

ARCH Group's aim: "To show our love for God and You"

Christmas Readings 2024

Collect for Christmas Eve

Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ-child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Post Communion Prayer for Christmas Eve

Eternal God, for whom we wait, you have fed us with the bread of eternal life: keep us ever watchful, that we may be ready to stand before the Son of man, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect for Christmas Day

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth: accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you, our Saviour and our eternal God.

Post Communion Prayer for Christmas Day

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.

Next Week's Services: Sunday 29th December 2024

10.00 am

Harvington

Benefice Communion+

Happy Christmas

Christmas Eve First Reading: *Isaiah 9:2-7*

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Christmas Eve Psalm: *Psalms 96:1-13*

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his name; tell out his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the nations are but idols; it is the Lord who made the heavens.

Psalm 96:1-13 continued

- 6 Honour and majesty are before him; power and splendour are in his sanctuary.
- 7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; ascribe to the Lord honour and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name; bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him.
- 10 Tell it out among the nations that the Lord is king. He has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
- 12 Let the fields be joyful and all that is in them; let all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord.
- 13 For he comes, he comes to judge the earth; with righteousness he will judge the world and the peoples with his truth.

Christmas Eve Second Reading: *Titus 2:11-14*

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifeastation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Christmas Eve Gospel Reading (1): *Luke 2:1-14*

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Christmas Eve Gospel Reading (2): *John 1:1-16*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God.

³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. ⁴What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ') ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Christmas Day First Reading: *Isaiah 62:6-12*

Thus says the LORD: ⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest, ⁷and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. ⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have laboured; ⁹but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. ¹⁰Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. ¹¹The LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, 'See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.' ¹²They shall be called, 'The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD'; and you shall be called, 'Sought Out,

Christmas Day Psalm: *Psalms 97:1-12*

- 1 The Lord is king: let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
- 3 Fire goes before him and burns up his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightnings lit up the world; the earth saw it and trembled.

Psalm 97:1-12 continued

- 5 The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6 The heavens declared his righteousness and all the peoples have seen his glory.
- 7 Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in mere idols. Bow down before him, all you gods.
- 8 Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of your judgements, O Lord.
- 9 For you, Lord, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.
- 10 The Lord loves those who hate evil; he preserves the lives of his faithful and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
- 11 Light has sprung up for the righteous and joy for the true of heart.
- 12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous and give thanks to his holy name.

Christmas Day Second Reading: *Titus 3:4-7*

⁴When the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Christmas Day Gospel Reading: *Luke 2:8-20*

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.