

Elham Valley Group Newsletter – 21st December 2025

“Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all”

Find us online : www.elhamvalleygroupofchurches.co.uk OR www.achurchnearyou.com

This week’s services:

Saturday 20th December

3pm – Quiet Christmas Service - Elham
5pm – Candlelight Carol Service - Lyminge

21st December - 4th Sunday of Advent

8.30am – Said Holy Communion – Postling
9.30am – Eucharist – Elham
9.30am – Service of Lessons & Carols – Acrise
10am – Eucharist - Lyminge
11.15am – Carol Service – Denton
3pm – Blessing of the Crib & Christingle – Paddlesworth
5pm – Joint Carol Service – Elham Methodist Church

Monday 22nd December

7.30pm Carol Service with Shepway Singers– Postling

Tuesday 23rd December

8.30am - Morning Prayer - Elham

The Collect:

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Post Communion Prayer:

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of the promised saviour: fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹² But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. ¹³ Then Isaiah said: ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-end

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child

from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²² All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Wednesday 24th December – Christmas Eve

11.30am – Crib Service – Postling

3pm – Crib Service – Lyminge

5pm – Crib Service – Stanford ~~~~ 5pm – Crib Service – Elham

6pm – Carol Service – Wootton

11.30pm – Carol Service – Cat & Custard Pot Pub, Paddlesworth (then in church)

11pm – Midnight Mass – Lyminge ~~~~ 11pm – Midnight Mass – Elham

Christmas Eve Readings – Old Testament: Isaiah 52: 7-10; Gospel: John 1:1-14

Thursday 25th December – Christmas Day

9.30am – Morning Service – Acrise ~~~~ 9.30am – Morning Service – Postling

10am – Benefice Eucharist – Elham

Christmas Day Readings - Old Testament: Isaiah 9: 2-7; Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

Please Pray for *Robin Mackonochie, Mark, Tom Hutchings, Millie Collins, Jill Fitch, Poppy Allard, John Meers, Michael Kirk, Alice Mills, Martyn Bowles, Claire Laker.*

Please contact the Benefice Administrator Alison Dale 07985025381 or beneficeadmin@elhamvalleygroupofchurches.co.uk to add people to the prayers.

Please pray for the departed, *Roger Hargreaves, Vera Law & June Carr*, and those for whom an anniversary of death falls at this time, *Barbara Parker, Mary Button, Susan Fisher, Gladys Harris, Judith Abate, Michael Molloy, Sally Stone, Doris Whitethread, Bev Shepherd, Francis London & Neil Williams.*

To arrange for Funerals, Thanksgivings, Blessings, Renewal of Vows and *all other services* please contact the Rector – revcarolbates@gmail.com 0777 239 4855

For Baptisms and Weddings please contact the Benefice Administrator - beneficeadmin@elhamvalleygroupofchurches.co.uk 07985025381

Benefice Notices: see website for full details or contact Benefice Admin (above).

Advent Bible Study - On the **20th Dec.** there is an Advent bible study open to all. The session is between 10.30am and noon, in Hawkinge. Let me know if you would like to attend, and I will let you have my address. Tel: 07503 290552 or email sharonpaine10@aol.com. *Rev. Sharon Paine*

Christingles –**28th Dec.** 10am – Lyminge; **Jan. 25th** – 9.30am – Acrise

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!