



A Service for Epiphany 3rd January 2021

*A film of the service will be on our website so we can join together
www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk*

Light a candle or simply have a quiet moment to prepare....take time to breath, aware of the life within you, aware of God who made you – receive from the stillness.....

Greeting

The Lord be with us, and, also with all of creation.
Amen.

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, nothing is hidden from you:
We open our hearts to the cleansing
and inspiration of your Holy Spirit.
May we worship you alone our one true Lord and king.
Amen.



Confession

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son Jesus Christ.
The Word made flesh, incarnate amongst us.

In a moment's silence,
let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to love God and to live in peace with all.

We pray in silence.....

Absolution

Almighty God, thank you for forgiving us,
strengthen us with your goodness,
and keep us throughout eternity;
in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Hymn O, Worship the Lord in The Beauty of Holiness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v76NLI-eXhU>



The Collect

The Gospel

For Collect and Readings please see separate sheets

Reflection

As we come to the celebration of Epiphany we traditionally recall the visit by the 'Wise Men' or Magi (*from which we get the word magic!*) or 'Three Kings,' all coming to bow down and worship the Christ King. These 'kings' bring gifts and can serve as a reminder to us of the One 'true' King who alone deserves our worship, and brings us the greatest gift of all – forgiveness, salvation and eternal life!

I enjoyed a couple of books through Advent, one of which was 'Wild Advent' by Rachel Summers. In the book Rachel draws attention to the Christmas Carol – 'The Holly and the Ivy' – and how the Carol says that 'out of all the trees in the wood, the holly bears the crown.' The holly is a hardy tree, which is evergreen and will spring us and grow in all sorts of wastelands. 'The holly bears the berry as red as any blood' – so the Carol goes; a splash of bright colour on a winter's day that can remind us, as we celebrate the birth of Christ, of the sacrifice to come.

Rachel writes: "In the traditional mythology of these islands, the year was divided up between two woodland kings – King Oak, and King Holly. King Holly rules the year between midsummer and midwinter, so around Advent time King Holly is in his final days. You'd assume, wouldn't you, that it's Holly taking precedence around Christmas. But actually it's King Oak, bursting through triumphantly with his promise of new life to come in the darkness of winter."

The holly may bear the crown of berries in winter but it is the mighty oak who brings us the hope of new life – the hope of emerging from the darkness. The oak who becomes home to so many creatures – providing sustenance and shelter, becomes the one who reminds us of the mighty God we worship and the One to whom all must come and bow down in worship. These three who came to visit and worship the Christ child were so filled with joy when the star hovered over the place where the child lay – they entered and presented their gifts.

May we present our gift of worship to the One who sustains and shelters us, our Lord in whom our hope is found. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession: (From Psalm 72)

Give your love of justice, O God, to all leaders and decision makers.

Let the poor always be treated fairly.

May your mountains yield prosperity for all, and the hills be fruitful.

Loving God, defend the poor, rescue the children of the needy,

and may we all worship only you, as long as the sun shines,

and the moon remains in the sky.

Continue in silence allowing the Lord to prompt you.....

Further Subjects for Personal Prayer:

For an increased care of all creation – creatures and the environment.

Our local community – including Keston school, businesses and homes.

Those who are struggling in body, mind or spirit.

The speedy roll out of the vaccine and an end to the pandemic.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.



Hymn As With Gladness Men of Old

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sp52sx2_GYs

Blessing

May the God of all grace and mercy bring us healing and hope.
And the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be with us and those we love now and always.
Amen.



The Holly and The Ivy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7eHtDtZ7hs>