

ST LAURENCE CHURCH, Hawkhurst

Midnight Mass of the Nativity of our Lord Followed by the Blessing of the Crib

**Christmas Eve
24th December 2025**

The Youtube Details for this
service are:

[https://www.youtube.com/@St
LaurenceChurchHawkhurst](https://www.youtube.com/@StLaurenceChurchHawkhurst)



Sidesperson: Diana Ringer

THE GATHERING.

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

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for His bed:

Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from
heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and meek, and
lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And our eyes at last shall see
Him,
through His own redeeming
love;
for that Child so dear and
gentle
is our Lord in heaven above,
and He leads His children on
to the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see Him, but in
heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars His children
crowned
all in white shall wait around.

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 Sandra
Dreyer

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

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down
His sweet head;
the stars in the heavens looked
down where He lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on
the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying
He makes.

I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look
down from the sky
and stay by my side until morn-
ing is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask
Thee to stay
close by me forever, and love
me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in
Thy tender care,

and fit us for heaven, to live with
Thee there.

THE GOSPEL READING.

Luke 2:1-14

*We sing: Alleluia, alleluia, al-
leluia*

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 Je-
sus 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 regis-
tered. 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.

REFLECTION

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, preachers 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: Eleanor Ash, David Winstone, John Tanner, Irene Bow, Brian Elliott, Jill Fitzpatrick,

Keith Brown, Thomas Cox, Gwen Brown, Peter Duffy, Matt, Jill, Carol, Dido Robson, Hannah, Chris Bodeen, Val, Jane and Jeremy, Val Mansell.

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, John Heady, Herbert Fautly, Matthew Liggett, Elizabeth Jones, George Longley, Millicent Butler, Lilian Guest, Sarah Scrivener, Mark Ryan, Sylvia Doreen Gould, Audrey Fautly, Irene Reed, Nancy Bennett, Mary Alice Hammonds, Charles Newcomb, Fergus Gask, Gerald Larkin, Ignace Van Kan, Barbara Kirby, Victoria Wells, Mary Kilby, John Hunt, Ida Levett, Peter Scoones, Joyce Clark, Barbara Elgar, Neville Highwood, Ronald Catt, Raymond Collins, Dennis Vinall, Derek Christie, David Hyde, Sheila Cox, Anne Maugham, Roy Cooper, Charles Henry Collingwood, Kiora Andrew Hill, Peter Penfold.

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 for the continuing work of this church-during the singing of the following carol

Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story
now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the

newborn king.

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by
night,

God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant light:

Refrain

Sages, leave your contempla-
tions,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of na-
tions;

ye have seen his natal star:

Refrain

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 be-
come 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 spir-
itual 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 sac-
rifice 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.

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.

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.

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 Stephen Ringer and Sandra Dreyer.

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 would like to come up for a Blessing please carry this service booklet with you and go to the High Altar Rail.

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!

Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven

afar,
heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!"

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from Thy holy face

with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!

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

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy
mild,

God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Christ, by highest heaven
adored,

Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead
see;

hail the Incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel. ***Refrain***

Hail the heaven-born Prince of
Peace!

Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

Refrain

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God

May the divine assistance re-
main with us always.

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

May the souls of the faithful de-
parted through the mercy of
God, rest in peace.

And rise in glory. Amen.

Please do say a prayer at the
Crib for peace and reconcilia-
tion in our world.

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

**Family Communion at 10a.m
on Christmas morning.**