long!



**Family Game Night for January has been cancelled.**

**An announcement will Be made during Worship service as to date of next event.**

## YOUR SESSION/COUNCIL AT WORK

Tidbits of information from Session/Council meeting of December 19, 2017, that you may find helpful:

**Opening:** Pastor Dave opened the meeting with a reflection and prayer.

**Deacons' Report:** Ten families received Christmas baskets of food, four of those families received gifts, on December 18, 2017.

**Clerk's Report:** Church membership is 98 with the passing of Barbara Klein on November 16, 2017 and the removal of Gwen Henderson from Session and from the membership rolls per her request. A letter from Garth Westendorf resigning from the Session was also read. Session accepted both resignations with regrets. Motion sustained to ask members to pay the per capita of the UCC and the Presbytery in the amount of \$30.00. (Please see article in newsletter regarding this matter.)

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Dave gave his report in serving the church, its members and friends and the community. ***Pastor Dave will be having an educational training session for all officers, Elders and Deacons, on Saturday, January 6, 2018 from 9 AM to 11:30 AM with a short Called Session meeting at the conclusion of the training session for the express purpose of the examination of the newly elected officers. Ordination and Installation of officers will be Sunday, January 7, 2018 during the worship service.***

**Building & Grounds:** Ed Halase gave a short report of the building upkeep. Motion sustained to begin the process to end the relationship with Waste Management and to go with Billy's for trash pick up because Billy's is offering a better contract and price. Motion sustained to switch from ATT telephone service to Spectrum because Spectrum is offering more service at a better rate.

**Christian Education:** Pat Gndt reported that the youth group will begin meeting in January, 2018. The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed in early 2018.

**Long Range Planning:** Mary Ann Parker reported that their meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup> resulted in a Christmas Banner display on the church grounds; the reserved parking signs are to be taken down including the pastor's parking sign (the handicap signs will remain); six volunteers are to begin the READ program at Weiss Elementary School in January (5 had orientation on the 19<sup>th</sup>); the money for the television in fellowship hall was donated by three members of the Long Range Planning Committee (Session members were e-mailed seeking their approval to accept the funding for the TV before the purchase and installation of the TV); and the realization of the need for more people to be involved with the mission of the church so that we can be more relational and out-reaching was discussed.

**Mission:** Kitty Blehm reported about the Christmas baskets. Backpacks were packed for a period of three weeks because of Christmas vacation. January's mission of the month will be The Forgotten Man Ministries.

**Personnel:** Pat Gndt reported that Mike Groom had surgery but that the facilities will be cared for during the time he is off. The Employment Agreement and the new policy booklet and new job descriptions have been distributed to the employees. There is a question regarding the sick time policy which will be clarified.

**New Business:** Motion sustained to allow the Nursing Occupations Chapter of Health Occupations Students of America, at the Saginaw Career Complex to host a bake sale during coffee hour on December 31, 2017 as a Fundraiser for their State competition. Aubree Mahan is a member of this organization through the Saginaw Career Complex.

Submitted for your information,  
Mary Ann Parker, Clerk of Session

Both denominations, United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to which Countryside Trinity is a member, charge the churches of their denomination a per capita every year. The churches are charged a certain amount for each member of that particular church. The amount charged pays a portion of the salaries and expenses to operate the church government at all levels. It is calculated each year according to the expenses and budget of the church government whether it is at national or at the local level. It is similar to your expenses at home whether your pay check is used for your mortgage, for utilities, for food and clothing or for insurances for your house and car.

Countryside Trinity has certainly benefited from the Presbytery of Lake Huron's assistance this last year as we were starting into our transition phase of ministers. We were not charged for any of the time or advice that we received from the Presbytery's Executive Officer, staff, or any of the ministers who helped us. As the saying goes, "It comes with the job".

Per capita is the cost of being a Presbyterian and a UCC member. However, whether you pay your per capita or not is entirely up to you. The per capita is an amount above and beyond your regular contribution to the church. The church is required to pay the apportionment whether its members pay their share or not. If a member does not pay the amount requested, that amount is taken from the church treasury which puts more pressure on the already stressed budget.

