

The Benefice of Chew Valley East

Morning Prayer for Sunday 28 December 2025, First Sunday of Christmas

*If you wish to join in the service, then the words in bold are to be said together.
Please join in with the Psalms and Canticles by reciting each one in its entirety.*

Preparation

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

You laid the foundation of the earth
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

Blessed are you, sovereign God,
creator of heaven and earth,
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As your living Word, eternal in heaven,
assumed the frailty of our mortal flesh,
may the light of your love be born in us
to fill our hearts with joy as we sing:
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Word of God

Psalm 148

¹Alleluia. Praise the Lord from the heavens; ♦
praise him in the heights.

²Praise him, all you his angels; ♦
praise him, all his host.

³Praise him, sun and moon; ♦
praise him, all you stars of light.

⁴Praise him, heaven of heavens, ♦
and you waters above the heavens.

⁵Let them praise the name of the Lord; ♦
for he commanded and they were created.

⁶He made them fast for ever and ever; ♦
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.

⁷Praise the Lord from the earth, ♦
you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸Fire and hail, snow and mist, ♦
tempestuous wind, fulfilling his word;

⁹Mountains and all hills, ♦
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰Wild beasts and all cattle, ♦
creeping things and birds on the wing;

¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, ♦
princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²Young men and women, old and young together; ♦
let them praise the name of the Lord.

¹³For his name only is exalted, ♦
his splendour above earth and heaven.

¹⁴He has raised up the horn of his people
and praise for all his faithful servants, ♦
the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Alleluia.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 63:7-9

I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,
because of all that the LORD has done for us,
and the great favour to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
For he said, ‘Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely’;
and he became their saviour in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Canticle

**I have given you as a light to the nations,
and I have called you in righteousness.**

¹The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; ♦
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, upon them the light has dawned.

²You have increased their joy and given them great gladness; ♦
they rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest.

³For you have shattered the yoke that burdened them; ♦
the collar that lay heavy on their shoulders.

⁴For to us a child is born and to us a son is given, ♦
and the government will be upon his shoulder.

⁵And his name will be called: Wonderful Counsellor; the Mighty God; ♦
the Everlasting Father; the Prince of Peace.

⁶Of the increase of his government and of peace ♦
there will be no end,

⁷Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, ♦
to establish and uphold it with justice and righteousness.

⁸From this time forth and for evermore; ♦
the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. *Isaiah 9.2, 3b, 4a, 6, 7*

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**I have given you as a light to the nations,
and I have called you in righteousness.**

Second Reading: Matthew 2:13-23

After the wise men 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.’

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of

Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

Responsory

The Word of life which was from the beginning
we proclaim to you.

The darkness is passing away
and the true light is already shining;

the Word of life which was from the beginning.

That which we heard, which we saw with our eyes,
and touched with our hands,

we proclaim to you.

For our fellowship is with the Father,
and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The Word of life which was from the beginning
we proclaim to you.**

from 1 John 1

Gospel Canticle: Benedictus

**You shall call his name Jesus
for he will save his people from their sins.**

¹Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, ♦
who has come to his people and set them free.

²He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, ♦
born of the house of his servant David.

³Through his holy prophets God promised of old ♦
to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all that hate us,

⁴To show mercy to our ancestors, ♦
and to remember his holy covenant.

⁵This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: ♦
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

⁶Free to worship him without fear, ♦
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

⁷And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, ♦
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

⁸To give his people knowledge of salvation ♦
by the forgiveness of all their sins.

⁹In the tender compassion of our God ♦
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

¹⁰To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, ♦
and to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Luke 1.68-79*

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**You shall call his name Jesus
for he will save his people from their sins.**

Intercessions

<i>To the words:</i>	Lord, in your mercy:
<i>Please respond:</i>	Hear our prayer.

God in Christ has come to share our humanity:
the vulnerability of our flesh;
the dangers of being in our world;
the limited nature of our life.
Born at one time in history, to one people;
born for all time, to all humankind.
Born that we may have new life in him.

Compassionate God, we pray for new life
for those who suffer, as did your Son; for . . .
We ask for the strength, healing and comfort
that only your company in their pain can bring.
Lord, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Defending God, we pray for new life
for the world, sick with many evils
that threaten the lives of the young; for . . .
We ask for good government, led by the Spirit
of the King who came as a helpless child.
Lord, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Enabling God, we pray for new life
for all who seek to follow your Son; for . . .
We ask for the freedom and empowerment
brought by his victory over sin and death.
Lord, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

God, in Christ you came to share our humanity,
to transform our human existence
into the glorious freedom
of life as your children.
God our Saviour, you came to be one with us.
We pray that we may be one with you
and live to your praise and glory. **Amen.**

Collect

God our Father,
in love you sent your Son
that the world may have life:
lead us to seek him among the outcast
and to find him in those in need,
for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

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Conclusion

May God, who has called us out of darkness
into his marvellous light,
bless us and fill us with peace. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**