



St Mary the Virgin & All Saints Potters Bar

28th December 2025

The Feast of the Holy Innocents

A warm welcome to St Mary's.

If this is your first time here, we hope you feel at home with us.

Refreshments are served after the Parish Eucharist in the hall..

Please do join us.

TODAY'S SERVICES

8.00am **HOLY COMMUNION**

10.00am **PARISH EUCHARIST**

Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 31 vv 15-17 *A voice in Ramah – Rachel weeping for her children.*

New Testament Reading: 1 Corinthians 1 vv 26-29 *God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; and what is weak to shame the strong.*

Gospel: Matthew 2 vv 13-18 *The flight to Egypt and the massacre of the innocents.*

Hymns: 21, 39, 32, 28, 26 (omit verse 4)

The Week Ahead

There will be just one service this week – Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament on **Wednesday** at 9.30am.

The usual pattern of midweek services will resume on **Tuesday 6th January**

Tuesday 10.30am – 12 noon Church open for visitors

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Saturday 8.30am Churches Together Prayers at St John's Methodist Church, followed by refreshments

Next Sunday we celebrate the **Feast of the Epiphany**

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am **FESTIVAL EUCHARIST**

Next Sunday's readings will be: Isaiah 60 vv 1-6; Ephesians 3 vv 1-12 and Matthew 2 vv 1-12.

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Our livestreamed services are available at:

www.facebook.com/stmaryspb

If you would like to receive the **weekly email bulletin** which is sent out every Saturday, you can sign up by going to this link: <https://tinyurl.com/b6dz2ap3>

Parish Notices

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to make our Advent and Christmas celebrations so special, especially our musicians, servers, readers, welcomers, those who cleaned & decorated the church and those who served refreshments. Many thanks to you all.

Our **Christmas flowers** were arranged by Pearl Shepherd, Trisha Salmon, Jessica Hollings and Stephanie Maughan. We were grateful to receive donations towards the flowers from Julian Zerfahs in memory of his mother Marjorie and from Pat Biddlecombe in memory of her husband Richard.

Many thanks to everyone who has given St Mary's a Christmas present this year. There is still an opportunity to make a gift – please see the notice at the back of church.

Watchers & Welcomers Please inform Heather of any dates you cannot manage during February and March.

There is no lunchtime recital in January. The next recital will be on **Tuesday 3rd February** when the recitalists will be Lucy Cox and Tom Jesty (soprano and piano).

Please could **Children's Society collecting boxes** be returned to church by Sunday 25th January. Thank you.

A new **flower rota** is on the noticeboard. Please sign up for Sundays when you can help to arrange the flowers or for a Sunday near to a special date for you when you would be willing to make a donation towards their cost.

For your prayers

The sick Anna Downes, Valerie Taylor, Elizabeth Liney, Joan Golden, Carlos Perez, Lisa Collins, Linda, Daren Elis, Maureen Alderman, Alison Stevens, Bob Keefe, Gill Efstathiou, Lindsey Lyons, Prussia Blake

We also pray for Keith Downes, Jayne Hutton, Janet Daniels, Francoise Groves-de-Milleret, Susan North, Julia, Tessa, Nicola Stiff, Ricky Mella, Betty Lockton, David Evans, Richard Barnes, Dave Gough, Pauline Phillips, Keith Probert

The recently departed David Burrows, Marion North, Trevor Scammell, Paul Ayriss

Those whose anniversary of death falls this week Margaret Ross, Enid Osborn, George Stout, Marion Graham, Louisa Biddlecombe, Margaret Farquhar, Betty Fox, Dick Gilliam

Our parish We remember those who live in Oakmere Close, Oakmere Lane and Oakroyd Avenue

The Methodist Covenant Prayer for the New Year

I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you, or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing: I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

*We wish everyone
a very Happy New Year!*

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.*

If the Lord himself had not been
on our side,
now may Israel say;
If the Lord had not been on our
side,
when enemies rose up against
us; **R**

Then would they have swallowed
us alive

when their anger burned against
us;
Then would the waters have
overwhelmed us
and the torrent gone over our
soul;
over our soul would have swept
the raging waters. **R**

But blessed be the Lord
who has not given us over to be
a prey for their teeth.
Our soul has escaped
as a bird from the snare of the
fowler;
the snare is broken and we are
delivered. **R**

Our help is in the name of the
Lord,
who has made 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.

