

# Holsworthy Benefice

## December and January News Sheet

Bridgerule, Hollacombe, Holsworthy, Pyworthy with Pancrasweek

[www.holsworthybenefice.org.uk](http://www.holsworthybenefice.org.uk)

	<b>Bridgerule</b>	<b>Hollacombe</b>	<b>Holsworthy</b>	<b>Pancrasweek</b>	<b>Pyworthy</b>
<b>7th Dec</b>	11am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Mass	9.30am Sung Eucharist 6pm Town Carol Service		4pm Christingle
<b>14th Dec</b>	11am Morning Prayer	3pm Christingle	11am Tree Festival Memorial Service		9.30am Sung Eucharist
<b>16th Dec</b>	6pm Bridgerule School Christingle				
<b>21st Dec</b>	(11am Joint Service at Methodist Chapel) 6.30pm Carol Service at the Church	9.30am Mass	11am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Crib Service	3pm Carol & Crib Service
<b>24th Dec</b>	3pm Crib Service	11.30pm Midnight Mass	4pm Family Nativity 11pm Midnight Mass		8pm Christmas Eve Mass
<b>25th Dec</b>	10am Eucharist	10am Christmas Day Mass			
<b>27th Dec</b>		2.30pm Carol Service			
<b>28<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	10am Eucharist at Holsworthy				9.30am Morning Prayer

	<b>Bridgerule</b>	<b>Hollacombe</b>	<b>Holsworthy</b>	<b>Pancrasweek</b>	<b>Pyworthy</b>
<b>4th Jan</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b>	<b>9.30am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Family Service</b>
<b>11th Jan</b>	<b>11am Morning Prayer</b>	<b>3pm Evensong</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Sung Eucharist</b>
<b>18th Jan</b>	<b>11am Joint Service at Methodist Chapel</b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Celtic Eucharist</b>
<b>25th Jan</b>	<b>11am All Age Eucharist</b>		<b>11am Cafe style Church</b>	<b>2.30pm All Age Plough Service</b>	<b>9.30am Morning Prayer</b>
<b>1st Feb</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b>	<b>9.30am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Family Service</b>
<b>8th Feb</b>	<b>11am Morning Prayer</b>	<b>3pm Evensong</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Sung Eucharist</b>
<b>15th Feb</b>	<b>11am Joint Service at Methodist Chapel</b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b>	<b>11am Sung Eucharist</b>		<b>9.30am Sung Eucharist</b>
<b>18th Feb</b>		<b>12 noon Service of Ashing</b>	<b>7.30pm Service of Ashing</b>		
<b>22nd Feb</b>	<b>11am All Age Eucharist</b>		<b>11am Cafe style Church</b>	<b>9.30am All Age Service</b>	<b>9.30am Morning Prayer</b>

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our double newsletter for the months of December and January combined. In it we celebrate two New Years: that of the Church Year at the beginning of Advent; and that of our Calendar New Year in January.

Advent is a time of spiritual preparation to welcome Jesus into our hearts. It is also a practical preparation for our Christmas festivities. Biblically, Advent is a sign of God doing a 'new thing', as the prophet Isaiah predicted:

*See, I am doing a new thing!*

*Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?*

*I am making a way in the wilderness*

*and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43.19)*

God's 'new thing' with the birth of Jesus was to create a new way to reveal himself to people; to start afresh with humankind by inviting us to join his family; to anoint Jesus to become the one who shows us the way to God, by being born among us.

The New Year is equally seen as a fresh start. We think of it as a time of re-setting our values or putting behind us the struggles of the old year. It holds a special significance in that, with a new date, we have new hope. We can renew our lives.

It is not easy though. Think of all those quickly forgotten New Year resolutions. How do we find the strength and hope to keep up a resolution? For me, the solution is found in my Advent preparation. As I seek and wait on Christ during Advent, I am strengthened in my spirit and I learn better what it means to have *God with us* (*Emmanuel*) as our guide, support, encourager and hope. We need that presence of Jesus with us each and every day. And I hope you find his presence during this season.

I pray that you have a blessed Christmas and a hope-filled New Year.

Yours in Christ,  
Alison

## Notices & Special Services

### Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November

2pm at Bridgerule Church - A talk on the Impact of a changing climate on historic buildings.