There has been some confusion regarding the amount to be paid this year. We had not received the UCC bill when the Session met in November and the amount had been estimated. Now we have both bills. The charge from the Presbytery of Lake Huron is \$26.94/member. The charge from the United Church of Christ is \$2.75/member. The two combined amounts equal \$29.69/member. The Session, this year, has decided to combine the two amounts and request members to help defray expenses by paying for both denominations. **At the December Session meeting, it was decided to petition members to pay \$30.00/member.** So if there are two Countryside members in one household that would tally out to \$60.00 for that household. We are so sorry for the confusion and we do appreciate your patience and understanding into this matter. If you have any questions, please talk with a Session member, the minister, or the Clerk of Session.

Submitted by,  
Mary Ann Parker, Clerk of Session

### **2018 Stewardship Pledges**

If you have not submitted your Stewardship Pledge for 2018, please do so as soon as possible. It is of utmost importance for the finance committee to have that information in hand to plan for the new year.

Thank you.  
Mary Ann Parker

## Treasurer's Report

	November				
	Beginning Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers	Ending Balance
General	17,519.23	7,819.77	11,086.40	1,600.00	15,852.60
Building	-	100.00		(100.00)	-
Memorial	15,056.83	305.00		(1,500.00)	13,861.83
Special projects	610.69		25.00		585.69
Mission					
Hunger	621.30	142.00	160.76		602.54
Heifer proj (Church School)	158.46				158.46
Christmas Joy/Peace	-				-
Good Samaritan	2,608.28				2,608.28
Muriel Lakey Scholarship	3,844.36				3,844.36
Miscellaneous	285.00	173.38	118.38		340.00
Bricks	1,325.40				1,325.40
	42,029.55	8,540.15	11,390.54	-	39,179.16
Endowment	174,363.20				174,363.20
	216,392.75	8,540.15	11,390.54	-	213,542.36



## Our path together

As we move ahead into the New Year, the Session/Council will soon begin the next phase of Countryside Trinity's Pastoral search. The Nominating Committee will be seeking people to serve on the Pastoral Nominating Committee ("PNC") whose job it will be to search for a full-time Pastor.

This journey may be an arduous one, but we know that God will guide us in our search.

Please be patient and keep the Nominating Committee and PNC always in your prayers.

## Bible Study

**TIME CHANGE:** Come join the group for Bible Study each Thursday afternoon at 4:00 p.m.





**Youth Group:** Calling all CTC youth! A youth group meeting will be held on Sunday evening January 14th at 8 pm. Please come and enjoy an evening of fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Dave.

### **MISSION REPORT**

The mission of the month for January is Forgotten Man Ministries that serves the Saginaw County Jail. The mission provides counseling, worship and Bible study. Last year we collected white underwear and socks for the men.

The Mission Committee is looking to expand our mission to the state prison in Freeland. Check the Sunday bulletins for further information.

The Mission Committee began the idea of "Mission of the Month" several years ago when Mission was taken out of the annual budget as a line item.

The idea was to focus attention on various local and church wide missions. We hoped to spark interest within our congregation. No one is expected to give to all the missions. Choose the one(s) that interest you the most. The committee is open to considering adding, changing missions. Our goal is to increase our mission knowledge and giving.

### **Women's Association News**

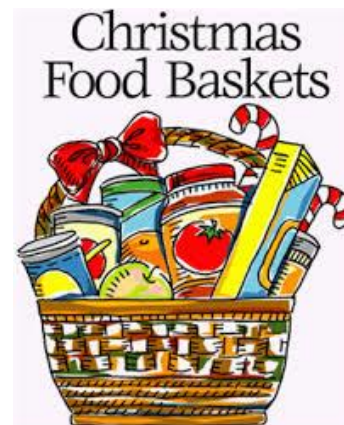
The Cookie Walk was a big success. We thank all who baked and all who bought. We hope the cookies added JOY to your holidays. We shout a special thanks to Barb Groom who organized the event and all her helpers. The women added \$350.00 to their treasury.

### **Officer Retreat**

An Officers Retreat will be held on Saturday, January 6th for all Elders and Deacons currently serving and newly elected to serve. The retreat will go from 9 am to 11:30 am. Please bring your energy, your imagination and your love as we talk and plan the mission and ministry of Countryside Trinity Church for the new year. New officers will be ordained and installed at worship on January 7th.



