



WELCOME to *Across the Parish* for the next three months, November 2017 to January 2018. Services and events between now and December are listed, but at the time of going to press details for January are not yet known. There is a separate list of services and events for Advent and Christmas.

For the latest information check church notice boards, pick up the monthly lists available in St Cuthbert's and Seascale Methodist Churches, (also available by email from Stcuthbertswebeditor@gmail.com) and visit the St Cuthbert's website, <http://www.seascalestcuthberts.org.uk/>

Please note that from Advent until Easter 2018 the Sunday Said Communion will be at 8.45am. This arrangement will be reviewed then.

The New Benefice of Seatallan

By the time this magazine is issued we at St Cuthbert's will be part of a new benefice in the Calder Deanery.

What is a benefice? The term benefice refers to the permanent appointment of a stipendiary vicar or rector (i.e. a priest in charge with a salary and a residence). These days a priest in charge will usually have a number of parishes under their care and the term is taken to mean this group of parishes.



The Benefice in question is that of Seatallan. It includes the parishes of Gosforth, Seascale, the Wasdales and Beckermeth with Calderbridge. These are the parishes for which Reverend John Riley is officially, from 1 November, the priest in charge. A Pastoral Measure is required to change a benefice and in our case the Pastoral Measure came into effect from 1 November 2017. It has the effect of separating the old Benefice of Seascale and Drigg and joining Seascale with the Gosforth parishes, while Drigg is now part of the Benefice of Drigg, Eskdale and Black Combe for which Reverend Canon Gill Hart is priest in charge.

We welcomed the Reverends John and Lesley Riley here ten months ago and they both regularly take services in Seascale. John has been acting as our priest in charge ever since Reverend Lindsay Gray retired so as far as the services and interactions within the new benefice are concerned there will be no perceptible change.

Both of the benefices are part of the wider South Calder Mission Community and all of us will be welcome if we want to go to a service in any of the Churches in either benefice. Those of us who are part of the ministry team have been taking services in both benefices for a long time now and we always receive a warm welcome.

The name of the new benefice is taken from Seatallan, the gently rounded fell which can be seen from most places in Gosforth, the Wasdales and Seascale. The name Seatallan is believed to mean "Aleyn's high pasture".

From the Rectory

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

Lots of people have been saying to me over recent weeks that they cannot believe how quickly this year is flying by! So, when you read this we will be into Remembrance-tide and Advent and Christmas (not to mention another New Year!), will be just around the corner.

'Christmas just won't be the same this year.' How frequently too, you hear those words spoken as the Christmas Season approaches once again. This sentiment is so often expressed by those who have experienced illness, bereavement or separation from their loved ones over the past year. Sometimes it is because of other changes in life, changing circumstances such as retirement, moving home or as it is here at St Cuthbert's a new priest in charge and still much uncertainty concerning the future. For others it will be different because of good events during the last year, new grandchildren, new family members. However we approach it each year is never the same as previous years. So whether you will be approaching Christmas 2017 with a deep sense of anxiety and uncertainty, or a happy sense of something just a little different might be happening it is good to take a step back to reflect on the vast array of emotions that weave through the Christmas Season.

If for you 'Christmas just won't be the same this year' because it will not be familiar but a step of faith into the unknown then you are in very good company because that is exactly what God Himself did on that first Christmas Day; He took a giant leap of faith into the unknown. God gave His Son, Jesus, who stepped onto the stage of human history, to be born as a weak, helpless, dependent, vulnerable baby at Bethlehem. Frank Houghton expressed this great truth so movingly in his beautiful Christmas hymn:

*"Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becamest poor,
Thrones for a manger didst surrender
Sapphire paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becamest poor."*

Christ gave up the glory and splendour of heaven in order to be born in lowliness and poverty in the stable in Bethlehem. He exchanged riches for poverty because He was motivated by the most incredible love for each one of us. The hymn goes on:

*"Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
Heavenwards by Thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising
All for love's sake becamest man."*

Christ not only exchanged riches for poverty He allowed His divinity to take on human nature. *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."* (John 1:14).

