



St. Andrew's Tidings

For the Week of January 10th

Biblical Magi

The Rev. Deacon Raymond Wishart

This Sunday we celebrate one of our most important feast days, Epiphany. It really was January 6, but we move the celebration of this event to the next Sunday for practical purposes. Epiphany, also known as Three Kings' Day, is a Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation of God the Son as human in Jesus Christ. In Western Christianity, the feast commemorates principally the visit of the Magi to the Christ child, and thus Jesus' physical manifestation to the Gentiles.

It's interesting how we all hear and read stories in the bible, especially in the Gospels, but what we remember seems to come more from hymns and Christmas carols. We have all sung the carol hundreds of times, "We three kings of Orient are . . .", but what does scripture really tell us about the "Magi" that we speak of in this week's Gospel reading? (Matthew 2:1-12).

The Magi, also referred to as the Wise Men or in the popular carol, Three Kings, were, in the Gospel of Matthew and Christian tradition, a group of distinguished foreigners who visited Jesus after his birth, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They are regular figures in traditional accounts of the nativity celebrations of Christmas and are an important part of Christian tradition.

According to Matthew, the only one of the four Canonical gospels to even mention the Magi, they came "from the east" to worship the "king of the Jews". Although the account does not mention the number of Magi, the three gifts has led to the widespread assumption that there were three men. In early Christian writings, and even today in Eastern Christianity, the Magi often number twelve. In some other traditions they may have been many more, even up to 70. Their identification as kings in later Christian writings is probably linked to Psalms 72:11, "May all kings fall down before him". So apparently the carol has it wrong; there were probably more than three and they probably were not really kings.

The term Magi, used in the King James version, refers to the priestly caste of Zoroastrianism, one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions. It was founded by the Prophet Zoroaster in ancient Iran approximately 3500 years ago. As part of their religion, these priests paid particular attention to the stars and gained an international reputation for astrology, which was at that time highly regarded as a science. So the "Three Kings" were more likely a larger group of priests and astrologers, but that may not sound as good in song.

Even the timing of the visit varies greatly from tradition to what scripture and history really tells us. Traditional nativity scenes depict three "kings" visiting the infant Jesus on the night of his birth, in a manger accompanied by the shepherds and angels, but this should be understood as an artistic convention allowing the two separate scenes of the Adoration of the Shepherds on the birth night and the later Adoration of the Magi to be combined for convenience. The single biblical account in Matthew simply presents an event at an unspecified point after Christ's birth in which an unnumbered party of unnamed "wise men" or Magi visits him in a house, not a stable, with only "his mother" mentioned as present. The Bible specifies no interval between the birth and the visit, and artistic depictions and the closeness of the traditional dates of December 25 and January 6 encourage the popular assumption that the visit took place the same winter as the birth, but later traditions varied, with the visit taken as occurring up to two winters later.

Confused a bit? So am I but maybe we will clear up some misconceptions this Sunday in my sermon, see you then!



Thirty-fifth

Men's Conference

and Retreat

March 4, 5, & 6, 2016

The Also-life:

Life Beyond the Life We Know

Presented by

Reverend Barbara Crafton

Priest, Author and Spiritual Director



*Would you like a Norfolk Island Pine?
Now is your chance! You can purchase one
of the trees in the worship space or narthex
for only \$15. Please make your check out to
the church and put "tree" on the check.*

Coming Up:

*Pre-convention meeting of delegates to convention
from area churches in our Region*

*will be on Jan. 31, 2016. Diocesan Convention is
February 18-20 at St. Paul's Daphne.*

Please Note:

**If you have info to go in the bulletin,
please send it in by 10 a.m. on
Wednesday. If you have items for the
Tidings, please send in by 10 a.m. on
Thursday.**

Centering Prayer Resumes
Tuesday January 19th

at 10 a.m.

In the Chapel



GROCERY CART MINISTRY

When the groceries collected by our parish were delivered to the food pantry at St. Andrew Baptist, the coordinator of the program said it was completely out of cereal- that the two boxes we gave were all that was available. When you are doing your grocery shopping this week please pick up some cereal and place it in the basket under the bulletin board in Byrne Hall. Thank you for blessing others.





