

## The Epiphany - 6<sup>th</sup> January

**Epiphany**, also known as **Theophany** in Eastern Christian traditions, is a Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ.

In Western Christianity, the feast commemorates principally (but not solely) the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus Christ's physical manifestation to the Gentiles. It is sometimes called **Three Kings' Day**, and in some traditions celebrated as Little Christmas. Moreover, the feast of the Epiphany may also initiate the liturgical season of Epiphanytide.

Eastern Christians, on the other hand, commemorate the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, seen as his manifestation to the world as the Son of God. The spot marked by Al-Maghtas in Jordan, adjacent to Qasr al-Yahud in the West Bank, is considered to be the original site of the baptism of Jesus and the ministry of John the Baptist.

The traditional date for the feast is January 6. However, since 1970, the celebration is held in some countries on the Sunday after January 1. In many Western Churches, the eve of the feast is celebrated as Twelfth Night (Epiphany Eve). The Monday after Epiphany is known as Plough Monday.



*Adoration of the Magi - Edward Burne-Jones*

## St Cross Newsletter January 2023



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### *The Vicar writes...*

It has been a busy Christmas period and I am so grateful for the ministerial support that has been available to me during this time, and from other church members helping in countless ways: I could not have managed without you! There has been a sudden influx of funerals, and combined with two school concerts, an outreach carol service at The Welcome, and the logistics of the variety of Christmas Services, for me it all added up to a juxtaposed feeling of great joy and tiredness by Christmas Day lunchtime.

The Christmas Lessons and Carols Service was very well attended by just over fifty people, which, considering the frozen state of the footpaths and side roads, and the football World Cup final taking place, was a truly remarkable turnout. The Christingle, which was our first one indoors since December 2019, was well supported. We had no idea what sort of response we would have but after many prayers and lots of preparation the fifty oranges all went. It's always a moving moment when the lights are dimmed, and the carol 'Away in a Manger' is sung. We raised a total of around £295 for The Children's Society.

The biggest challenge for us at this time, is that many of our own regulars are away visiting their own families, so staffing the services is a challenge. But on the flip side, we had so many visitors to all our Christmas services. It's just a pity that for some of our visitors that

doesn't translate into a more substantial connection through the year, either here or elsewhere. Another aspect of the support I mentioned is that from December 18<sup>th</sup> through to January 1<sup>st</sup> we had five different organists / pianists to support all our major services. How blessed we are!

So, we move into 2023 with challenges ahead, and placing all our cares and concerns, both for ourselves and the work of the Church, in God's hands. As Peter wrote, 'Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you' (1 Peter 5.7). In January we have the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and we are invited to Knutsford Methodist Church on the 19<sup>th</sup> and then we reciprocate for our normal Wednesday Eucharist on the 25<sup>th</sup> when we celebrate the Conversion of St. Paul. He was undoubtedly a great advocate of bringing people together and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. That is our mission too, and the best advert for Christ is to let people experience him through the way we live and work together in his name.

Yours, in Christ  
*Paul*

*The moment in the Christingle Service when 'Away in a Manger' is sung. The beautiful Christmas Tree looked truly magnificent this year, as did the floral displays.*



### Occasional Offices

#### Funerals

**22 December** Kenneth Jackson  
**30 December** Mary Kennerley



Readings for Services - Sundays and Wednesdays		
	Morning Services	
<b>Sunday 1 January</b> <b>Christmas 2</b> <b>Naming of Jesus</b>	Isaiah 63.7-9 Hebrews 2.10-end Matthew 2.13-end	
<b>4 January</b> <b>Wednesday</b>	Psalms 98.1,8-end 1 John 3.7-10 John 1.35-42	
<b>Sunday 8 January</b> <b>Epiphany</b>	Isaiah 60.1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12	
<b>11 January</b> <b>Wednesday</b>	Psalms 105.1-9 Hebrews 2.14-end Mark 1.29-39	
<b>Sunday 15 January</b> <b>Epiphany 2</b>	Isaiah 49.1-7 1 Corinthians 1.1-9 John 1.29-42	
<b>18 January</b> <b>Wednesday</b>	Psalms 100.1-4 Hebrews 7.1-3,15-17 Mark 3.1-6	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. No service at St Cross</i>
<b>22 January</b> <b>Epiphany 3</b>	Isaiah 9.1-4 1 Corinthians 1.10-18 Matthew 4.12-23	
<b>25 January</b> <b>Conversion of Paul</b>	Jeremiah 1.4-10 Galatians 1.11-16a or Acts 9.1-22 Matthew 19.27-end	<i>Combined service with KMC at St Cross</i>
<b>29 January</b> <b>Epiphany 4</b> <b>Candlemas</b>	Malachi 3.1-5 Hebrews 2.14-end Luke 2.22-40	

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