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# CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY COLLECTS AND READINGS

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## **25<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Day**

9:30am	Harvington	Christmas Communion
11:00am	Church Lench	Christmas Communion

## **This Weeks Services: Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December**

10:00am	Harvington	Benefice Communion
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Please don't forget to donate to 'Helping Hands' trust.  
This charity provides care packages and services to individuals facing  
homelessness and hardship in the Worcestershire area.

WITH FLUE CASES CURRENTLY RISING, WE WOULD LIKE TO REMIND  
PARISHIONERS THAT IT IS PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE TO RECEIVE  
COMMUNION IN ONE KIND ONLY (THE BREAD) IF YOU PREFER NOT TO  
RECEIVE FROM THE CHALICE DURING THIS PERIOD.

## Christmas Eve

Collect : Eternal God, who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth, to see the radiance of 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.

Post Communion: God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts. To him be glory both now and for ever.

### Christmas Eve Prayers of Intersession

As we rejoice at the birth of Jesus, our Saviour, we turn with confidence to God our Father praying that the peace and light which Christ brings will be welcomed into the world: For the Church, that the people of God will always be a light to the world for those who live in darkness.

#### **Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer**

For peace on earth, that the peace which Christ offers will be a reality for all peoples. For all who are welcoming a new child into their family, that they may receive this gift of new life with joy and be blessed with patience, health and strength.

#### **Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer**

For our own parish community, that our celebration of the birth of our Saviour will make us more aware of our unity in Jesus Christ. For the lonely, the bereaved, the sick, and all those who are suffering in any way, remembering especially the victims of war and terrorism, that the light of Christ will shine on them.

## **Lord in your mercy, Hear our Prayer**

God our Father, on this holy night you give us your Son, the Lord of the Universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. On this holy night draw us into the mystery of your love that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in the splendour of eternal light, God for ever and ever.

**Amen**

*First Reading: Samuel 2, 7.1-5, 8-11, 16.*

<sup>7</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.'

<sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in?

<sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that

Continued First Reading: Samuel 2, 7.1-5, 8-11, 16.

I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

Psalm: Psalm 89.2, 21-27,

I declare that your steadfast love is established for ever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

<sup>21</sup> my hand shall always remain with him;  
my arm also shall strengthen him.

<sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him, the wicked shall not humble him.

<sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.

<sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;  
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.

<sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

<sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, "You are my Father,  
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!"

<sup>27</sup> I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

Second Reading: Acts 13.16-26,

<sup>16</sup> So Paul stood up and with a gesture began to speak:

'You Israelites and others who fear God, listen. <sup>17</sup> The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. <sup>18</sup> For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. <sup>19</sup> After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance <sup>20</sup> for about four hundred and fifty years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel. <sup>21</sup> Then they asked for a king; and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe

of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years.<sup>22</sup> When he had removed him, he made David their king. In his testimony about him he said, “I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes.”<sup>23</sup> Of this man’s posterity God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised;<sup>24</sup> before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.<sup>25</sup> And as John was finishing his work, he said, “What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals on his feet.”

<sup>26</sup> ‘My brothers, you descendants of Abraham’s family, and others who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

*Gospel Reading: Luke 1.67-79.*

<sup>67</sup> Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

<sup>68</sup> ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.<sup>69</sup> He has raised up a mighty saviour for us in the house of his servant David,<sup>70</sup> as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,<sup>71</sup> that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

<sup>72</sup> Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant,<sup>73</sup> the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us<sup>74</sup> that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear,<sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.<sup>76</sup> And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

<sup>77</sup> to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.<sup>78</sup> By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break

Continued Gospel Reading: Luke 1.67-79.

upon us,<sup>79</sup> to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

## Christmas Day

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.

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.

## Christmas Day Prayers of Intersessions

Holy Jesus, by being born one of us, and lying humbly in a manger, you show how much God loves the world. Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts, until we reach our home in heaven, and see you on your throne of glory.

**Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

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.

**Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

Loving Jesus, you were born in a stable but worshipped by the angels.

Be with all who are lonely, and with all who feel distant from celebrations. Be for us a living hope that lightens their hearts. Jesus, as you healed the sick, bring healing to those in our families who are ill today. **Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

Christ born for us, Son of God, given for us, help us to know you, to worship and to serve you. The kings, Lord, brought myrrh, frankincense, and gold. Lord, we have nothing of our own to bring; we bring you what you have given: our lives for your life. Jesus, Saviour, son of Mary, you know us and love us, you share our lives and hear our prayer. **Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.**

First Reading: Isaiah 52. 7-10

<sup>7</sup> 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.'

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> 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

O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvellous things.  
His right hand and his holy arm have gained him victory.

2 The LORD has made known his victory;  
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody.

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who live in it.

8 Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy

9 at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Second Reading: Hebrews 1.1-12

<sup>1</sup> Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

<sup>5</sup> 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'? <sup>6</sup> And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.' <sup>7</sup> Of the angels he says,



‘He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.’

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.’

<sup>10</sup> And, ‘In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; <sup>12</sup> 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 Reading: John 1.1-14

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

<sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> 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.