Sunday 29 November 2026 First Sunday of Advent

COLLECT

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence – as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil – to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

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? R

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 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

My brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL Mark 13:24-end

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Jesus said to his disciples: "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake – for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

POST COMMUNION

O Lord our God,
make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord;
that, when he shall appear,
he may not find us sleeping in sin
but active in his service
and joyful in his praise;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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November 29th 2026 – Advent Sunday - Parish of the Harwich Peninsula

A Christmas Carol: we are delighted to announce that there will be a dramatised reading with musical accompaniment at St Nicholas, tomorrow, 7.30-9.15pm with an interval. Colchester Arts Centre Director Anthony Roberts brings his traditional rendition of the Dickens classic to St Nicholas Church, with musical accompaniment by Jamie Cunliffe. This is guaranteed to get you in the Christmas spirit!
All money raised will go back to the church. Sponsored by Essex Rocks Creative CIC. Booking: https://www.tickettailor.com/events/harwichfestival/2465631 £9 for adults, £6 children under 16.
CHRISTMAS: a leaflet with the Christmas services and events is available in each building to take and to pass on to friends and neighbours. A personal invitation is always best; why not suggest you attend together?
Christmas Dinner: The Salvation Army are doing a Christmas lunch and wonder if anyone would appreciate an invitation? If so, please let Ian know and he will put you in touch with Debbie Tubby the organiser. Harwich Connexions may be able to provide the transport.
United Service: please remember we have the opportunity to worship as one congregation this afternoon at 5pm in St Michael's. This will mark our start of Advent, and the new church year, together as one body.
ADVENT: there is a free book available in each building, a present from the Rector, with readings for each day of Advent (29th November) based on Handel's oratorio Messiah. For the first 3 Wednesdays of December the Rector will speak about the book of Revelation at St Michael's, within a service of Compline. He will offer easy steps to understand the last, some think most difficult and disturbing, book of the Bible. Time 7.30pm
Testimony: Testimonies encourage the body of Christ and Sioux is looking for people to join in on the 4th Sunday evening at All Saints at 5pm to give a testimony of how God has recently encouraged /felt close to them either as an answer to pray or during worship or at the kitchen sink; something extraordinary that has happened that made you aware of who God is! There are several different themes planned for next year that we can plan your testimony around and it need only be 1 or 2 minutes long.
St Nicholas and St Michael: both buildings have been visited by their architect, Olga Vladic-Weal and a structural engineer, Robert Frostick. Sections of masonry have fallen from the south side of St Nicholas, and some cracks have been seen inside. St Michael's nave roof has gaps where daylight can be seen where it meets the tower and the chancel and there is significant stone erosion in the west window of the tower and higher up. We will pass on their reports and advice as soon as possible. Please remember the PCC and their great responsibilities for the buildings and for the safety of people on the path next to St Nicholas. *Please note St Nicholas is having a full check of its electric wiring and fuses this week.* The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches will be visiting St Nicholas on Monday 7th from 2pm.
Social meeting: we are offering a social evening with an opportunity to informally talk with Kirsty and Ian and meet PCC members and church officers on Wednesday 13th January at 7pm at St Michael's Millennium Room. The evening will end by 9pm. The car park is fairly big, but the room isn't, so it may be cosy!
Residential Homes Carols: Lime Court 14th December 11am, Don Thomson 15th December 11am

Baptised in November/December: Faith Betty Thompson Cooper; Robin Alexander James Carman
Married in November/December: Trevor Mills and Izabella Joo; Gary Potten and Lisa Parker
Departed in October/November: Jeffrey Rex Eaton; Maurice Barker; Patricia Clarke; The Rev. Laurie Bond; George William Harvey; Adrian Herbert Thackeray; Margaret Elizabeth Dean; John Hughes

SAFEGUARDING: if you have any concerns about safeguarding or wish to report anything please speak to our Parish Safeguarding Officer Claire Cooper. Email: clc1507@outlook.com or call 0771151814 this is for safeguarding only.

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 Sunday of every month (except December): Worship and the Word at All Saints at 5pm (except December)
4th Saturday of every month (except August and December): Messy Church in the Esplanade Hall from 2-4pm.
1st Tuesday of every month: Hymns and Service at Don Thomson Residential Home at 11am – *EXCEPT DECEMBER*
2nd Monday of every month: Hymns and Service at Lime Court Residential Home at 11am – *EXCEPT DECEMBER*

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