Join us on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2pm at St Bridget's Church, Bridgerule for a fascinating talk by conservation architect Jeremy Chadburn on the impact of a changing climate on historic buildings.

Jeremy has over 35 years experience working with historic buildings across the country, recently specialising in work on Churches and ancient manor houses.

He's been the architect on our recent tower restoration project at Bridgerule.

He'll be talking about the challenges posed by increased rainfall, extreme temperatures and more frequent storms on our historic built environment; and what measures we can take to address this impact.

This talk is part of the "Saving St Bridget's" project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

### Advent Sunday - 30<sup>th</sup> November

10am Joint Eucharist at Pyworthy with guest speaker Nikki Sweatman

3pm Advent Carols at Hollacombe with light refreshments.

### Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December

All day Bridgerule Chapel Christmas Tree Festival

Evening Holsworthy Christmas Lights Switch-on in the Square

### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December

4pm Pyworthy Christingle

6pm Holsworthy Town Carol Service with the Town Band

### Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> Bridgerule

1.30pm Infant Nativity Service

### Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Holsworthy

12noon-6pm Christmas Tree Festival

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Livestock Market

7.30pm Christmas Carol Service followed by refreshments

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> Bridgerule

6pm School Christingle

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> Holsworthy

9.15am & 2pm Primary School Christingle and Christmas services

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>

3pm Pyworthy Crib Service with Readings and Carols

6.30pm Bridgerule united Carol Service

Christmas Eve

3pm Bridgerule Crib Service

4pm Holsworthy Family Nativity

8pm Pyworthy Christmas Eve Mass

11pm Holsworthy Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10am Hollacombe Christmas Day Mass

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>

2.30pm Hollacombe Carol Service

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>

9.30am Pyworthy Christmas Morning Prayer

10am Holsworthy Christmas Eucharist

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January

7-9pm Safeguarding Training at the Rectory - Awareness of Domestic Abuse.  
This course is recommended for all PCC members and any others who hold a role in the church. For those who prefer the course can be accessed on-line at the Church of England Safeguarding Portal.



# Christmas Fair

The Fair will be opened by the  
Town Cryer and will be held  
on:

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
in:

Pyworthy Village Hall,  
11.00am until 3.00pm.

There will be lots of crafts, books, cakes, grand raffle,  
chocolate tombola, face painting, plus lots, lots more.

Refreshments will be available.

Come along and start your Christmas shopping.

**PLEASE PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY!**

**I will be looking for:**

- Books,
- Raffle prizes and
- Chocolate for the tombola, also
- Cakes for the cake stall.

For further information contact:

Janet Grant on:

01409 259356.

Thank you for your support.

*Merry  
Christmas*







# **CLIMATE TALK**

at

## **Bridgerule Church**

**SATURDAY 29<sup>TH</sup>  
NOVEMBER 2 PM**

**A FASCINATING TALK ABOUT THE  
IMPACT OF A CHANGING CLIMATE  
ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

**With conservation architect Jeremy Chadburn**

**BA(Hons), Dip Arch, ARB, RIBA MSc in Conservation(Bath)  
AABC**







# Christmas Tree Festival

*St Peter & St Paul's Church  
Holsworthy*

WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER  
12.00 NOON- 6.00PM

THURSDAY 11TH DECEMBER  
12.00 NOON- 6.00PM

FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER  
12.00 NOON - 6.00PM

SATURDAY 13TH DECEMBER  
10.00AM - 6.00PM

SUNDAY 14TH DECEMBER  
12.00 NOON - 4.00PM

## Free Entry

Refreshments, Raffle,  
Chocolate Tombola,  
Children's Craft Table,  
Vote For Your Favourite Tree





**KIVELLS**

and the  
**Holsworthy  
Market Chaplaincy Team**  
Present:



**FOLLOWING  
THE  
WISE  
MEN**



**A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION**

at **Holsworthy Livestock Market**  
on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025** at **7:30 pm**

with a **miscellany of readings, carols  
and food for thought**  
music by **Northlew Silver Band**

and light refreshments at the end

**A plea from the Rector of Bradworthy Benefice. If your church has a vacancy for a deanery representative, please read on....**