We earned \$26 last month!!

Calling All Panama City Episcopalians!

Bill Buskell, owner of Pineapple Willies and The Wicked Wheel on Middle Beach Road, who is a good Episcopalian, will give St. Andrew's 15% of the total tab from now until February 16 if you bring a church bulletin and eat on Sunday at the Wicked Wheel. What a Deal! Let's see how much we can earn.

St. Mary's Guild

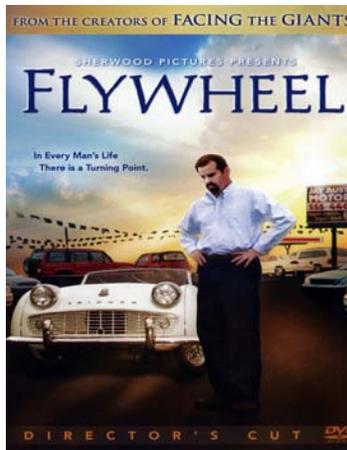
A new year! A new opportunity to join the St. Andrew's ladies, for fellowship, devotion and programs.

When: January 12, 2016 at 10:00 am

Where: Mary Wimpenny's, 112 Harmon Ave.

Program: Ken Graves, Supervising Attny., Florida Guardian ad Litem Program, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit

Hostesses: Judy Cooley, Barbara Sontag, Nell Barnett



On Friday, **January 15, 2016**, St. Andrews Episcopal Church will host the St. Andrews Movie Lovers Movie Night & Dinner. Movie starts at 6:00 pm.

Where: Byrne (Parrish) Hall, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1608 Baker Court, PC 32401 [Parking in the Back]

Movie: **Flywheel (2003)** IMDb rating **6.9**; Starring Rosetta Harris Armstrong, Lisa Arnold, Alex Kendrick. Rating: Not Rated but PG material. 120-minutes. **Jay Austin, a dishonest car salesman in lots of debt, comes to a turning point in his life where he becomes a born-again Christian, turns from his dishonest way of business and begins trusting in God to take care of him. Even when things get hard he trusts God, and God provides him with a way to pay off his debt honestly**

Dinner: Pizza, red and white wine, ginger ale and chilled bottled water.

Trivia Contest at end with winner getting bottle of champagne.

Movie shown on big screen (48-inch) color TV

Other: No admittance fee, but donations accepted and encouraged. One-hundred percent (100%) of all donations will go to Living Stones building fund.

Questions: Contact Dr. Dan Finley at dfinley@gulfcoast.edu

*The Living Stones Fund
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church*

Has received a gift in honor of

From

*Welcoming every to celebrate the wholeness of God's creation in our
language, worship prayer and music.*

*This is your opportunity to give a lasting
gift to Living Stones. You can celebrate a
special occasion or remember a special
person.*

Thank You

*I want to Thank St. Andrew's Congregation for the very thoughtful
Christmas gift. I feel very honored to be your Organist and very much
appreciate you remembering me at Christmas time.*

Lovingly in Christ,

Miriam

Thank You

A very warm thank you to the St. Andrew's parish for your gift at Christmas. It was much appreciated and I am grateful for your continued support. Wishes to all for a blessed and prosperous New Year.

*Fran Tate
Office Assistant*

Sunday is Rector's Discretionary Day! Please be generous!

Please keep the following in your prayers: Bob, Virginia, Ryan, Andrea, Alexis, Pam, Mike, Warren, Mary, Kellie, Lindsey, Doris, Marvin, Robin, David, Margaret, Tripp, Mike Michele, Richard, Jeremy, Dozier, Josh, Bonnie, Fran, Nancy, Bobby, Deb, Anne, Shawn,, Camille, Jan, Jeremy, Kim, Vito, Luke, Markuson family, Patricia, Martha, Frances, Carol, Kathleen, Doris, Ed, Mary Lou, Bobbie, Dawn, Hong

(Names are left on the prayer list for 3 weeks, unless specified for a longer time)

***We pray for our men and women in the Armed Forces at home and abroad:
Richard, David, Brian, Jason, Billy, Colin, Todd, Brett, Jordan, Jeremiah, Richard, Patricia***