

2022-01-02 ... 10am Worship Together Talk ... Revd Canon Judy Hunt

Matthew 2: 1 – 12

**'Going Home another Way'**

How good is your sense of direction?

Suppose you are going to a service – maybe a wedding or baptism in a town that you don't know. You follow directions to a public car park and you can see the tower of the church in the distance. So you keep looking towards that tower and you can make your way to the church. But, how about on the way back? And here, I'm going to ban Google maps – your phone has run out of battery!!

How would you find your way back to your car?

**Chat together and take answers ...** *various ideas were given ...*

Some of us might have a brilliant sense of direction

Some of us might be excited by the challenge – others might be worried (especially if the parking ticket was about to run out!)

Some of us might rely on what we'd passed on the way to the church – but what if the way we'd gone was now blocked – what if we had to go **'another way'**?

That's what happened for the wise men – but they were already in a state of confusion ...

We talk of 'seeing stars' when we've had a knock on the head that makes us dizzy. That kind of experience leaves us feeling out of kilter, knocked off our balance. Perhaps this is how the wise men felt. They were used to controlling what they saw and felt – the stars were a source of wisdom, guiding them by well-known rules. Yet suddenly here is a star that doesn't behave in the normal way, and here is an experience which confounds all their expectations.

The mysterious, all-powerful God is born in poverty, far from royal palaces and the corridors of power. They bring with them treasures, symbols of the power of wealth and status, knowledge and wisdom, life and death. Yet they lay them at the feet of a newborn baby, born of a humble mother, watched over by a carpenter and some wandering shepherds. Nothing is as they had imagined it would be.

What they meet in Bethlehem is the God of surprises, the wild and unpredictable God who can never be tamed or domesticated. This is God who calls us to **'go home by another way'**. PTO

In previous times, this might present a challenge to us ... We had got used to how things were and this sentence from our Gospel could unsettle us.

In our current situation, however, I think that there is great reassurance and hope. The wise men were going through experiences that were previously unknown to them – they didn't know what would happen next. But God was there with them and showing them what they needed to do.

Remember, too, that Mary and Joseph, with their newborn child, also had to **'go home by another way'** as they had to flee to Egypt.

What can we take from this?

In what is and what will be going on around us – with Covid and with Climate change – we need to change our expectations. We will not be able to live as we did before 2020 – we have to **'go home another way'**. Some of the things that have seemed settled, secure and comforting are no longer present – and that will cause many to feel worried – and some to feel excited by the challenge (just like the different reactions to getting back to the carpark at the beginning of this talk).

Whatever our personal reaction – and let's be sensitive to each other in this – the most important thing to keep in our hearts and minds is that God is with us, has not abandoned us and will guide us step by step in our journey into unknown territory.

Adapted from: [Session 4: Going home by another way/Sacred Space](#)