

**ST LAURENCE CHURCH,  
HAWKHURST**

**MIDNIGHT MASS OF THE NATIVITY  
OF OUR LORD FOLLOWED BY THE  
BLESSING OF THE CRIB**

**CHRISTMAS EVE  
24TH DECEMBER 2023**

THE ZOOM DETAILS FOR THIS SERVICE ARE:

**Meeting ID: 457 244 0784**

**Passcode: 5i1UCa**



*Sidespeople: Ali Jones and  
Liz Hatcher*

**THE GATHERING.**

**CAROL: 19**

**ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY**

*(The congregation stands to join in the  
second verse).*

In the name of the Father, and of the  
Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**THE GREETING.**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

When God wanted to show himself as he is in a way we could understand, he became human, one of us, appearing with the face of a child. He showed himself in all our fragility, as if saying ‘Do you see now that I am near to you. That I am with you not to overpower you but with the face of peace and love and trust?’ Let us welcome with joy the Lord who comes to live among us and to join us on the journey of life. Now we can become more like God.

*(Silence is kept)*

**PRAYER OF PREPARATION.**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF PENITENCE.**

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purpose of the heart. Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

*We Sing:*

Lord, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

Christ have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you. pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*We sing:*

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS**

*Glory to God, Glory to God,  
Glory to God in the highest.*

**Glory to God in the highest**

And peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
*Glory to God, Glory to God,  
Glory to God in the highest.*

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
*Glory to God .....*

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father,  
*Glory to God .....*

**COLLECT OF THE DAY.**

Let us pray:

*(Silence is kept)*

Almighty God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the

Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Please sit*

**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD.**

*Isaiah 9:2-7 read by Liz Hatcher*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

You 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.

For 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.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For 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.

His 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.

This is the word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

**CAROL: 6**

**AWAY IN A MANGER**

**THE GOSPEL READING.**

*Luke 2:1-14*

*We sing: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

*Sing: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom

he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom  
he favours!’

This is the Gospel of the Lord,  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

*Please sit.*

**SERMON**

*We stand to say*

**THE CREED.**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, he became incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION LED BY  
THE VICAR**

*Please sit/kneel.*

On the first day of Christmas Jesus Christ, God's gift to us on that first Christmas, was born to Mary and Joseph in the poorest of circumstances. We pray for the poor of the world many of whom live in conditions far worse than the stable where Jesus began his earthly life.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the second day of Christmas the Heavenly choir of Angels appeared to the shepherds and sang to the Glory of God; so we give thanks for our church music and those who play and sing God's praises, not only with Carols, at this joyful time, but week by week in our worship together in Christian churches throughout the world.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the third day of Christmas The Shepherds returned home to spread the Good News; we pray for evangelists, preacher's and teachers who tell out the Gospel story of God's amazing gift to all humankind.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the fourth day of Christmas the Three Kings arrived in Jerusalem; we raise before God the Holy city of Jerusalem praying that it may be place of true peace, and an international centre of worship for Christians, Jews and Muslims alike.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the fifth day of Christmas the Three Kings sought news of Jesus from King Herod; we pray for rulers of the nations in our troubled world where so many leaders abuse their positions and their power.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the sixth day of Christmas, Herod ordered the "Slaughter of the Innocents"; we pray for all those who continue to be slaughtered in acts of genocide, racial cleansing and similar atrocities. We continue to pray for the sick and suffering known to us: Robbie Robinson, Eleanor Ash, David Winstone, Christian Jervis-Read, Jan Edwards, Jill Fitzpatrick, Nigel Lemon, Ray Wicks, John Tanner, Hilary Deller, Georgie Whitaker, Brian Elliott.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the seventh day of Christmas, The Kings found Jesus and presented their gifts – we give thanks for the season of giving and receiving and for the joy and happiness that it generates.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the eighth day of Christmas, Joseph and Mary took the infant Jesus to the temple to present him to the Lord and

for Him to be circumcised; we pray for all new-born children, for those being baptised and receiving their Christian names.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the ninth day of Christmas, Simeon rejoiced that he had not died before he had seen the Lord's Christ; we pray for those who are coming to the end of their lives and especially for those who have seen Jesus in their lives and lived that life accordingly.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the tenth day of Christmas, Anna, who had devoted her whole life to prayer and fasting, recognised Jesus as The Redeemer; so we pray for those who within religious communities across the world fast and pray for the world and for each of us.. In the same spirit we now pray for those who are ill or in need.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the eleventh day of Christmas, the Holy family left the shelter of the stable – we pray for all those involved in hospitality and tourism and for all people who, like the Innkeeper in Bethlehem, make their homes a place of welcome and love.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