### **Why Deanery Synod Matters and Why We Need You**

**Every parish in the Holsworthy Deanery has a seat at Deanery Synod. When those seats are empty, our voice is missing. When they're filled, the deanery becomes stronger, wiser, and more connected.**

**The Church of England is synodical, decisions flow from parishes to deaneries, from deaneries to dioceses, from dioceses to General Synod. Deanery Synod is the crucial link in that chain. It elects people to Diocesan Synod, feeds parish concerns into wider discussions, and helps shape the future of the Church. Without representatives, a parish simply isn't heard.**

**But Synod is more than legal structure. At its best, it is:**

- +A prayerful gathering of Christians across our villages.**
- +A place to share joys, struggles, and ideas.**
- +A way to support one another in rural ministry.**
- +A space where we discern together what God might be calling us to do.**
- +A reminder that we are part of something bigger than our own parish.**

**You don't need expertise.**

**You don't need to know Church law.**

**You just need a love for your parish, a willingness to listen, and a desire to help shape the future of the Church in our area.**

**Serving on Synod is a small commitment that makes a big difference.**

**Your parish deserves a voice.**

**Your deanery needs your perspective.**

**And together, we can strengthen the mission and life of the Church across Holsworthy Deanery.**

**Would you consider representing your parish?**

# Readings for December and January

## **7<sup>th</sup> Dec-Purple Second Sunday of Advent –**

Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 72: 1- 7. 18-19, Romans 15: 4-13, Gospel Matthew 3: 1-12

## **14<sup>th</sup> Dec-Purple Third Sunday of Advent –**

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146: 4-10. 18-19, Luke 1:46b-55, James 5:7-10 , Gospel Matthew 11: 2-11

## **21<sup>st</sup> Dec-Purple Forth Sunday of Advent –**

Isaiah 7:10--16, Psalm 80: 1-8. 18-20, Romans 1: 1-7, Gospel Matthew 1: 18-end

## **25<sup>th</sup> Dec-White Christmas Day –**

Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrews 1: 1-4 (5-12) , Gospel John 1: 1-14

## **28<sup>th</sup> Dec-Red The Holy Innocents –**

Jeremiah 31: 15-17, Psalm 124, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, Gospel Matthew 2: 13-18,

## **4<sup>th</sup> Jan- White Epiphany -**

Isaiah 60.1-6; Psalm 72; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

## **11<sup>th</sup> Jan- White Baptism of Christ -**

Isaiah 42.1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10.34-43; Matthew 3.13-end

## **18<sup>th</sup> Jan- White Epiphany 2 -**

Isaiah 49.1-7; Psalm 40.1-12; 1 Corinthians 1.1-9; John 1.29-42

## **25<sup>th</sup> Jan- White Conversion of Paul -**

Jeremiah 1.4-10; Psalm 67; Acts 9.1-22; Matthew 19.27-end

## Contacts

Bridgerule Church Wardens



## COLLECT

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

## PSALM Psalm 72:1-7. 18-19

**R** *The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice.*

Give the king your judgements, O God, and your righteousness to the son of a king.

Then shall he judge your people righteously and your poor with justice. **R**

May the mountains bring forth peace, and the little hills righteousness for the people. May he defend the poor among the people, deliver the children of the needy and crush the oppressor. **R**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another. May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, like the showers that water the earth. In his time shall righteousness flourish, and abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more. **R**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wonderful things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever. May all the earth be filled with his glory. Amen. Amen. **R**

## SECOND READING Romans 15:4-13

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.*

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy

and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## GOSPEL Matthew 3:1-12

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptise you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

## POST COMMUNION

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Lord is king; let the earth - re-joice.



