



January can seem a bleak month, devoid of the colour, decorations and jollity of December (and with bank balances often feeling the pinch.) But it continues to be a season of joy and celebration in church. The season of Epiphany reminds us that Jesus came not simply to be king of the Jews, but as Saviour of the world. It begins with Epiphany itself, when we find the wise men from far off lands are drawn by the star, and by their searching of the scriptures, to the Christ child in Bethlehem. It ends with celebrating another biblical scene, that of Mary and Joseph bringing the baby Jesus to the temple to present him to the Lord and make the appropriate sacrifices. It is whilst the Holy Family are in the Temple that two aged saints, Simeon and Anna, are inspired to recognise Jesus as the long-awaited saviour. And Simeon utters the words immortalised in the service of Evensong 'A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.' Jesus came not just for the devoutly holy and watchful, like Simeon and Anna, but for you and for me, wherever we are and whatever our circumstances.

Next time you're in All Saints' Church why not look at the window portraying this scene – you'll find it set in the left hand wall. It portrays the intense focus of the old man on the baby Jesus, as he holds him in his hands. Simeon is now content to die in peace, having not just seen but held the Saviour. As you journey into the rest of 2019, with all its uncertainties, why not do so in the company of Jesus Christ, and find in him light and peace and the hope of glory?

May God bless you and yours throughout this new year,

Toby

Altham and All Saints' Carol Services.

We can't bring you a taste of the wonderful music from the Carol Services. But we can show you what it looked like...