The purpose of this humbling and self-emptying in taking our flesh was to suffer and die to redeem us. "Stooping so low (to the cross as well as the crib) but sinners raising, heavenwards by Thine eternal plan."

The final verse of this wonderful hymn expresses our response to Christ's amazing love and sacrifice. May this, indeed, be our response this Christmas time;

*"Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship Thee.
Immanuel, within us dwelling,
Make us what Thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who are love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship Thee."*

If Christmas just won't be the same for you this year (or even if it is going to be very similar), ponder afresh the words of that great hymn and remember that, as things change around you, there is One who never changes, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."* (Hebrews 13:8).

May you know God's richest blessing in your hearts and homes, His joy and peace as you celebrate the gift of Jesus this Christmas time and as you look forward to a New Year may you be assured that you do not go alone but God will walk with you whatever the future may hold.

With warm greetings and prayerful good wishes.

John G. Riley

The St Cuthbert's Team

Priest in Charge: Reverend John Riley tel: 25499

Assistant Priest: Reverend Lesley Riley tel: 25499

Parish Associate: Reverend Jonathan Falkner tel: 21852

Lay Reader: Dorothy Chatterley tel: 28379

Lay Reader: Sheila Falkner tel: 21852

Lay Reader: Brian Pateman tel: 28131

Lay Worship Leader: Jim Geering tel: 27380

Pastoral Outreach Minister: Peter Holburt tel: 21584

Organist: Dorothy Chatterley tel: 28379

Church Wardens: Jim Geering tel: 27380

and Joyce Roberts tel: 28655

PCC Treasurer: Tom Jones tel: 28938PCC

Secretary, Messy Church contact, Safeguarding Officer:

Mary Waterhouse tel: 27641



Coffee Morning in aid of the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS)

On Saturday 21 October the regular coffee morning in the Methodist Hall was used for a special fundraising event for the Great North Air Ambulance Service. The theme was Chocolate, and chocolate cakes and treats were provided to eat with tea and coffee, and to buy for later.

The event was very well attended, and raised £361 for GNAAS.

To read more about the work of the service and to find out how to help go to: <https://www.greatnorthairambulance.co.uk/>



Churches Together in Cumbria

Celebrating Together – 7 October 2017

Made in God's Image: exploring gender and discipleship

Churches Together in Cumbria's annual celebration was held at the Ambleside Church Centre, a beautifully designed venue which makes the most of its setting, having panoramic views of the village and the surrounding fells.

The theme for this year, *Made in God's Image: exploring gender and discipleship*, emphasised the message that all humankind is equal, having been created in God's image, and avoiding controversies of sexuality by concentrating on this ordained equality of the genders.

An integral precept for the day was the equal value and importance to the Church of all its members, of any gender, within both the clergy and the laity. This was stressed by the day's opening and closing worship sessions calling on the Church's members to affirm their duty of friendship and inclusivity to the rainbow diversity of humanity.

Reverend Terri Robinson, the Anglican Communion's Director for Women in Church and Society was the keynote speaker. She has travelled worldwide among the churches of the Communion and gave an upbeat assessment of the progress of women towards equality in these churches, while pointing out how much more still needs to be achieved.

The major part of the day was devoted to five workshop sessions, each of which ran twice with ten to twelve delegates attending each time, giving plenty of opportunity for discussion and interaction.

Gender justice: still an issue? was led by Reverend Terri Robinson and explored in greater depth the issues of her keynote address.

Domestic abuse concentrated on the alarming prevalence of all forms of domestic violence towards women and, as is increasingly reported, towards men, and how the Church, with its responsibility of care, can respond. The leader was Brec Seaton, Regional Learning and Development Officer for the Methodist Church.

Irene McKay, a member of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Methodist Church in Britain, led the workshop *Gender and the Local Church* which explored how to use the gender toolkit prepared by the Methodist Church.