On the Twelfth day of Christmas, the

Holy Family fled to Egypt – we pray for all those fleeing their homes in Gaza, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Iraq and those European countries which are welcoming them and giving safe refuge.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

We pray for those whose years' mind occur at this time: Michael Roger Fisher-Barham, David Colvin, Alice Mary Bennett, Diana Jones, Leslie Richardson, Hebert Fautly, Elizabeth Jones, George Longley, Millicent Butler, Lilian Guest, Sarah May Scrivener, Mark Ryan, Sylvia Doreen Gould, Audrey May Fautly, Irene Nora Reed, Charles Newcomb, Ignace Van Kan, Gerald Larkin.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Lord God you sent your angels from glory to bring to shepherds the good news of Jesus' birth. We have heard his story, the story of Your own Son. May he fill us with joy to bring this good news to others today and through the twelve days of Christmas and into the New Year beyond.

Merciful father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

**LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT.**

We stand to share:

## **THE PEACE.**

The Priest introduces the peace:

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace,

All may exchange a sign of peace.

A collection will be taken during the singing of the following carol

### **OFFERTORY CAROL: 18**

#### **ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.

Through your goodness we have this bread to offer which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed are you Lord, God of all creation.

Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

## **THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER.**

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*The Priest continues with the Eucharistic Prayer Preface and all sing:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

*Sit/kneel*

*The Priest continues, recalling and remembering with us the Last Supper*

.... and says

Great is the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died:**  
**Christ is risen:**  
**Christ will come again.**

*At the End of the next part of the  
Eucharistic Prayer we respond  
Amen  
Silence is kept*

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

With Jesus in our midst we are bold to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom  
come; thy will be done, on earth as  
it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we  
forgive those who trespass against  
us, and lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory, for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

#### **BREAKING OF THE BREAD.**

*The Priest breaks the consecrated  
bread, saying:*

We break this bread to share in the  
body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one  
body, because we all share in one  
bread.**

*We sing:*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin  
of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin  
of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin  
of the world, grant us peace.**

#### **The Prayer of Humble Access**

**We do not presume to come to this  
your table, merciful Lord, trusting  
in our own righteousness, but in  
your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy so much as to  
gather up the crumbs under your  
table. But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have  
mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious  
Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear  
Son Jesus Christ and to drink his  
blood, that our sinful bodies may be  
made clean by his body and our  
souls washed through his most  
precious blood, and that we may  
evermore dwell in him, and he in us.  
Amen.**

#### **A Prayer for those joining us on Zoom who are making their Spiritual Communion**

**My Jesus, I believe that you are  
present in the most Blessed  
Sacrament. I love You above `all  
things and I desire to receive you  
into my soul. Since I cannot now  
receive You sacramentally, come at**



**least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.**

*For a Personal Blessing and/or a Special Prayer only, please also go to the High Altar Rail.*

#### **WE SHARE IN HOLY COMMUNION.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*The Chalice Bearers are Sandra Dreyer and Alison Jones*

*If you are a communicant member of another church you are welcome to share with us in the Blessed sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If you are not, but would like to come up for a Blessing please carry this service booklet with you so that the Priest will know.*

**CAROL: 13  
SILENT NIGHT! HOLY NIGHT!**

#### **BLESSING OF THE CRIB.**

*The priest and the servers move in procession to the Crib. A prayer of blessing is said. The crib is then sprinkled with holy water. They then return to their places.*

*Please remain seated.*

#### **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER.**

Let us pray:

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. **Amen**

**Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

#### **THE DISMISSAL.**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

*The Priest pronounces a Blessing.  
We respond: **Amen***

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ, Amen.**

**CAROL: 10  
HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

Let us bless the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

May the divine assistance remain with  
us always.

**And with all our brothers and  
sisters in Christ.**

May the souls of the faithful departed  
through the mercy of God, rest in  
peace.

**And rise in glory. Amen.**

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*FAMILY COMMUNION  
FOR CHRISTMAS DAY  
10.00 AM*

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**Please do say a prayer at the Crib  
for peace and reconciliation in our  
world.**

**A Very Happy and Blessed  
Christmas to you all from Fr.  
Rodney, Sandra and all the  
members of the PCC**