The last Sunday of each month is when we collect food for those in need. Please mark your calendar to drop off or bring your donation to church when you come for Worship. This Christmas Season we distributed food baskets to ten area needy families. The "Angel Tree" contained names of four families and gifts were distributed to ten children and five adults. Thanks to all those who contributed and also helped shop and pack. Special thanks to Judi Westendorf for her hard work in this so important project.





# UCC response to North Bay fires - a story from the N. California-Nevada Conference

November 21, 2017

By Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain, Disaster Ministry Coordinator, NCNC-UCC

*Story shared with UCC Disaster Updates by the UCC's Northern California-Nevada Conference*



Virtually no one in Northern California will soon forget the terrible devastation of the early October firestorms that swept through Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake, Yuba and Solano counties. For those of us here in Contra Costa County, we will remember being awakened by smoke on Oct. 8 in the middle of the night, while those in the fire zone remember fleeing for their lives.

As the fires raged through country previously devastated by epic drought, air quality went into the red zone for days on end and for 100-150 miles in different directions, depending on the wind conditions. As of this writing, the blazes killed at least 42 people, destroyed an estimated 8,400 structures, burned through nearly 400 square miles of land and prompted 100,000 people to evacuate. Governor Jerry Brown has requested 7.4 billion dollars for wildfire recovery.

Within our Northern California Nevada Conference UCC (NCNC) church family, Pastor Eddie Sunia and another member of Wellspring Church in Santa Rosa lost their homes. Pastor Eddie was living in a rental home pending the building of a parsonage on land owned by a member of the church. The congregation is now working with United Church Building and Loan to build a parsonage for their pastor. Seven members of First Congregational, Santa Rosa lost their homes and two members of First Congregational, Sonoma

lost homes as well. While all our church properties were spared major damage, almost everyone in the fire zone has some level of damage from toxic ash, lost food due to power outages, and smoke damage to linens and bedding.

Our NCNC-UCC churches and organizations quickly sprang into action to help our friends farther North. Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) immediately organized two fundraising concerts and many, many churches sent gift cards to be distributed by congregations in the fire zone to those most in need during the extended



evacuation. Rev. Laura Rose, pastor for First Congregational, Alameda took to social media to offer her motor home to evacuees and Rev. Curran Reichert connected the RV to evacuating neighbors.

In the United Church of Christ, our role in the disaster recovery community is to focus on unmet needs and technological (human-caused) disaster. This often means that our work begins somewhat late in the process of disaster recovery.

But in this case, the Rev. Curran Reichert and First Congregational, Sonoma identified an early unmet need to connect Spanish-speaking and undocumented persons to fire recovery resources in the town of Sonoma neighborhood known as Agua Caliente, or "the Springs".

Working quickly with Zach Wolgemuth and Mary Schaller Blaufuss in the national setting of the UCC and our own conference minister, the Rev. Diane Weible, we were able to create a solidarity grant to help FCC, Sonoma hire a short-term "service navigator/community organizer" named Mario Castillo (*pictured, right, with the Rev. Curran Reichert*). Mario, who has now been seen on many local media outlets raising issues about undocumented and Spanish-speaking people's unique needs in this disaster, is also helping to reach out to folks who may or may not qualify for federal disaster aid, but could access private sources of support. And as a way to "open doors" and support Mario's outreach efforts, NCNC congregations have also assembled over 80 food bags to distribute to those in need so that we can help folks connect with recovery resources. Congregations have also sent respirator masks to facilitate safe clean-up of the toxic ash.

Associations, churches, and individuals have donated generously and a number of folks stand ready to volunteer as needed. But the long term need is great and as the UCC, we pledge to be in it for the long haul. So even though the headlines have diminished, our energy to help must not decrease.



