

WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY



If this is your first newsletter, **welcome!** If you have any questions about the church family, the Christian faith, or about our children's work, please do not hesitate to get in touch. This notice sheet covers the next two weeks and combines:

- Notices
- The church diary (including livestream & Zoom joining instructions) **including all Christmas Services**
- Prayers and readings for the morning services on Sunday 14th & 21st December 2025.

Brief Advent Reflection

At Morning Prayer on Tuesday this week, as well as praying for everyone in our villages, and for our services, we also prayed more personally about Christmas approaching. I do not think I am betraying any confidences when I say that we expressed thanks for the message of Christmas - that for some reason (love!) God chose to come and dwell among us, as one of us, to shine his light on the right path for us muddled humans to take. But whilst also looking forward to Christ's return, we also remembered loved ones who are no longer with us, difficult family circumstances, and various other reasons why Christmas may be difficult for those we prayed for. Nevertheless, we must take heed of Father Henry's advice during the Advent Carol Service, to rejoice! Paul rejoiced despite being in prison unfairly; it is possible to have joy in our hearts despite difficult circumstances. So, I finish with that well-known passage from the book of Philippians Chapter 4:

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Midweek Christmas Communion

Each month on the third Wednesday a small team from the Benefice takes Holy Communion to the residents of Steeds Meadow (10am) and Melford Court (2.15pm). On Wednesday 17th December: we will be putting on a special Christmas Holy Communion, including Richard Hastings on his keyboard and prosecco; it would be really good if a few members of the Chadbrook community could join us for either of these services; even better if you could let Ian McDonald know if you intend to come (mcdonald@spa-ltd.co.uk, 07748 655301).



An action-packed week including ... (from Fusion talent show and Melford tree decorating ...)

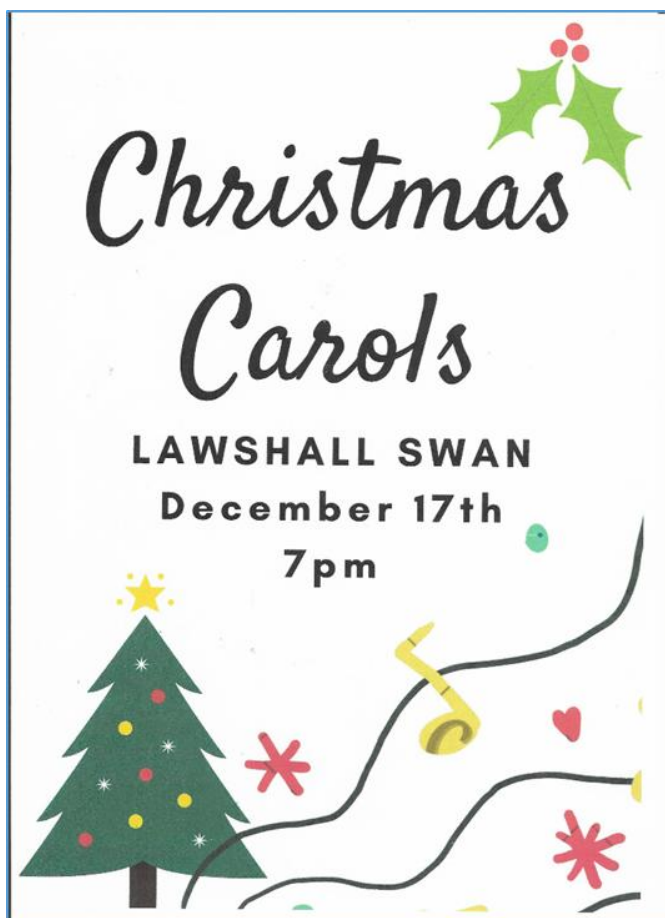


Elizabeth Bird RIP

Elizabeth was a regular member of our church family in Long Melford for many years. Elizabeth was a prayerful woman with great spiritual insight. One often felt a desire to pray and to enjoy God more after being in Elizabeth's presence. She will be missed by her large family as well as her church family here. As announced at the service last week, Elizabeth's funeral will be at Chelsworth church on Friday 19th December at 12.00 noon.

