



# The Parish of Darfield

All Saints Darfield and St Michael Great Houghton

## Sunday 4th January 2026

**9:00 a.m. Morning Worship** Great Houghton

**10:45 a.m. Morning Worship** Darfield

## Sunday 11th January 2026

**10:45 a.m. Holy Communion** Darfield

### Christmas roundup

A big **thankyou** to all who contributed in any way to our Christmas services across both Churches. The cleaners who made the churches ready. Flower arrangers and tree decorators. The candle teams who set out, lit and put out the candles, and removed the remains. The service leaders, readers and prayer leaders. Sidesmen and torch bearers, refreshment and mulled wine preparers and servers, mince pie suppliers and eaters. Those who dressed up as Mary, Joseph, shepherds, kings and angels for our Crib Service and Nativity but not forgetting the polar bear and giraffe! The organists and pianists and the Dearne Valley Singers.

A congregation of over fifty supported the Carol Service at Great Houghton with the Great Houghton Youth Group Nativity and over 180 attended Carols by Candlelight. The offering at Carols by Candlelight was **£370.22** which has been split equally with the Dearne Valley Singers and All Saints. The Dearne Valley Singers portion, **£185.11** has gone to Barnsley Youth Jazz Association who are supported by and receive donations and fees raised by the Singers.

### Epiphany

*As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold ...*

1859; William Chatterton Dix 1837-1898, MP 39

The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on 6th January, just twelve days after Christmas. It traditionally ends the Christmas celebrations and is the day by which Christmas decorations are meant to be removed. The name derives from the Greek word *epipháneia* meaning manifestation or appearance. It is generally linked to the record, in Matthew's Gospel, of the visit of the Wise Men to worship the new King of the Jews. Otherwise called Magi or Kings, these visitors are thought to be Zoroastrian Priests from the region around modern-day Iran. They were well known for their studies of astronomy, astrology, alchemy and other types of esoteric knowledge. They would have had access to the various Jewish scriptures and through their studies would have found the many references to a Messiah who would come to save Israel. The appearance of a new object on their star maps was enough to prompt them that Isaiah's prophesy "For unto us a Child is born..." [Isaiah 9: 6] had been fulfilled. We do not know how many of them set off on their journey to Jerusalem to worship the new King of the Jews but tradition has it that there were three to line up with the three gifts.

After following the star to Jerusalem, they arrived at the Court of King Herod with the question "where is He that is born King of the Jews" [Matthew 2:2] Herod's advisors point them towards Bethlehem [Matthew 2: 5; Micah 5: 2]. The star leads them on to a house in Bethlehem where they find Jesus and present their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These symbolize the roles of Jesus as King (gold), Priest (frankincense), and Sacrificial Saviour (myrrh), foreshadowing his life, deity, and death. The Wise Men left without returning to Herod who became very angry and ordered his guards to kill all young boys in Bethlehem who were two years old and under. Joseph had been warned in a dream to flee to Egypt with Mary and Jesus to escape this massacre. [Matthew 2: 13-18]. The family stayed in Egypt until King Herod died and an angel told Joseph in a dream to return to the land of Israel. They actually were guided in another dream to return to Nazareth to be out of the reach of Herod's son, Herod Archelaus.