### COLLECT

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
who at your first coming sent your  
messenger  
to prepare your way before you:  
grant that the ministers and stewards of  
your mysteries  
may likewise so prepare and make ready  
your way  
by turning the hearts of the disobedient  
to the wisdom of the just,  
that at your second coming to judge the  
world  
we may be found an acceptable people  
in your sight;  
for you are alive and reign with the  
Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-10

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### PSALM OR CANTICLE

Either **Psalm 146:4-10**

**R** *The Lord shall reign for ever.*

Happy are those who have the God of Jacob for their help,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God;  
Who made heaven and earth,  
the sea and all that is in them;  
who keeps his promise for ever;  
Who gives justice to those that suffer wrong  
and bread to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord looses those that are bound;  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;  
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;  
the Lord loves the righteous; **R**

The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow;  
but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever,  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.  
Alleluia. **R**

### Or Luke 1:46b-55 (Magnificat)

**R** *My soul doth magnify the Lord.*

My soul doth magnify the Lord  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold, from henceforth  
all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me  
and holy is his Name. **R**

And his mercy is on them that fear him  
throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm  
he hath scattered the proud in the  
imagination of their hearts. **R**

He hath put down the mighty from their seat  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich he hath sent empty away. **R**

He remembering his mercy hath holpen  
his servant Israel  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed for ever. **R**



### SECOND READING James 5:7-10

*A reading from the letter of James.*

Be patient, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

### GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

### POST COMMUNION

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these  
heavenly gifts;  
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit  
that when your Christ comes again  
we may shine as lights before his face;  
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.



The Lord shall reign for ever.



## COLLECT

God our redeemer,  
who prepared the Blessed Virgin  
Mary  
to be the mother of your Son:  
grant that, as she looked for his  
coming as our saviour,  
so we may be ready to greet him  
when he comes again as our judge;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10-16

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,  
"Ask a sign of the LORD your  
God; let it be deep as Sheol or  
high as heaven." But Ahaz said,  
"I will not ask, and I will not put  
the LORD to the test." Then  
Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house  
of David! Is it too little for you  
to weary mortals, that you weary  
my God also? Therefore the Lord  
himself will give you a sign. Look,  
the young woman is with child and  
shall bear a son, and shall name  
him Immanuel. He shall eat curds  
and honey by the time he knows  
how to refuse the evil and choose  
the good. For before the child  
knows how to refuse the evil and  
choose the good, the land before  
whose two kings you are in dread  
will be deserted."

## PSALM Psalm 80:1-8. 18-20

[80:1-8]

**R** Turn us again, O God; show the  
light of your countenance,  
and we shall be saved.

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you that led Joseph like a flock;  
Shine forth, you that are  
enthroned upon the cherubim,  
before Ephraim, Benjamin and  
Manasseh.

Stir up your mighty strength  
and come to our salvation. **R**

O Lord God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry at your  
people's prayer?  
You feed them with the bread of  
tears;  
you give them abundance of tears  
to drink.  
You have made us the derision of  
our neighbours  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn. **R**

Let your hand be upon the man at  
your right hand,  
the son of man you made so  
strong for yourself.  
And so will we not go back from  
you;  
give us life, and we shall call upon  
your name. **R**

## SECOND READING Romans 1:1-7

*A reading from the letter of Paul  
to the Romans.*

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ,  
called to be an apostle, set apart  
for the gospel of God, which he  
promised beforehand through his  
prophets in the holy scriptures,  
the gospel concerning his Son,  
who was descended from David  
according to the flesh and was  
declared to be Son of God with  
power according to the spirit  
of holiness by resurrection from  
the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Through Christ we have received  
grace and apostleship to bring  
about the obedience of faith  
among all the Gentiles for the sake  
of his name, including yourselves  
who are called to belong to Jesus  
Christ, To all God's beloved in  
Rome, who are called to be saints:  
Grace to you and peace from God  
our Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ.

## GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-end

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus  
Christ according to Matthew.*

The birth of Jesus the Messiah  
took place in this way. When his  
mother Mary had been engaged  
to Joseph, but before they lived  
together, she was found to be  
with child from the Holy Spirit. Her  
husband Joseph, being a righteous  
man and unwilling to expose her  
to public disgrace, planned to  
dismiss her quietly. But just when  
he had resolved to do this, an  
angel of the Lord appeared to  
him in a dream and said, "Joseph,  
son of David, do not be afraid to  
take Mary as your wife, for the  
child conceived in her is from the  
Holy Spirit. She will bear a son,  
and you are to name him Jesus,  
for he will save his people from  
their sins." All this took place to  
fulfil what had been spoken by the  
Lord through the prophet: "Look,  
the virgin shall conceive and bear  
a son, and they shall name him  
Emmanuel," which means, "God  
is with us." When Joseph awoke  
from sleep, he did as the angel of  
the Lord commanded him; he took  
her as his wife, but had no marital  
relations with her until she had  
borne a son; and he named him  
Jesus.