**Bickford Assisted Living**

Elaine Kraenzlein

**Health Source**

Bob Gulliver

**Edgewood Assisted Living Center**

Betty Huber

**Meadowview Manor**

Carolyn Pendell

**Swanhaven Manor**

Fern Evon Little

**New Hope Valley Independent Living**

Ed Iles & Dorothy Gray

**St. Francis Home**

Judith Lorenz

**Shattuck Manor**

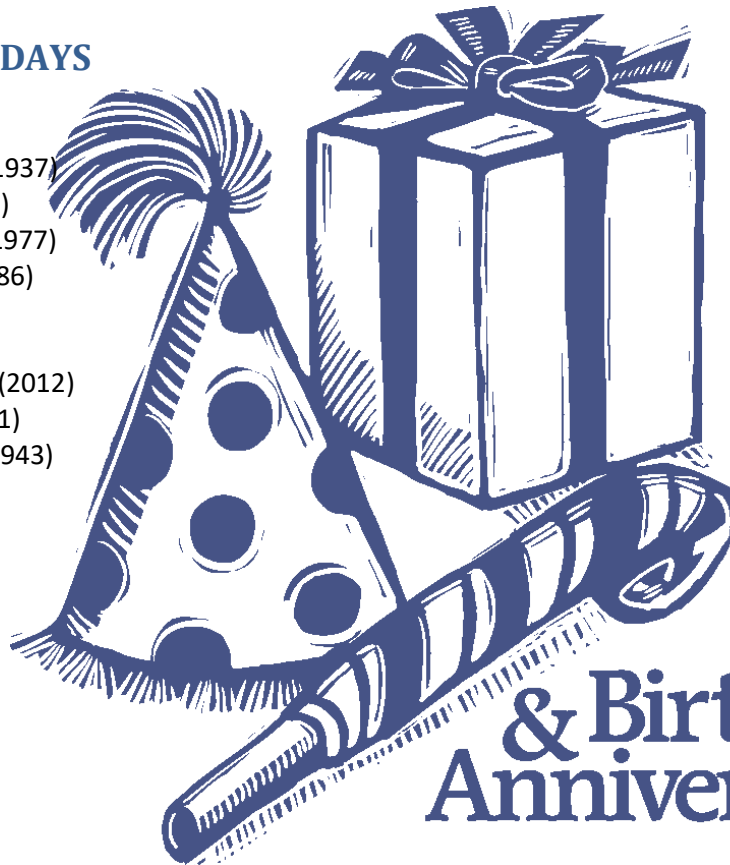
Shirley Roof & Carol Williamson

**In Hospital or Private Homes**

Betty Burr, Dawn Curtis, Bessie Daugharty,  
Betty Hauk, Fran Preuter, Fred & Kathy  
Williamson

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 4 Fred Williamson
- 5 Norma Meacham (1937)
- 8 Zachary Vega (1995)
- 12 Julie Smith Lowe (1977)
- 13 Sarah Gonzales (1986)
- 14 Betty Hauk (1923)
- 15 Mary Young (1931)
- 17 Madisen J. Groom (2012)
- 18 Frank Gndt (1941)
- 22 Mary Ann Parker (1943)
- 24 Chelsea Parker
- 27 Laura Nolan (1994)
- 28 Irene Ohmer



**JANUARY  
ANNIVERSARIES**

- 6 Pervez & Ezra Yusaf  
(1973)
- 28 Michael & Amanda  
Groom (2011)

**& Birthdays  
Anniversaries**

## **Tidbits and Items of Interest**

### **Lunch & Learn - The Saginaw News Heritage Homes Series - 50 years later**

**Date:** 1/9/2018  
**Time:** 12:00 PM TO 1:00 AM  
**Where:** 500 Federal Avenue  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
**Phone:** 989-752-2861

#### **Event Description:**

In the late 1960s, The Saginaw News published articles highlighting historic homes in Saginaw. The editor of the news stated, "rarely does a series of stories receive the widespread reader acclaim" of these features. Chief Historian Tom Trombley will recount the history, context and impact of the series and the significance of some of the homes.

Light refreshments will be provided. Cost: \$1 for adults, .50 for children and free for HSSC members.

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**Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Saginaw Township Fire Department receives many 911 calls from residents who say their smoke or carbon monoxide detectors are going off. When a smoke alarm or carbon monoxide detector activates in the case of an emergency, you will hear a **LOUD** beeping noise. In the case of smoke alarms, the beeping will be a constant noise. For carbon monoxide alarms, the beeping will sound four times, then a five-second pause, and beep again four times; this pattern will continue. If your smoke alarm activates, call 911 and exit the building, even if you don't see smoke. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that you will not be able to see. If the carbon monoxide alarm activates, call 911 and exit the building. Usually when the smoke alarm or carbon monoxide detector beeps/chirps (about once every thirty seconds), it means the battery needs to be replaced. Even if your smoke alarm is hard wired to your electrical system, it should have a battery backup. When that battery is getting low, the alarm chirps to let you know. So when the chirping starts, replace the battery.

