



# Epiphany Carol Service

Sunday  
4th January 2026  
6.00pm



---

[www.allsaintskingston.co.uk](http://www.allsaintskingston.co.uk)



Welcome to this service, which reflects on the Visit of the Magi and the gifts that they offer. We are invited to offer the equivalent of gold, frankincense and myrrh – our wealth, our prayers and our compassion.

There will be a collection taken during the second hymn so that this can be offered in the presentation of our gifts, representing our gold.

Please help us by placing any cash donation in a Gift Aid envelope, which enables us to claim the tax back from HMRC.

If you prefer to donate by card, you can use the card readers that will circulate during the hymn or the donation points near the doors on the way out.

You can still use the Gift Aid envelopes if giving in this way, simply write the amount on the envelope and add 'card reader'. You can also give from your phone, using the QR code.



## Introit

*Please remain seated while the Choir sings the Introit.*

Reges Tharsis et insulæ munera offerent;  
reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent.

*The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents:  
the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts.*

*Words: Responsory for Epiphany (Psalm 71: 10).  
Music: John Sheppard (c.1515–1558).*

## Hymn

**As with gladness men of old  
Did the guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright;  
So, most gracious God, may we  
Evermore be led to thee.**

**As with joyful steps they sped,  
To that lowly manger-bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
Him whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek thy mercy-seat.**

**As they offered gifts most rare  
At that manger rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee our heavenly King.**

**Holy Jesu, every day,  
Keep us in the narrow way,  
And, when earthly things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds thy glory hide.**

**In the heavenly country bright  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
Thou its sun which goes not down;  
There for ever may we sing  
Alleluias to our King.**

*Words: W Chatterton Dix (1837-1898).*

*Tune: 'Dix' by Conrad Kocher (1786-1872).*

## Bidding Prayer

*Please remain standing for the Bidding Prayer.*

In the name of Christ, who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, to be a kingdom of priests to our God, we welcome you. Grace to you and peace.

As we rejoice in the Word made flesh, who comes among us to reveal God's glory, so we pray that his kingly reign may be acknowledged throughout the world.

And so we pray for the unity and mission of Christ's Church, for the ministers of the gospel of Christ, and for all for whom we bear witness.

We pray for this world, which is already Christ's, that we may have reverence for the natural order and respect for every person, made in the image and likeness of God.

And we pray for those who stand in need, for the lonely, the fearful, the anxious, for the unemployed and those for whom the future holds dread, for the sick and the bereaved, and all who have no one to pray for them.

May God our Father take us and use us in his service; may he open our eyes to see his glory, and equip us to bless his people, now and at all times.

**All      Amen.**

And so we say together the prayer Jesus himself taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

The Almighty God bless us with his grace, Christ give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all.

## Choir

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,  
His hair was like a light.  
(O weary, weary were the world,  
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,  
His hair was like a star.  
(O stern and cunning are the kings,  
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,  
His hair was like a fire.  
(O weary, weary is the world,  
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,  
His hair was like a crown.  
And all the flowers looked up at him,  
And all the stars looked down.

*Words: G K Chesterton (1874–1936).*

*Music: Kenneth Leighton (1929–1988), from 'The World's Desire.'*

## Reading – Gold

*Read by Richard Hawkins.*

A certain ruler asked him, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honour your father and mother."' He replied, 'I have kept all these since my youth.'

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, 'There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich. Jesus looked at him and said, 'How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.'

Those who heard it said, 'Then who can be saved?'

He replied, 'What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.' Then Peter said, 'Look, we have left our homes and followed you.'

And he said to them, 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.'

*(Luke 18: 18–30)*

## Choir

Here is the little door, lift up the latch, oh lift!  
We need not wander more but enter with our gift;  
Our gift of finest gold,  
Gold that was never bought nor sold;  
Myrrh to be strewn about his bed;  
Incense in clouds about his head;  
All for the Child who stirs not in his sleep.  
But holy slumber holds with ass and sheep.