## POST COMMUNION

Heavenly Father,  
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the mother of the promised  
saviour:  
fill us your servants with your  
grace,  
that in all things we may embrace  
your holy will  
and with her rejoice in your  
salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.





# Christmas Day

Thursday 25 December 2025

## COLLECT

Almighty God,  
you have given us your only-begotten  
Son  
to take our nature upon him  
and as at this time to be born of a pure  
virgin:  
grant that we, who have been born  
again  
and made your children by adoption  
and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING Isaiah 52:7-10

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who  
announces peace, who brings good  
news, who announces salvation, who  
says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen!  
Your sentinels lift up their voices,  
together they sing for joy; for in plain  
sight they see the return of the LORD to  
Zion. Break forth together into singing,  
you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has  
comforted his people, he has redeemed  
Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy  
arm before the eyes of all the nations;  
and all the ends of the earth shall see the  
salvation of our God.

## PSALM Psalm 98

**R** Sing to the Lord a new song, for  
he has done marvellous things.

Sing to the Lord a new song,  
for he has done marvellous things.  
His own right hand and his holy arm  
have won for him the victory. **R**

The Lord has made known his salvation;  
his deliverance has he openly shown in  
the sight of the nations.  
He has remembered his mercy and  
faithfulness towards the house of  
Israel,  
and all the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God. **R**

Sound praises to the Lord, all the earth  
break into singing and make music.  
Make the music to the Lord with the  
lyre,  
with the lyre and the voice of melody.  
With trumpets and the sound of the  
horn  
sound praises before the Lord, the  
King. **R**

Let the sea thunder and all that fills it,  
the world and all that dwell upon it.  
Let the rivers clap their hands  
and let the hills ring out together before  
the Lord, for he comes to judge the  
earth.  
In righteousness shall he judge the  
world,  
and the peoples with equity. **R**

## SECOND READING

**Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]**

*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.*

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors  
in many and various ways by the  
prophets, but in these last days he  
has spoken to us by a Son, whom he  
appointed heir of all things, through  
whom he also created the worlds. He  
is the reflection of God's glory and the  
exact imprint of God's very being, and  
he sustains all things by his powerful  
word. When he had made purification  
for sins, he sat down at the right hand  
of the Majesty on high, having become  
as much superior to angels as the name  
he has inherited is more excellent than  
theirs. [For to which of the angels did  
God ever say, "You are my Son; today  
I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will  
be his Father, and he will be my Son"?  
And again, when he brings the firstborn  
into the world, he says, "Let all God's  
angels worship him." Of the angels he  
says, "He makes his angels winds, and  
his servants flames of fire." But of the  
Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is  
for ever and ever, and the righteous  
sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.  
You have loved righteousness and  
hated wickedness; therefore God, your  
God, has anointed you with the oil of

gladness beyond your companions."  
And, "In the beginning, Lord, you  
founded the earth, and the heavens are  
the work of your hands; they will perish,  
but you remain; they will all wear out  
like clothing; like a cloak you will roll  
them up, and like clothing they will be  
changed. But you are the same, and  
your years will never end."]