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**Property Taxes:** Property taxes are due February 14, 2018, after which a penalty fee and interest will be added.

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**Area Recreation Programs:** Check to see what the Saginaw Township Recreation has to offer. There are many programs for children to seniors. There is Youth Basketball, Lacross, Youth and Adult Volleyball, Dancing, Yoga & Chair Yoga, a Variety of Fitness Classes, Senior Basketball, Pickleball, Music for Munchkins, Snapology (Lego bricks, K'Nex and Technology for Kids) and Playgroup for Ages 3 and under just to name a few. Check em out at 989 791-9860.

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**New Year's Eve Early Dinner:** Swan Valley Golf & Banquet, 9521 Highland Green Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609 (989) 781-4411. Enjoy the evening with Gourmet Entrees of Slow Roasted Prime Rib, Chicken Parmesan, Elaborate Salad Bar & Homemade Desserts. Dinner from 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm. Full service open bar included from 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Dancing from 6:30 pm-8:00 pm. **NEW EARLY FORMAT** - \$35.00 per person.

**New Year's Eve Party:** Swan Valley Golf & Banquet, 9521 Highland Green Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609 (989) 781-4411. Enjoy the evening with Gourmet Entrees of Slow Roasted Prime Rib, Chicken Parmesan, Elaborate Salad Bar & Homemade Desserts. Dinner from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Full service open bar included from 7:00 pm to 1:00 am. Dancing the night away with DJ Scott Topham of "Ultimate Sounds". Party favors, Champagne Toast and Fireworks at Midnight 'Permit Pending. Late Night snack - homemade specialty pizzas. Book early for reserved seating. \$64.00 per person.



2018

CALENDAR YEAR

JANUARY

CALENDAR MONTH

SUNDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Countryside Trinity Church

4690 Weiss St. Saginaw, MI 48603

Email: trinitychurch40@att.net Phone: 989-793-0125

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 	01 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	02 <b>Family Game Night Cancelled</b>	03 <b>Book Study 1:00 pm Bring Lunch if Desired</b>	04 <b>Bible Study 4:00 pm</b>	05	06 <b>Officer Training</b>
07 10:25 am-Announcements in Sanctuary; 10:30 am Worship Service 11:30 am - Cong Mtg for Installation of Officers. 11:45 am - Coffee Hour: Celebration of January Birthdays & Anniversaries 4:00-6:00 City of God	08	09 4:00 p.m. Christian Education Meeting	10 Book Study 1:00 pm Bring Lunch if Desired	11 Bible Study 4:00 pm	12 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	13
14 10:25 am-Announcements in Sanctuary 10:30 am - Worship Service 11:30 am - Coffee Hour: 8:00 pm - Youth Group Mtg	15	16 7:00 p.m. Session/Council Meeting	17 Book Study 1:00 pm Bring Lunch if Desired	18 Bible Study 4:00 pm	19 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	20
21 10:25 am-Announcements in Sanctuary 10:30 am - Worship Service 11:30 am - Annual Meeting 11:45 am - Coffee Hour:	22 February 2018 Newsletter Deadline; submit your news to the office	23	24 Book Study 1:00 pm Bring Lunch if Desired	25 Bible Study 4:00 pm	26 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	27
28 10:25 am-Announcements in Sanctuary 10:30 am - Worship Service 11:30 am - Coffee Hour:	29	30	31 No Book Study	01	02 Office Hours: Monday- Thursday 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Worship Service Sundays at 10:30 a.m.	03 
<b>[ Pastor Dave will be away for Continuing Education ]</b>						

January, 2018

## COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY CHURCH

4690 Weiss Street  
Saginaw, Michigan 48603  
Phone: (989) 793-01250

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### A BIBLE STORY

#### “The Magi Visit the Messiah”, Matthew 2:1-12



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.”

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.