Expectations of Maleness – what happens when your personality doesn't quite fit the bill, led by Reverend Richard Goodfellow, curate in the benefice of Aspatria with Hayton and Gilcrux, looked at perceptions of maleness in general as well as within the Church. The workshop explored the ways individuals in the Church, clergy and laity alike, respond to these expectations and how preconceptions of masculinity need to evolve.

Leading *Trans* and the Church* were Alister McLure, a diversity practitioner who is a cis-gender gay man and Kenneth Wilkinson-Roberts, a trans Christian seeking ordination and currently an undergraduate at Lancaster University. The positive and optimistic discussion ranged through gender diversity, the experiences of transgender people in the Church and how these relate to God's sacred "otherness".

Winding up the day the final session consisted of a series of short one to one interviews between clergy of the Anglican and United Reformed Churches, and officers of the Salvation Army and the Society of Friends.

The Celebration for 2017 was slightly smaller in overall numbers than in previous years, but included a greater contribution from the Salvation Army, who have recently become full members of Churches Together. The subjects under discussion were challenging but there was a tremendous willingness from all the delegates to engage in a very positive way with each other and with the issues.

Helen Pateman



Domestic Abuse

Churches Together in Cumbria has been conducting awareness training for the clergy and laity on Domestic Abuse and is participating in a research study. In the last issue of *Across the Parish* we encouraged our readers to take part in the research. The research team would still welcome further input, as the greater the number participating the greater the validity of the research.

The study aims to include the views of women and men, those who have direct experience of domestic abuse and those who have none, but who are aware of the issue. Personal experience only forms part of the survey. The questions are designed to encourage participants to give their views on the importance and relevance of the issue in their local community and how the churches and individuals should be equipped to offer support and advice on how and where victims can obtain the help that is available.

The research team have sent us the following statement:

Researchers at Coventry and Leicester universities are working with Christian charities Restored and Churches Together in Cumbria to carry out the first major UK study of Church responses to domestic abuse. The study will collect vital data that will inform the training provided to churches. We invite everyone – whatever your gender or experience of this issue - to take part in the research. The research has received ethical approval. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity will be assured: the church won't be named and we don't require your name or contact details.

To complete the survey online visit:

<https://coventry.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/cumbria>

To request a paper copy and SAE please ring the researchers on 024 7765 1177

or contact Helen Pateman, tel: 28131 email: aitchpateman@gmail.com



Churches Together in Seascale and District



in **SEASCALE & DISTRICT**

Last year Churches Together in Seascale & District were involved in the Northern Prayerhouse event and we are intending to do it again this year.

What is it all about?

Prayer (from the Latin *precari* "to ask earnestly, beg, entreat") is an invocation or act which seeks to activate a rapport with an object of worship through deliberate communication.¹

I thought I'd start with a dictionary definition and work on from there. We all pray – even non-churchgoers pray, we don't have the monopoly on asking things of God. What we don't often do is to think about what it means to pray and what we are doing when we pray.



One of the great theologians of the early twentieth century, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, considered that personal prayer was more important than the public corporate prayer (the prayer of the assembled church) which forms part of our services. He also regarded prayer as part of our service to God. He writes of personal prayer "*here the poorest stammering can be better than the best-phrased prayer*".²

This is an important point if we look at prayer in a biblical context. In the Old Testament in particular prayer and sacrifice were part of the service rendered to God as king;

*Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.*

(Psalm 141:2)

Prayer is not just us asking our heavenly father for something, it is also thanking him for what we have through him (and praising him for his power and glory).

What we are doing with the Northern Prayerhouse is a combination of personal and corporate prayer. We are asking the members of all our churches for their prayers for those in need and then we come together to offer those prayers to God. We also share our prayers with other Northern Prayerhouse groups – and use the prayers they share with us. We will also take the prayers to use in our own private prayers as part of our service to God and sharing in the wider community of prayer.

One of the most important things is that, because it is organised by Churches Together it is an opportunity for all Christians, whatever their denomination, to come together in prayer and conversation with the God

in whom we all believe. Of course, those who don't regularly attend church of any denomination will also be welcome. This is an opportunity for us as a community to offer prayers for the community of the disadvantaged whoever and wherever they are.