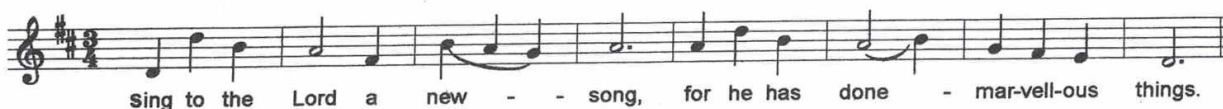
## GOSPEL John 1:1-14

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.*

In the beginning was the Word, and  
the Word was with God, and the Word  
was God. He was in the beginning  
with God. All things came into being  
through him, and without him not one  
thing came into being. What has come  
into being in him was life, and the life  
was the light of all people. The light  
shines in the darkness, and the darkness  
did not overcome it. There was a man  
sent from God, whose name was John.  
He came as a witness to testify to the  
light, so that all might believe through  
him. He himself was not the light, but  
he came to testify to the light. The true  
light, which enlightens everyone, was  
coming into the world. He was in the  
world, and the world came into being  
through him; yet the world did not know  
him. He came to what was his own, and  
his own people did not accept him. But  
to all who received him, who believed  
in his name, he gave power to become  
children of God, who were born, not of  
blood or of the will of the flesh or of the  
will of man but of God. And the Word  
became flesh and lived among us, and  
we have seen his glory, the glory as of a  
father's only son, full of grace and truth.

## POST COMMUNION

God our Father,  
whose Word has come among us  
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:  
may the light of faith illumine our hearts  
and shine in our words and deeds;  
through him who is Christ the Lord.





### COLLECT

Heavenly Father,  
whose children suffered at the  
hands of Herod,  
though they had done no wrong:  
by the suffering of your Son  
and by the innocence of our lives  
frustrate all evil designs  
and establish your reign of  
justice and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son  
our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### FIRST READING

**Jeremiah 31:15-17**

*A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.*

Thus says the LORD: A voice  
is heard in Ramah, lamentation  
and bitter weeping. Rachel is  
weeping for her children; she  
refuses to be comforted for her  
children, because they are no  
more. Thus says the LORD: Keep  
your voice from weeping, and  
your eyes from tears; for there is  
a reward for your work, says the  
LORD: they shall come back from  
the land of the enemy; there is  
hope for your future, says the  
LORD: your children shall come  
back to their own country.

### PSALM Psalm 124

**R** *Our help is in the name of  
the Lord.*

If the Lord himself had not been  
on our side,  
now may Israel say;  
If the Lord had not been on our  
side,  
when enemies rose up against  
us; **R**

Then would they have swallowed  
us alive

when their anger burned against  
us;  
Then would the waters have  
overwhelmed us  
and the torrent gone over our  
soul;  
over our soul would have swept  
the raging waters. **R**

But blessed be the Lord  
who has not given us over to be  
a prey for their teeth.  
Our soul has escaped  
as a bird from the snare of the  
fowler;  
the snare is broken and we are  
delivered. **R**

Our help is in the name of the  
Lord,  
who has made heaven and  
earth. **R**

### SECOND READING

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29**

*A reading from the first letter of  
Paul to the Corinthians.*

Consider your own call, brothers  
and sisters: not many of you  
were wise by human standards,  
not many were powerful, not  
many were of noble birth. But  
God chose what is foolish in the  
world to shame the wise; God  
chose what is weak in the world  
to shame the strong; God chose  
what is low and despised in the  
world, things that are not, to  
reduce to nothing things that  
are, so that no one might boast  
in the presence of God.

### GOSPEL Matthew 2:13-18

*Hear the gospel of our Lord  
Jesus Christ according to  
Matthew.*

After the wise men had left, an  
angel of the Lord appeared to  
Joseph in a dream and said,

"Get up, take the child and his  
mother, and flee to Egypt, and  
remain there until I tell you; for  
Herod is about to search for  
the child, to destroy him." Then  
Joseph got up, took the child  
and his mother by night, and  
went to Egypt, and remained  
there until the death of Herod.  
This was to fulfil what had been  
spoken by the Lord through the  
prophet, "Out of Egypt I have  
called my son". When Herod saw  
that he had been tricked by the  
wise men, he was infuriated, and  
he sent and killed all the children  
in and around Bethlehem who  
were two years old or under,  
according to the time that he  
had learned from the wise men.  
Then was fulfilled what had been  
spoken through the prophet  
Jeremiah: "A voice was heard  
in Ramah, wailing and loud  
lamentation, Rachel weeping for  
her children; she refused to be  
consoled, because they are no  
more."

### POST COMMUNION

Lord Jesus Christ,  
in your humility you have  
stooped to share our human  
life  
with the most defenceless of  
your children:  
may we who have received these  
gifts of your passion  
rejoice in celebrating the witness  
of the holy innocents  
to the purity of your sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross;  
for you are alive and reign, now  
and for ever.