Bend low about his bed, for each he has a gift;  
See how his eyes awake, lift up your hands, oh lift!  
For gold, he gives a keen-edged sword  
(Defend with it thy little Lord!),  
For incense, smoke of battle red.  
Myrrh for the honoured happy dead;  
Gifts for his children terrible and sweet,  
Touched by such tiny hands and  
Oh such tiny feet.

*Words: Frances Chesterton (1869–1938).*

*Music: Herbert Howells (1892–1983).*

## Hymn

*During this hymn our collection will be taken, so that this can be offered in the presentation of our gifts, representing our gold.*

**Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
Great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free;  
To take away transgression,  
And rule in equity.**

He comes, with succour speedy,  
To those who suffer wrong;  
To help the poor and needy,  
And bid the weak be strong;  
To give them songs for sighing,  
Their darkness turn to light,  
Whose souls, condemned and dying,  
Were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers  
Upon the fruitful earth;  
And love, joy, hope, like flowers,  
Spring in his path to birth:  
Before him, on the mountains  
Shall peace the herald go;  
And righteousness in fountains  
From hill to valley flow.

Kings shall fall down before him,  
And gold and incense bring;  
All nations shall adore him,  
His praise all people sing;  
To him shall prayer unceasing  
And daily vows ascend;  
His kingdom still increasing,  
A kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,  
He on his throne shall rest;  
From age to age more glorious,  
All-blessing and all-blest.  
The tide of time shall never  
His covenant remove;  
His name shall stand for ever;  
That name to us is love.

*Words: James Montgomery (1771–1854), based on Psalm 72.  
Tune: 'Crüger', adapted by W H Monk (1823–1889),  
from a chorale by Johann Crüger (1598–1662).*

# Reading – Frankincense

*Read by Charlie Thompson.*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

*(Philippians 4: 4-9)*

## Choir

When Jesus, our Lord, was born in Bethlehem,  
in the land of Judea:

Behold, from the east to the city of Jerusalem  
there came wise men, and said:

'Say, where is he born, the King of Judea?  
For we have seen his star, and are come to adore him.'

There shall a star from Jacob come forth,  
and a sceptre from Israel rise up.  
And dash in pieces princes and nations.

How bright the star of morning gleams,  
So Jesus sheddeth glorious beams  
of light and consolation.

Thy word, O Lord,  
radiance darting, truth imparting,  
gives salvation.  
Thine be praise and adoration.

*Words: Matthew 2: 1-2, Numbers 24: 17, Psalm 2: 9.  
Chorale 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern',  
by Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608).  
from 'Christus', by Felix Mendelssohn (1809 -1847).*

## Hymn

**Bethlehem, of noblest cities  
None can once with thee compare;  
Thou alone the Lord from heaven  
Didst for us incarnate bear.**

**Fairer than the sun at morning  
Was the star that told his birth;  
To the lands their God announcing,  
Seen in fleshly form on earth.**

**By its lambent beauty guided  
See the eastern kings appear;  
See them bend, their gifts to offer,  
Gifts of incense, gold and myrrh.**

**Solemn things of mystic meaning:  
Incense doth the God disclose,  
Gold a royal child proclaimeth,  
Myrrh a future tomb foreshows.**

**Holy Jesus, in thy brightness  
To the Gentile world displayed,  
With the Father and the Spirit  
Endless praise to thee be paid.**

*Words: Prudentius (348–410), translated Edward Caswall (1814–1878).*

*Tune: 'Stuttgart', by Christian Friedrich Witt (1660–1717).*

## Reading – Myrrh

*Read by Rowan Ratcliff.*

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.)

Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

*(John 12: 1-8)*

## Choir

"When He is King we will give him the Kings' gifts,  
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,  
Beautiful robes," said the young girl to Joseph,  
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight,  
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,  
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music  
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When he is King they will clothe him in grave-sheets,  
Myrrh for embalming and wood for a crown,  
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary  
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here he has peace and a short while for dreaming,  
Close-huddled oxen to keep him from cold,  
Mary for love, and for lullaby music  
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

*Words: Bruce Blunt (1899-1957).  
Music: Peter Warlock (1894-1930).*

# Hymn

*During the hymn, the procession of gifts to the altar will begin.*

**O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;  
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness.  
Kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!**

**Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,  
High on his heart he will bear it for thee,  
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,  
Guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.**

**Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness  
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:  
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,  
These are the offerings to lay on his shrine.**

**These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,  
He will accept for the name that is dear;  
Mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,  
Trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.**

**O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;  
With gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,  
Kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!**

*Words: John Monsell (1811–1875).*

*Tune: 'Was lebet', melody from the Rheinhardt MS (1754).*

# Reading

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

*(Matthew 2: 1-12)*

## Choir

O balow, balow la lay, O balow, balow la lay,  
The first king was very young,  
With doleful ballads on his tongue.  
He came bearing a branch of myrrh  
Than which no gall is bitterer,  
Gifts for a baby King, O.

O balow, balow la lay.  
The second king was a man in prime,  
The solemn priest of a solemn time,  
With eyes downcast and rev'rent feet  
He brought his incense sad and sweet,  
Gifts for a baby King, O.

O balow, balow la lay.  
The third king was very old,  
Both his hands were full of gold.  
Many a gaud and a glittering toy  
Baubles brave for a baby boy.  
O balow, balow la lay, O balow, balow la lay,  
Gifts for a baby King, O.

*Words: Dorothy L Sayers (1893–1957).  
Music: Jonathan Dove (b.1959).*

*At the offering of gold:*

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
As gold in the furnace is tried and purified seven times in the  
fire, so purify our hearts and minds that we may be a royal  
priesthood acceptable in the service of your kingdom.

**All Blessed be God for ever!**

*At the offering of the incense:*

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
As our prayer rises up in your presence as incense, so may we  
be presented before you with penitent hearts and uplifted  
hands to offer ourselves in your priestly service.

**All Blessed be God for ever!**

*At the offering of the myrrh:*

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe:  
to you be praise and glory for ever!  
As you give medicine to heal our sickness and the leaves of  
the tree of life for the healing of the nations, so anoint us with  
your healing power that we may be the first-fruits of your new  
creation.

**All Blessed be God for ever!**

## Responsory

Behold the Lord, the ruler is come:  
in his hands are the Kingdom, dominion and power.  
Give the King thy judgments, O God:  
and thy righteousness unto the King's Son.  
All they from Saba have come:  
They have brought gold and incense,  
and have shown forth the praises of the Lord.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son:  
and to the Holy Ghost.  
Behold the Lord, the ruler is come:  
in his hands are the Kingdom, dominion and power.

*Matin Respond for the Epiphany,  
adapted from a Magnificat by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594).*

## Collect for the Epiphany

*Please stand for the Collect.*

O God, who by the leading of a star  
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:  
mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith,  
may at last behold your glory face to face;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All Amen.**

# Hymn

**Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.**

**Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;  
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.**

**Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
Odours of Edom, and offerings divine,  
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?**

**Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would his favour secure:  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.**

**Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.**

*Words: Reginald Heber (1783–1826).*

*Tune: 'Epiphany', by Joseph Thrupp (1827–1867).*

## Blessing

May God the Father, who led the wise men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, lead you in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.

**All Amen.**

May God who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, give us a place with the saints in light in the kingdom of his beloved Son.

**All Amen.**

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shine in your hearts and fill your lives with his joy and peace.

**All Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

## Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ. Amen.**

*The Choir processes to the Vestry.*

**The Congregation is invited to move to the East End  
for refreshments.**



## Organ Voluntary

J S Bach – Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543