What is this year's theme?

As last year, we are praying for those in need especially across the North of England (that shouldn't stop us from extending our prayers to cover a wider area of course).

Poverty is a very real part of modern life and my theme for this year's Prayerhouse is equality – thinking about those who have more than enough and those who don't have enough.

When is our event?

This year we are coming together to offer our prayers on 23 November at 7.30 pm. We are meeting at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Seascale.

We will be singing as well. I think that song can also be a form of prayer, not least to thank God for the gifts we have received!

Look out for posters and flyers in our churches which give more details of how to take part in our Prayerhouse for those who need our thoughts and prayers.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prayer>

² Bonhoeffer D, 1996. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Works vol. 5. Life Together; Prayerbook of the Bible, p71, Minneapolis, Fortress Press.

Brian Pateman



Seascale's Christmas Tree Festival

All over Seascale people are rooting out decorations on a theme. Some are still wondering which subject to go for. Others are searching the internet for drawings of the chosen book's characters, and producing

figures to cut out and colour in, and some are feverishly knitting. What's going on?

Preparations for Seascale's 3rd Christmas Tree Festival, of course!

What IS a Christmas Tree Festival? Various groups in Seascale are invited to bring and set up a Christmas tree and decorate it on a theme. This year it's children's books. Groups pick a book or series to use for their own tree. By the way, if your group hasn't been asked and you want to join in, please just let Mary Waterhouse know as soon as possible. Mary is the co-ordinator this year.

Groups may have a collecting box by their tree for donations, and often display information about their group, or have leaflets for you to take away if you want to. It's an unusual and fun way of spreading information that your group exists, and what it does. There is no charge to enter a tree, but you must supply and set up your own tree, and groups are asked if they can provide a raffle prize, and if anyone from the group can come and help with the refreshments and/or selling raffle tickets.

By a 'group' I mean any organisation or gathering of individuals with a common interest, in Seascale and surrounding area. All ages, from the Mother and Baby group upwards, and widely differing purposes have taken part. Children's groups include Rainbows, Brownies, Cubs and Scouts, also Messy Church and Craft club. Shackles Off have contributed a tree too. So have the Methodist Church, Mothers' Union and Women's Outlook. The Depression Support Group have joined in, so have GADS (Gosforth Amateur Dramatic Society) and the Knitting Group – all their decorations are knitted of course – it's amazing the different things they can knit! In 2015, which was the first year the festival happened, it was also 70th anniversary of the end of the 2nd World War, and the British Legion decorated a tree with Poppies, and displayed an account of the Christmas during the war in the trenches, when fighting stopped and the troops from both sides played football together.

The Christmas Tree Festival was started when someone who had benefitted from the charity CLIC Sergeant – the charity which helps children who have cancer, and their families – wanted to do something to raise money for this worthwhile cause. Allison Hanshaw came up with this idea, and began to research how to do it, and so it all began. The first year we had about 12 trees, last year we had 16 trees, no-one knows yet how many there will be this year, but I know that new groups have applied, so it's still growing.

This year the festival is to take place in St Cuthbert's Church at Seascale. Times and dates are as follows:

Friday 15th December 2 – 8 pm

Saturday 16th December 2 – 8 pm

Sunday 17th December 12 noon – 3 pm

There are also tasty refreshments and they're FREE – but if you could leave a donation, that money and the proceeds of the raffle will be shared between St Cuthbert's Church and CLIC Sergeant (see above).

Word has been spreading about the Christmas tree festival, and we're growing year by year, with more trees and lots of visitors. There's such a special atmosphere, it's a real community event. Don't miss it!

Why not come and bring family and friends to see too? It's free to come into the Church to look round, and you'll be given a guide to tell you where each organisation's tree is and what the theme is too. The church looks lovely lit up by the lights on the trees, and they're all unique. It's so interesting to see how the themes have been interpreted too. Finish up with a cup of tea or coffee, and a mince pie or shortbread, or a piece of home made cake. You'll be made very welcome.

