

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST WEST BYFLEET

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4th January 2026

Welcome to our services!

Welcome everyone to St John's Church, West Byfleet for our services this Sunday. Please join us after the service for refreshments and please do make yourselves known to the ministers or churchwardens. If you would like to receive regular copies of this notice sheet, please send your email address to Vicky in the Parish Office – admin@stjohnswestbyfleet.org.uk

All children are very welcome at St John's – and please don't worry if they are restless, or sometimes noisy. The Children's Corner is situated at the front of the church on the left; you are most welcome to spend time there during the service. Toilets and changing facilities can be found in our adjacent Cornerstone Centre.

Would you like someone to pray with you?

A member of the Pastoral Team will be available to pray with you after the 10am service each Sunday. If you would like to take this opportunity, please make your way to the Prayer Corner at the end of the service and one of us will be waiting for you. The Minister leading the service on the day may also be available.

Large print versions of the Notices Sheet and of the Order of Service are available from the welcomers

Please make use of our hearing loop system if this would be helpful to you



Today's readings are **Ephesians 3:1-12** and **Matthew 2:1-12**

Keith writes....

Who were the Magi? And what are we to make of their role in the Christmas story? The consensus view is that they were probably from Persia, were men of learning and, likely, Zoroastrians – an ancient faith which posits an eternal battle between the forces of good and evil. Learning was a rich man's activity in those days, so we may assume they were also wealthy, perhaps from important Persian families. Their historical and astrological studies give rise to the conviction that a star would show them the birthplace of a new king of the Jews. (Astrology was then, and for many centuries after, seen as a normal part of the intellectual landscape.)

In the Gospels the Magi represent two things. The first is human wisdom and learning. The Magi show us the world of human philosophy and study recognising and worshipping Christ. It emphasises the unique and definitive nature of the revelation in Christ. The second is that it shows us Gentiles, non-Jews, being part of the Christmas story and prefigures the widespread acceptance of Christ beyond Israel which was to come. In fact, in the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, it is the Magi who recognise the nature and destiny of Christ, both his death and his kingship.

I cannot help but wonder what the Magi made of what they found after reflecting on it afterwards? Was it a kind of end for them and their philosophy (as T.S. Eliot suggests in his poem *The Journey of the Magi*)? Or was it the start of something new and hopeful? In a way they are us, the Gentile Christians they foreshadowed. For us it is hope, light, possibility.

Epiphany Carol Service

This year we are again holding an Epiphany Carol Service in which we will remember the coming of the Magi to Bethlehem. It will include readings, choir carols and congregational carols. Sunday 11 January 6.30pm. All welcome.

This Week's Prayer List

For the sick:

Joyce Ebbage, Mark Asplin, Lionel Griffiths, Roy Metcalfe, Ollie, Rose & Marie Crocket, Hannah, Pauline Kennedy, Sarah Helmy, Chrissie Beddows, Lilian Rance, Davida & Angus Whimster, Gareth, Amanda & Jasper, Margaret Blamey, John Blamey, Graham Smith and Caroline Hill

Remembering the departed:

Please send any new prayer requests or updates to admin@stjohnswestbyfleet.org.uk

Parish Office

For all general (non-urgent) enquiries, please contact the Parish Office by emailing admin@stjohnswestbyfleet.org.uk, or phone 01932 342263 (leave a message if the office is closed). The Parish Office opening hours are usually: Mon 12pm – 3pm, Wed 12pm – 3pm, Fri 12pm – 3pm.

All Saints' New Haw Weekly Newsletter

To view of a copy of the latest church family newsletter please visit
<https://www.allsaints-newhaw.org/news>

Save your Stamps

We are collecting! If you receive stamped cards and letters through the post this festive period (and throughout the year), could you save the stamps and bring them into church?

We will recycle them into much-needed funds for Kidney Care UK, who support kidney patients and their families. Thank you. The box is located in church by the Cornerstone exit door.

Noticeboard

Please include these events in your daily prayers. All are welcome to Morning Prayer as well as to Parish Eucharist.

Saturday 3rd January

10:00am Church open

Sunday 4th January

8.00am Parish Eucharist

10:00am Parish Eucharist for Epiphany followed by refreshments

Monday 5th January

9.30am Morning prayer

10:00am Church open

Tuesday 6th January

10:00am Church open

6:15pm Junior Choir Practice

Wednesday 7th January

10:00am Parish Eucharist

11:00am Church open

8:15pm Choir Practice

Thursday 8th January

10:00am Church open

Friday 9th January

10:00am Church open

Saturday 10th January

10:00am Church Open

Sunday 11th January

8.00am Parish Eucharist

10.00am Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments

6:30pm Epiphany Carol Service

Advance Dates

Sunday 1st February

Candlemas Evensong at 6:30pm

Clergy Contact Details

Our Vicar is Revd Keith Elford. He is also Vicar of All Saints, New Haw. Keith may be contacted at vicarwestbyfleetandnewhaw@gmail.com (note the new email address). His normal day off is Friday. For urgent enquiries outside of these times, contact our Churchwarden: **Neil Hatton** – 07593 372931. For prayer requests, please contact **Geoff Jones** - 01932 851830.