Suggestions for prayer include:

- We pray for all attending our various services and events over the Christmas period, and spare a particular thought for any who, for whatever reason, are dreading the Christmas break.
- We pray for world leaders that they would remain humble, seek peace, and be open to the Spirit of God.
- We remember before God those who have recently died including Elizabeth Bird, and we pray for those friends & family who mourn
- We pray for the Alpha course that those attending would know that God loves them and has a good plan for their life ... and that the church would nurture their faith effectively.
- We pray for those in need of God's presence or his healing touch including Barbara Brady, Anne Bush, David Bremer, Elizabeth Clarke, Phillip Cole, Christopher Freeman, Robert Hawkins, William Hawkins, Judith Mills, and Mary Tuffen.



Diary

Sun 14 th	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
	6.30pm	Lights of Remembrance at Holy Trinity (refreshments from 6pm)
Mon 15 th	9.30am	Connect Toddler Group Christmas party
	7.30pm	Lawshall Homegroup
Tues 16 th	9.00am	Morning Prayer #
Wed 17 th	10.00am	Steeds Meadow Christmas Communion (all welcome)
	2.15pm	Melford Court Christmas Communion (all welcome)
	7.00pm	Carols at The Swan, Lawshall
Thurs 18 th	6.15pm	Children's Choir Rehearsal
	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Fri 19 th	1.45pm	Melford School Carol Service at Holy Trinity
	2.30pm	Lawshall School Carol Service
Sat 20 th	5.30pm	Happysounds Community Choir at Holy Trinity
Sun 21 st	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
	4.00pm	Alpheton Carol Service
	6.30pm	Melford Carol Service *
Tues 23 rd	9.00am	Morning Prayer #
	6.30pm	Lawshall Carol Service
Wed 24 th	3.00pm	Crib Service at Holy Trinity
	6.00pm	Shimpling Carol Service
	10.45pm	Midnight Mass at Holy Trinity
Thurs 25 th	10.30am	Christmas Day Communion at Holy Trinity *
Sun 28 th	10.30am	Communion at Holy Trinity *
Wed 31 st	1.30pm	Wedding at Alpheton Greg & Abigail

*** Livestream Joining Instructions**

- Google the five words "Holy Trinity Long Melford Facebook" or [click here](#) to open the church's Facebook page (scroll down a bit to see the feed).
- Please note that you do not need a Facebook account yourself in order to watch the livestream.

Morning Prayer Zoom Meeting ID: 816 5338 9796, Passcode: 289895, or click [here](#).

Readings for the 14th December – Advent 3**Collect (prayer for the day)**

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Reading**James 5:7-10**

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Old Testament Reading**Isaiah 35:1-10**

The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

Like the crocus, ²it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the Lord,
the splendour of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;

⁴say to those with fearful hearts,
'Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;

with divine retribution
he will come to save you.'

⁵Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

⁶Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.

⁷The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

⁸ And a highway will be there;
 it will be called the Way of Holiness;
 it will be for those who walk on that Way.
 The unclean will not journey on it;
 wicked fools will not go about on it.
⁹ No lion will be there,
 nor any ravenous beast;
 they will not be found there.
 But only the redeemed will walk there,
¹⁰ and those the Lord has rescued will return.
 They will enter Zion with singing;
 everlasting joy will crown their heads.
 Gladness and joy will overtake them,
 and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:2-11

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'
⁴ Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.'
⁷ As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. ⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written:
 "'I will send my messenger ahead of you,
 who will prepare your way before you."
¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You O Christ

Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever. **Amen**

Readings for the 21st December – Advent 4**Collect (prayer for the day)**

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**

First Reading**Romans 1:1-7**

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God – ²the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, ⁴and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. ⁶And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Old Testament Reading**Isaiah 7:10-16**

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹'Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.' ¹²But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.'

¹³Then Isaiah said, 'Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. ¹⁵He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, ¹⁶for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Gospel Reading**Matthew 1:18-25**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: his mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'

²²All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us').

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You O Christ

(Bible readings courtesy of Bible Gateway New International Version - UK (NIVUK))

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**