Sheila Falkner



From "The Christmas Tree" by C. Day Lewis

So feast your eyes now
On mimic star and moon-cold bauble;
Worlds may wither unseen,
But the Christmas tree is a tree of fable
A Phoenix in evergreen
And the world cannot change or chill what its mysteries mean
To your hearts and eyes now.



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

St Cuthbert's, Seascale
December

Fri 15th 2pm-8pm

Sat 16th 2pm-8pm

Sun 17th 12-3pm

Raffle Refreshments

Proceeds to CLIC Sergent,
St Cuthbert's Church
Methodist Church

St Cuthbert's Christmas Fair
Saturday 2 December
11.00am onwards
St Joseph's Church Hall
Stalls!
Raffle!
Soup lunch!

Services for Advent and Christmas – Seascale, Gosforth and Drigg.

Sunday 1 December.

6.30 pm - Choral Evensong for Advent.

The Amethyst Green Singers. Methodist Church Seascale

Sunday 10 December.

4.00 pm – United Christingle Service at St. Mary's Gosforth

Sunday 17 December.

3.00 pm – Village Carol Service at St. Joseph's Church Seascale

Sunday 24 December – Christmas Eve.

10.00 am – Holy Communion at St Mary's Gosforth

11.00 am – Holy Communion at St. Peter's Drigg

4.00 pm – Crib Service at St Cuthberts Seascale.

6.30 pm – Crib Service at St. Mary's Gosforth

11.30 pm – Midnight Communion at St. Cuthbert's Seascale

11.30 pm – Midnight Communion at St. John's Beckermeth

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day.

9.00 am Christmas Mass at St Joseph's Seascale

10.00 am – United Morning Service at Methodist Church Seascale

10.00 am – Holy Communion at St. Mary's Gosforth

11.00 am – Family Communion at St Peter's Drigg

From the Parish Registers (August to November)

Baptism

20 August

Kody James Carnall

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; by the one Spirit we are all baptised into one body. We welcome you into the fellowship of faith.

Baptism First Anniversary

12 August

Austin Brendon Roy Rushworth

Baptism Second Anniversary

9 August

Jett Addison Hodgson

26 September

Eloise Spence

Evie-Leigh Spence

Finley Calum Lofthouse

3 October

Poppy Olivia Wood

15 November

Isla May Mawson

Baptism Third Anniversary

9 August

Rhian Joan Elizabeth Minnikin

16 November

Rhylee Edward Donaldson

Mylee Skye Moore

Baptism Fourth Anniversary

8 September

Amelia Jayne Carnall

May they grow in the faith into which they have been baptised.

Marriage

7 October

Amy Louise Thornton and Martin Ian Rigg

Funerals

2 August

Amy Victoria Ellery

10 August

Matthew Fleming

24 August

Pauline MaryJago

26 September

Colin Taylor

We give thanks for their lives and commend them to God. May the souls of the faithful rest in peace and rise in glory

**Sunday services in November are at
St Cuthbert's Church.
Wednesday morning Holy Communion is at St
Cuthbert's Church.**

Wednesday 1 November

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Lesley Riley

Sunday 5 November

10.00am Anglican Holy Communion
Reverend John Riley

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Wendy Bracegirdle

6.30pm United Evening Service
Methodist led
Reverend Ian Parker

Wednesday 8 November

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend John Riley

Sunday 12 November

10.00am United Remembrance Service
Reverend John Riley

11.00am Drigg Remembrance Holy
Communion
Reverend Wendy Bracegirdle

6.30pm No UES

Wednesday 15 November

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

Sunday 19 November

10.00am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle and Reverend
Wendy Bracegirdle

6.30pm United Evening Service
Methodist led
Alec Bounds

Wednesday 22 November

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle

Sunday 26 November

9.00am Anglican Said Communion
Reverend Lesley Riley

10.00am Methodist Morning Prayer
David Andrews

11.00am Drigg Family Service
Reverend Jonathan Falkner and Sheila Falkner

6.30pm United Evening Service
Anglican led
Reverend John Riley and Reverend Lesley Riley

Wednesday 29 November

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

Sunday services in December are at Seascale Methodist Church. Wednesday morning Holy Communion is at St Cuthbert's Church.

