



## **Sunday 28th December 2025 Holy Communion 10.00am Revd Tony Edmonds**

**A very warm welcome to our  
service this morning in  
St Nicholas Church, Studland**

... and a special welcome if you are a visitor to our Church! This is a Holy Communion service, and you are most welcome to take Communion with us. If you need a gluten-free wafer, please ask. Or if you would prefer to have a blessing, just bring this Notice Sheet with you to the communion rail, to give an indication to the priest. And, if you would prefer to receive communion in your seat, just mention this to the sidesperson (the person who welcomed you when you came into church).

Children are most welcome in our church. Do not worry if they are noisy or make a break for freedom: we are just delighted to have the children in Church with us. There are toys in the two green boxes at the back of the Church - and everyone is welcome to use them.

We do not pass around a collection plate at St Nicholas' Church, but we are most appreciative of donations to help maintain both the Church and its ministry. We have a traditional plate for cash donations with Gift Aid envelopes available as well as a contactless card payments station at the exit to the Church. If you would like to make regular donations, please consider setting up a Standing Order with your bank: if this is of interest, please contact the Treasurer, Eric Stobart at [eric@thestobarts.co.uk](mailto:eric@thestobarts.co.uk).

After the service, we serve coffee, tea and other refreshments in the Church Hall. Please do join us - and get to know us all a little better.

For regular updates on Church activities throughout the week, please find us on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) You can also follow us on Facebook. (St Nicholas Church Studland) – do give us a like or two!

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For additional information about St Nicholas Church and its services, please contact:  
Associate Minister: Revd Dr Tony Edmonds 01929 450097 [revtonyedmonds@outlook.com](mailto:revtonyedmonds@outlook.com)

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**SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY  
St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas  
28 December 2025 – Holy Innocents**

**Reading for this Sunday is:** Corinthians 1, 26 - 29

**Gospel Reading:** Matthew 2, 13 -18

Now after they 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.'

**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.

**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.

## REFLECTION

### **Jeremiah 31:15-17 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 Matthew 2:13-18**

The Sunday after Christmas is often rather an anti-climax; the splendour of the Carol Services and Christmas Day are over, and it's not quite Epiphany. This year we are brought down to earth abruptly as we remember the Slaughter of the Innocents.

King Herod was worried when the Wise Men came asking about the King of the Jews. He was the King of the Jews! He had no worries about killing all the local male children under 2 years old, who were possible contenders for this title; he had already murdered 3 of his own sons to ensure that there were no rivals!

Horrible though it is, we need to remember the Holy Innocents. They are a powerful reminder that some things never change. Dictators everywhere have no scruples about killing any number of people to keep themselves in power; human beings are expendable if they get in the way, and all over the world mothers are weeping for their children.

Happily, there is hope. Jeremiah, not the most cheerful of characters, sees that there is hope for the future. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the one who will judge with Righteousness (Isaiah 9 and 11), the author of the new Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) embodies that hope. From birth, to death, to resurrection, Jesus shows us a different form of Kingship. In him we see humility, justice, righteousness and a desire for the salvation of others. This is a stark contrast to the brutal self-interest of Herod, and the dictators of today.

As we look forward to a New Year, let us pray for the mothers who weep today, and pledge ourselves to let the Holy Spirit lead us to work for justice, righteousness and truth, in the way of Jesus.

*Rev. David Richards*

## TEAM NOTES

### New Year Studland Men's Breakfast Saturday 3rd January 2026

The first Men's Breakfast of 2026 will be held on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December in Studland Church Hall. It runs on a café style – so come any time between 8,30am – 10am for a great breakfast – and great conversation. You will be welcomed by Chef, Tony Edmonds, and Sous Chef, Peter Hawksworth, who will be cooking up a gastronomic treat of bacon rolls, sausages and black pudding, together with toast and marmalade (or honey) - and unlimited tea and coffee. They cater for vegetarians and vegans too – and, of course, offer gluten free options. There is no charge for the breakfast, but we are grateful if you can make a donation. The important thing is that you join us! Any queries, just email [Stnicksbreakfast@yahoo.com](mailto:Stnicksbreakfast@yahoo.com)



**Epiphany Team Service – Readings & Carols for Epiphany –**  
Sunday (4<sup>th</sup> January), 6.30pm at St Mark's Church, Herston. Please do try and come if you can. The Team church choirs join together, readings and carols are heard as we smell the sweet scent of the incense that the wise men brought. There will be refreshments after the service.

**Candle Wax for Ukraine** - Ukraine still needs our support. Candle wax is being collected from local churches and communities to create cooking candles ("trench candles") and candles for villages without electricity. Please donate candle ends, candle wax, and unwanted candles in the box in St Mary's Church porch, from where it will be taken to a Ukraine support group.



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**St Nicholas Church in Studland is part of the Swanage and Studland Team**

<b>Team Rector</b>	Revd Dr Ian Bird	Tel 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)
<b>Team Vicar</b>	Revd Jo Levasier	Tel 01929 208217 (normal day off Friday)
<b>Parish Administrator</b>	Karon Quirey	<a href="mailto:swanage.team@btconnect.com">swanage.team@btconnect.com</a>
<b>Parish Office</b>	Tues & Weds 9am-5pm / Friday 9am – 4pm	Tel: 01929 421117

Visit our Team website [www.swanageteam.com](http://www.swanageteam.com)