

The Church of England is joining in worship with Christians in the Holy Land for a celebration of Epiphany in collaboration with Embrace the Middle East, a charity working in the region.

The service will include prayers from Bethlehem and the Lord's Prayer in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. It will also bring together a parish in Birmingham; singing from King's College, London, and Christian leaders from the Diocese of Jerusalem.

It premieres on the Church of England [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) accounts at 9am on Sunday January 3rd.



Epiphany is a time when Christians celebrate that God is incarnate as man in Jesus Christ. It is also when the Church remembers the infant Jesus.

The sermon, delivered from the "land where it all happened," is from the Coadjutor Bishop of Jerusalem, the Rt Rev Hosam Naoum.

"Epiphany, or Theophany, is the feast where we celebrate the events where Heaven and Earth were united," he will say.

"The text assigned for the Feast of Epiphany is very rich with imagery and symbolism, naming a few, the star from East, the presents the Magi brought with them, gold, incense and myrrh, and also a handful of kings.

"These symbols are important descriptions to the very meaning of the birth narratives and the meaning of God's incarnation in the life of the people whom God has visited and manifested God himself.

"We have to be led by the star of our faith and diligently make manifest the one true God, to all people."

Bishop Hosam will also encourage worshipers to pray for the "Little Town of Bethlehem" and for peace in the region.

The service will be led by the Rev Debbie Collins, vicar of Holy Cross Billesley Common in Birmingham and a clergy ambassador for Embrace the Middle East.

It will also feature Fr Boulos Khano, who is a Syriac priest and lives in St Mark's Monastery in Jerusalem, who will chant the gospel reading and the Lord's Prayer in Aramaic.

Prayer of intercession will be led by a parishioner in a Bethlehem garden underneath an olive tree.

He will call for the Holy Spirit to "empower us... to bring in your kingdom of mercy, justice, love, and peace."

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