Sunday 3 December

10.00am Anglican Holy Communion
Reverend Lesley Riley

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Wendy Bracegirdle

6.30pm United Evening Service
Choral Evensong for Advent
Amethyst Green Singers
Brian Pateman

Wednesday 6 December

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle

Sunday 10 December

8.45am Holy Communion
Reverend John Riley

10.00am Methodist Holy Communion
Reverend Wendy Kilworth-Mason

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Gill Hart

6.30pm United Evening Service
Anglican led
Peter Holburt

Wednesday 13 December

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend John Riley

Sunday 17 December

10.00am Holy Communion
Reverend Lesley Riley

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle and Reverend
Wendy Bracegirdle

3.00pm Village Carol Service
At St Joseph's Church

Sunday 17 December cont.

6.30pm No UES

Wednesday 20 December

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

Sunday 24 December

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Gill Hart

4.00pm Crib Service
At St Cuthbert's Church

6.30pm No UES

23.30pm Midnight Communion
at St Cuthbert's Church
Reverend John Riley

Monday 25 December

10.00am United Methodist Service
Reverend Wendy Kilworth-Mason

11.00am Drigg Family Christmas
Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle
and Reverend Wendy Bracegirdle
Reverend Jonathan Falkner
and Sheila Falkner

Wednesday 27 December

10.30am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

Sunday 31 December

10.00am Holy Communion
Reverend Jonathan Falkner

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion
Reverend Robert Bracegirdle

Pattern of Services for January (no further details available)

Sunday services in January are at Seascale Methodist Church.

Wednesday morning Holy Communion is at St Cuthbert's Church.

Sunday 7 January

10.00am Anglican Holy Communion

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion

6.30pm United Evening Service
Methodist led

Wednesday 10 January

10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 14 January

10.00am Methodist Service

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion

6.30pm United Evening Service
Anglican led

Wednesday 17 January

10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 21 January

10.00am Anglican Holy Communion

11.00am Drigg Holy Communion

6.30pm United Evening Service
Methodist led

Wednesday 24 January

10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 28 January

8.45am Said Holy Communion

10.00am Methodist Service

11.00am Drigg Family Service

6.30pm United Evening Service
Anglican led

Wednesday 31 January

10.30am Holy Communion

Epiphany

The Feast of Epiphany is commemorated by the Church on 6 January, the twelfth day of Christmas. It celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, as recounted in Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 2:1–12).

To the early church the three Magi visiting the infant Christ were foreigners, and their "otherness" drew attention to the concept which recurs frequently in the New Testament of Christ always being open to outsiders. In early representations the visitors are shown wearing clothing which distinguishes them from natives of the Roman Empire.

In the carving from the third century shown below they wear trousers and overtunics, which to the Romans marked them as barbarians, and their Phrygian caps show they were of eastern origin. This is the earliest known image of Epiphany; it comes from the Catacomb of Priscilla, on the Via Salaria, Rome.



After the time of Augustine the Magi had become more stylised, and were often given the names by which we know them today. They were seen as philosophers, possibly Chaldean, influential and respected in their native land; the richness of their clothing reflected their newly assumed status. By the twelfth century the Magi had become known as kings and were frequently shown wearing crowns and robes, riding horses rather than camels. Although deeply reverential towards the Child and

his Mother they were no longer humble outsiders. They were sometimes portrayed as representing the three ages human life or the three races of humankind, engendered by Noah's three sons.

Carvings from the first half of the twelfth century by the sculptor Gislebertus in the cathedral of St Lazare in Autun, Burgundy, show the kings worshiping Christ and his Mother, and then being warned in a dream by an angel not to return to Herod.



The three kings, the Magi, subject of numerous carols, thousands of Christmas cards and of TS Eliot's great poem, should be remembered as representing all the peoples of the wider world to whom Christ would become the Saviour.