### COLLECT

O God,  
who by the leading of a star  
manifested your only Son to the peoples  
of the earth:  
mercifully grant that we,  
who know you now by faith,  
may at last behold your glory face to face;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### FIRST READING Isaiah 60:1-6

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

### PSALM Psalm 72:[1-9] 10-15

**R** *The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice.*

Give the king your judgements, O God, and your righteousness to the son of a king.

Then shall he judge your people righteously  
and your poor with justice. **R**

May the mountains bring forth peace, and the little hills righteousness for the people.

May he defend the poor among the people,  
deliver the children of the needy and crush the oppressor. **R**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
from one generation to another.  
May he come down like rain upon the mown grass,

like the showers that water the earth.  
In his time shall righteousness flourish,  
and abundance of peace  
till the moon shall be no more. **R**

May his dominion extend from sea to sea  
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

May his foes kneel before him  
and his enemies lick the dust. **R**

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute;  
the kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring gifts.

All kings shall fall down before him;  
all nations shall do him service. **R**

For he shall deliver the poor that cry out,  
the needy and those who have no helper.  
He shall have pity on the weak and poor;  
he shall preserve the lives of the needy. **R**

He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,  
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.  
Long may he live;  
unto him may be given gold from Sheba;  
may prayer be made for him continually  
and may they bless him all the day long. **R**

### SECOND READING Ephesians 3:1-12

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.*

I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly

places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

### GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### POST COMMUNION

Lord God,  
the bright splendour whom the  
nations seek:  
may we who with the wise men  
have been drawn by your light  
discern the glory of your presence in  
your Son,  
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our  
Lord.



The Lord is king; let the earth - re-joice.



# Sunday 11 January 2026 Baptism of Christ

## COLLECT

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by  
water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as  
your adopted children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING Isaiah 42:1-9

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

Thus says the LORD: Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

## PSALM Psalm 29

**R** The Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name;  
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters. **R**

The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation;  
the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young wild ox. **R**

The voice of the Lord splits the flash of lightning; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;  
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare;

in his temple all cry, "Glory!" **R**

The Lord sits enthroned above the water flood;  
the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.

The Lord shall give strength to his people;  
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace. **R**

## SECOND READING Acts 10:34-43

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.*

Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius. "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We

are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

## GOSPEL Matthew 3:13-end

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptised by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptised, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

## POST COMMUNION

Lord of all time and eternity,  
you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father  
in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:  
by the power of your Spirit  
complete the heavenly work of our rebirth  
through the waters of the new creation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.





# Sunday

18 January 2026 Second Sunday of Epiphany

## COLLECT

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
transform the poverty of our nature by the  
riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING Isaiah 49:1-7

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention,  
you peoples from far away! The LORD  
called me before I was born, while I was  
in my mother's womb he named me. He  
made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the  
shadow of his hand he hid me; he made  
me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid  
me away. And he said to me, "You are my  
servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."  
But I said, "I have laboured in vain, I have  
spent my strength for nothing and vanity;  
yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and  
my reward with my God." And now the  
LORD says, who formed me in the womb  
to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to  
him, and that Israel might be gathered  
to him, for I am honoured in the sight of  
the LORD, and my God has become my  
strength. The LORD says, "It is too light  
a thing that you should be my servant to  
raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore  
the survivors of Israel; I will give you as  
a light to the nations, that my salvation  
may reach to the end of the earth."  
Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of  
Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply  
despised, abhorred by the nations, the  
slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand  
up, princes, and they shall prostrate  
themselves, because of the LORD, who is  
faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has  
chosen you."

## PSALM Psalm 40:1-12

**R** *Great are the wonders you have done,  
O Lord my God.*

I waited patiently for the Lord;  
he inclined to me and heard my cry.  
He brought me out of the roaring pit,  
out of the mire and clay;  
he set my feet upon a rock and made my  
footing sure. **R**

He has put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God;  
many shall see and fear  
and put their trust in the Lord.  
Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,  
who does not turn to the proud that follow  
a lie. **R**

Great are the wonders you have done,  
O Lord my God.  
How great your designs for us!  
There is none that can be compared with  
you.

