

Clergy Letter: 'Looking with fresh eyes'

Have you ever stood in front of your larder, and searched and searched for something which you know must be there, but you just can't lay your hands on? Then when you ask for help, you find it immediately. It was staring you in the face all the time. My husband is a 'dab-hand' at this skill! (* But has many other redeeming qualities to compensate!) 'It's the 'not being able to see the wood for the trees' syndrome.

In January Christians celebrate Epiphany, when we remember the Magi (sometimes called the Three Kings or Wisemen) who travelled a very long way to find Jesus. The gospels include different parts of the Christmas story which are merged to produce the traditional Nativity which we have been celebrating throughout Christmas.

St Luke has the shepherds recognising Jesus in the manger. St Matthew, on the other hand, only had Jesus recognised as the new King by the Magi; strangers who had travelled great distances to get to the Holy Land. These well-informed strangers knew who the child was.

Herod, Leader of the Jews, should have known, but didn't. As the leader of a people who longed for a Messiah, he should have been the first to know that the new king had been born and should have been the first to pay him homage. But Herod didn't see what was right under his nose. He couldn't see the wood for the trees. He must have been so immersed in his own business that he missed the most important event of his life.

We all know what it's like to lose sight of what really matters. It could be that we need a new way to look at a familiar situation, or a creative solution to a problem that threatens to overwhelm us, or we merely need the insight to know that what we already have is complete in itself.

To regain the focus on what's really important we need the wisdom of the Magi, and a fresh pair of eyes to provide a different perspective. Whatever our personal circumstances, hope is here, Jesus is here, right in the midst of us.

We just need to open our eyes, hearts and minds.

May *You and Yours* have a wonderfully blessed 2022.

Your Rector,

Reverend Mandy

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