

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, [the maker of
heaven and earth].*

If the Lord had not been on our
side,
let Israel now say;
If the Lord had not been on our
side,

when enemies rose up against
us; **R**

Then would they have
swallowed us up alive
in their fierce anger towards us;
Then would the waters have
overwhelmed us
and the torrent gone over us. **R**

Then would the raging waters
have gone right over us.
Blessèd be the Lord!
he has not given us over to be
a prey for their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowler;
the snare is broken and we
have escaped. **R**

[Our help is in the name of the
Lord,
the maker of 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.

December 28th 2025 – CHRISTMAS 1 (Holy Innocents)

Parish of the Harwich Peninsula

May we wish all who are reading this a very blessed entry into 2026

Christmas Trees: the trees in each of our church buildings have been generously supplied by Harwich Independent Funeral Services and we are very appreciative of their annual gift.

Homeless: a sheet with information on the parish agreed response to homeless people on our grounds is now available and is commended by the Archdeacon of Colchester. It was written by the Rector.

St Nicholas roof and chairs: we have discovered that the hopper heads may be full of debris and rain is not discharging as it should; this could damage the building. The diocese sent a drone to fly and investigate free of charge. We are seeking a contractor to deal with the issue. You will notice a difference in the sanctuary as the blue chairs move out, and the area is reclaimed as a sacred space not a furniture store.

All Saints drainage and clock: an examination was undertaken on Monday 1st. The situation is more serious and may require sections of the churchyard to be dug up to clear the drainage pipes. After months of waiting one of the conservation societies has asked for more detail about the clock restoration. We are supplying that as quickly as possible to get a date early in 2026 for the work to start.

Peninsula Post 5: is out now and covers the end and start of 2025/2026. We welcome your own contributions for the next editions. The next edition is on its way and being written now! Contributions to it are welcome.

Epiphany: will have a service on Tuesday 6th January at All Saints at 7pm to mark Epiphany. This is the feast celebrating the unveiling or the revelation of God to the Gentiles (us) represented by the Magi.

Future dates – 2026: for those who like to plan ahead; Tuesday 6th January 7pm an Epiphany service in All Saints; Sunday 25th January at 5pm a service for Churches Together in Harwich at the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in All Saints (please feel free to use Kingsway Church Car Park). The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on Wednesday May 13th at which meeting we elect the new PCC and Wardens for the year ahead and the Deanery Synod representatives for a three-year term.

School Assemblies and Residential Care Home Services: please remember that as the new school term begins on the 5th January. Ian will be weekly at St Michael's school each Monday morning and All Saints school each Friday morning. Each first Tuesday of the month there is a service at Don Thomson home at 11am and each second Monday at Lime Court home also at 11am. Support at these residential homes is welcome; please be ready to go in just before 11am.

Prayer as we move into 2026: *Leading Your Church Into Growth (a card with this on is available)*

God of mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to give – Vision to our planning, Wisdom to our actions, Joy to our worship,
and Power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Baptised in December: None **Married in December:** None

Departed in November/December: Shirley Warner; Philip (Pip) Cone; Scott Robbie Aiken; Stephanie (Steph) Kirk; Robert Vaughan Wilson (Vaughan); Peter Weir; **Jennie (Babs) Talbot** – her funeral is on Friday 2nd January at 2.45pm at Weeley Crematorium. We may be able to help with transport on request

St Michael's worship 9am each Sunday (Communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays)

All Saints worship 10.30am each Sunday (Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays)

St Nicholas worship 10.30am each Sunday (Communion on the 2nd and 4th Sundays)

You should be able to access the hearing loop in each building – please let us know if you cannot

1st Sunday of every month: Prayer Book Evensong at St Nicholas at 5pm

2nd Sunday of the month: Pop Up church at St Michael's at 3pm

3rd Sunday of every month: Prayer and Praise at St Michael's at 5pm

4th Saturday of every month (except August and December): Messy Church in the Esplanade Hall from 2-4pm. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information please visit our social media:

www.harwichparish.co.uk or www.achurchnearyou.com or our Facebook pages.

<https://www.facebook.com/> Harwich Peninsula Parish CoFE. All Saints, St Michaels & St Nicholas or Messy Church at the Esplanade Hall