If I were to proclaim them and tell of them  
they would be more than I am able to  
express. **R**

Sacrifice and offering you do not desire  
but my ears you have opened;  
Burnt offering and sacrifice for sin you  
have not required,  
then said I: "Lo, I come. **R**

"In the scroll of the book it is written of  
me that I should do your will, O my God;  
I delight to do it: your law is within my  
heart."

I have declared your righteousness in the  
great congregation;  
behold, I did not restrain my lips;  
and that, O Lord, you know. **R**

Your righteousness I have not hidden in  
my heart; I have spoken of your  
faithfulness and your salvation;  
I have not concealed your loving-kindness  
and truth from the great congregation.  
Do not withhold your compassion from  
me, O Lord;  
let your love and your faithfulness always  
preserve me. **R**

## SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

*A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.*

From Paul, called to be an apostle of  
Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our  
brother Sosthenes, To the church of  
God that is in Corinth, to those who are  
sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be  
saints, together with all those who in every  
place call on the name of our Lord Jesus  
Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to  
you and peace from God our Father and  
the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my  
God always for you because of the grace  
of God that has been given you in Christ  
Jesus, for in every way you have been  
enriched in him, in speech and knowledge  
of every kind – just as the testimony of  
Christ has been strengthened among  
you – so that you are not lacking in any  
spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing  
of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also

strengthen you to the end, so that you  
may be blameless on the day of our Lord  
Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you  
were called into the fellowship of his Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

## GOSPEL John 1:29-42

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.*

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming  
towards him and declared, "Here is the  
Lamb of God who takes away the sin of  
the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After  
me comes a man who ranks ahead of me  
because he was before me.' I myself did  
not know him; but I came baptising with  
water for this reason, that he might be  
revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I  
saw the Spirit descending from heaven  
like a dove, and it remained on him. I  
myself did not know him, but the one who  
sent me to baptise with water said to me,  
'He on whom you see the Spirit descend  
and remain is the one who baptises with  
the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen  
and have testified that this is the Son  
of God." The next day John again was  
standing with two of his disciples, and as  
he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed,  
"Look, here is the Lamb of God!" The  
two disciples heard him say this, and they  
followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and  
saw them following, he said to them,  
"What are you looking for?" They said  
to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means  
Teacher), "where are you staying?" He  
said to them, "Come and see." They came  
and saw where he was staying, and they  
remained with him that day. It was about  
four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the  
two who heard John speak and followed  
him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.  
He first found his brother Simon and said  
to him, "We have found the Messiah"  
(which is translated Anointed). He brought  
Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and  
said, "You are Simon son of John. You are  
to be called Cephas" (which is translated  
Peter).

## POST COMMUNION

God of glory,  
you nourish us with your Word  
who is the bread of life:  
fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that through us the light of your glory  
may shine in all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ  
our Lord.



Great are the won-ders you have done, O Lord my God.



### COLLECT

Almighty God,  
who caused the light of the gospel  
to shine throughout the world  
through the preaching of your servant  
Saint Paul:  
grant that we who celebrate his wonderful  
conversion  
may follow him in bearing witness to your  
truth;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### FIRST READING

Either **Jeremiah 1:4-10**

*A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.*

The word of the LORD came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you, Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD." Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Or **Acts 9:1-22**

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.*

Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see

nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptised, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

### PSALM Psalm 67

**R** Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.

God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face to shine upon us,  
That your way may be known upon earth,  
your saving power among all nations. **R**

O let the nations rejoice and be glad,  
for you will judge the peoples righteously  
and govern the nations upon earth.  
Then shall the earth bring forth her  
increase,

and God, our own God, will bless us.  
God will bless us,  
and all the ends of the earth shall fear  
him. **R**

### SECOND READING Either Acts 9:1-22

Or **Galatians 1:11-16a**

*A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians.*

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being.

### GOSPEL Matthew 19:27-end

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.*

Peter said to Jesus: "Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

### POST COMMUNION

Almighty God,  
who on the day of Pentecost  
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles  
with the wind from heaven and in tongues  
of flame,  
filling them with joy and boldness to  
preach the gospel:  
by the power of the same Spirit  
strengthen us to witness to your truth  
and to draw everyone to the fire of your  
love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

