

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.

FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10-16

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,
"Ask a sign of the LORD your
God; let it be deep as Sheol or
high as heaven." But Ahaz said,
"I will not ask, and I will not put
the LORD to the test." Then
Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house
of David! Is it too little for you
to weary mortals, that you weary
my God also? 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. He shall eat
curds and honey by the time he
knows how to refuse the evil and
choose the good. 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."

PSALM Psalm 80:1-8. 18-20

R Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your
countenance and we shall be
saved.

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,
leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are
enthroned upon the cherubim.
In the presence of Ephraim,
Benjamin and Manasseh,

stir up your strength and come to
help us. **R**

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your
people?
You have fed them with the bread
of tears;
you have given them bowls of
tears to drink.
You have made us the derision of
our neighbours,
and our enemies laugh us to
scorn. **R**

Let your hand be upon the man
of your right hand,
the son of man you have made so
strong for yourself.
And so will we never turn away
from you;
give us life, that we may call upon
your name. **R**

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

*A reading from the letter of Paul
to the Romans.*

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ,
called to be an apostle, set apart
for the gospel of God, which he
promised beforehand through his
prophets in the holy scriptures,
the gospel concerning his Son,
who was descended from David
according to the flesh and was
declared to be Son of God
with power according to the
spirit of holiness by resurrection
from the dead, Jesus Christ our
Lord. Through Christ we have
received grace and apostleship
to bring about the obedience of
faith among all the Gentiles for
the sake of his name, including
yourselves who are called to
belong to Jesus Christ, To all
God's beloved in Rome, who are
called to be saints: Grace to you
and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-end

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to Matthew.*

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.
Her husband Joseph, being a
righteous man and unwilling to
expose her to public disgrace,
planned to dismiss her quietly.
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. She
will bear a son, and you are to
name him Jesus, for he will save
his people from their sins." All this
took place to fulfil what had been
spoken by the Lord through the
prophet: "Look, the virgin shall
conceive and bear a son, and
they shall name him Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us."
When Joseph awoke from sleep,
he did as the angel of the Lord
commanded him; he took her
as his wife, but had no marital
relations with her until she had
borne a son; and he named him
Jesus.

POST COMMUNION

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.

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through Jesus Christ our Lord.

December 21st 2025 – Advent 4 - Parish of the Harwich Peninsula

Christmas: a leaflet with information about the Christmas Eve and Day services is out to share.

Christmas Day: there will be a service at St Nicholas on Christmas Day shared by Kirsty and Ian.

Christmas Home Communion: if you know someone unable to get to church at Christmas the Rector will do his best to take them communion on request.

Pop Up Church @ St Michael's: our first go at this looked as if no one was coming and then minutes before the start four families arrived! The service will take place each second Sunday at 3pm. We hope Bishop Roger will be visiting in the future and Chris the Ising Pop leader who worked in St Michael's school to introduce it.

Christmas Food Bags: the Salvation Army were so grateful for the all the food donated to them.

Christingle Time: We are holding a Christingle making session in the Esplanade Hall on the 23rd at 7.30pm for the two 3pm services at St Michaels and St Nicholas on the 24th. If anyone is free to help at this session, please feel free to come along and join in the Christmas fun!

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.

Christmas Eve: the communion at St Nicholas will be at a new time of 7pm and will be supported by the outstanding organist Peter Clayton. This earlier time might help those for whom late night is too late. At All Saints we begin at 11pm and at St Michael's it will be 11.30pm.

Peninsula Post 5: is out now and covers the end and start of 2025/2026. We welcome your own contributions for the next editions.

Epiphany: we 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; Sunday 28th December Sioux will lead a Taizé service at All Saints at 10.30am; 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). Annual Meeting, Wednesday 13th May at 7pm and Confirmation Service with Bishop Roger, Sunday 4th October at 5pm.

Residential Homes: in 2026 we hope to have regular visits to Don Thomson and Lime Court; DT - 1st Tuesday of each month and LC 2nd Monday each at 11am, before residents go to lunch. Support is very much welcome.

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); Barbara (Babs) Talbot.

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