

Sunday 21st December 2025

4th Sunday of Advent

Holy Trinity Cuckfield

*You are very welcome
to our worship!*



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and challenges
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Reflection

Our Gospel this Sunday opens.... 'Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way': we're getting nearer to Christmas. Matthew doesn't show much interest in the birth; he is more interested in the conception (the baby is God's) and the naming (the baby is to be called Jesus because he saves people). Joseph acts honourably and faithfully: he does as the angel commands him and never takes centre stage. The baby is given a title as well as a name: he is 'Emmanuel, God with us'. We get to know right at the start that wherever Jesus is, God is with us and we are assured of forgiveness.

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. **Amen.**

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**

Worship this Sunday...

Sunday 21st December - 4th Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7.10-16

Romans 1.1-7

Matthew 1.18-end

8.00 am Holy Communion (CW)

Readers: Anthony Vander Willigen
Charles Solomon

9.45 am Parish Eucharist *

Pr Hymn 26 v4 Candle lighting
45 O come, o come Emmanuel
Gr Hymn 30 Come thou long expected
Of Hymn 32 Come thou redeemer
Anthem Gabriel's message (sheet)
Cm Hymn 313 For Mary, mother
430i Bread of heaven
Fn Hymn 315 Sing we of the blessed

Readers: Isobel Simmonds
Nick Jones
Intercessor: Nick Jones

6.00 pm Candlelit Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

* Also live streamed on zoom - click the blue button on the church homepage

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First Reading

Isaiah 7.10-16

Ahaz is told that a virgin shall conceive and bear a child, to be called Emmanuel

Again 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.

Second Reading

Romans 1.1-7

Paul greets Rome and describes Jesus as 'seed of David'

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 whom 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

Joseph doubts Mary but an angel appears to him in a dream; Joseph resolves to marry Mary

Now 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.

This Week

22/12 Mon	7.30 pm	Home Group (In Person)	
24/12 Wed	2.30 pm	Crib Service	Church
	4.00 pm	Crib Service	Church
	11.15 pm	Midnight Mass	Isaiah 9.2-7
			Titus 2.11-14
			Luke 2.1-14
			John 1.1-14
25/12 Thurs	9.45 am	Festal Eucharist for Christmas Day	"Christmas Day" Rossetti
			Titus 3.4-7
			Luke 2.1-20

Our hardworking team will be taking a well-deserved rest after Christmas. As a result, weekday services will be suspended after Christmas and will resume on Wednesday 7 January 2025. The church will be closed on Christmas Day after the Festal Eucharist. It will also be closed on New Year's Day.

Next Sunday...

Sunday 28th December - 1st Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 63.7-9

Hebrews 2.10-end

Matthew 2.13-end

8.00 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Reader:	Roger Edmonston
9.45 am	Said Eucharist with Hymns*		
Pr Hymn	58 A great and mighty wonder	Readers:	Olly Taylor
Gr Hymn	69ii In the night the sound		Christine Best
Of Hymn	715 Lord for the years		
Anthem	In the bleak mid-winter		
Cm Hymn	77 Lully, lulla		
	456ii Now let us from this table		
Fn Hymn	72 Joy to the world		

*** Also live streamed on zoom - click the blue button on the church home page**

Notices and Parish News...

- **Samara's Aid** - A huge thank you to everyone who has supported this appeal. We are delighted to share that the **grand total raised is £1,200**, which will help to change lives and has far exceeded all expectations.
- **Christmas Tree Festival** - A huge thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Christmas Tree Festival such a wonderful success - to all the volunteers who gave their time, those who decorated the beautiful trees, and everyone who came along to support and enjoy the festival. We are delighted to share that **£5319.46**, will be donated to **Sussex Cancer Fund**, and we are incredibly grateful for the generosity and community spirit shown throughout the event.
- **Advent and Christmas 2026 at Holy Trinity Cuckfield** - Our traditional candlelit Nine Lessons and Carols on **Sunday 21 December at 6.00 pm**. On Christmas Eve, **Wednesday 24 December**, we have Crib Services at 2.30 pm and 4.00 pm for families and children, followed by Midnight Mass at 11.15 pm. On **Christmas Day, Thursday 25 December**, join us at 9.45 am for our Festal Eucharist celebrating the birth of Christ, and on **Sunday 4 January at 6.00 pm** we conclude the season with a Choral Service for Epiphany marking the visit of the Magi and the revelation of Christ to the nations.

Booking for the Christmas Eve Crib Services:

Crib service 2.30 pm use this QR Code or follow this link...

<https://cuckfieldandbolneybenefice.churchsuite.com/events/7j1sld0g>



Crib Service 4.00 pm use this QR Code or follow this link:

<https://cuckfieldandbolneybenefice.churchsuite.com/events/jomxmugg>



- **Lunch "n" Linger** - Makes a welcome return at the Old School on **Thursday 29th January**. We gather from 12.30, **lunch is served at 1.00 pm**, the menu is to be determined. Please let Jane know or email office@holytrinitycuckfield.org confirming your menu choices when available. We need to confirm final numbers by the Monday before the lunch (Monday, 26th January).
- **Bereavement Café - A Space to Talk, Listen, and Simply Be** - If you've experienced the loss of someone close, you are warmly invited to our Bereavement Café-a gentle, welcoming space to sit, share, or simply be. Whether you feel like talking or prefer quiet companionship, this is a place of understanding and care. Grief can feel isolating, but gathering with others who are walking a similar path can bring comfort and connection. Over tea and coffee, we offer space for gentle conversation and quiet presence. Our first Bereavement Café will be held on **Tuesday 13th January 2pm-4pm** at The Old School, Committee Room (opposite Holy Trinity Church). It will continue the Second Tuesday of each month, at the same time and place. For more information, please email the Revd Stephen Caple pastoral-care@holytrinitycuckfield.org or the Parish Office: 01444 456461
- **Sustainability Event - Tuesday 20th January 2026** - Haywards Heath Baptist Church are hosting a special talk, "*From Scorched Earth to A Rocha*", with Ed Walker MBE, Executive Director of A Rocha International. Join at 7.30pm at Haywards Heath Baptist Church, Sussex Road for an inspiring evening about Christian environmental action. Free entry, refreshments provided.
- **Deanery Day 2026 - Art & Prayer - Saturday 7 February 2026**. The Ascension Church, Vale Road, Haywards Heath 10am-1pm. **Speaker:** Rev Charles Pickstone, former vicar of St. Laurence, Catford, London and a trustee of Art & Christianity Enquiry. He is on the editorial board of Art & Christianity, and until recently a visiting scholar at Sarum College. Charles regularly contributes articles to books and magazines on art and spirituality, as well as lecturing in the UK and abroad. He is on the board of the UK branch of AICA (the International Association of Art Critics) and is chair of the Fabric Advisory Committee of Southwark Cathedral
- **Cuckfield Local Market** - Holy Trinity Cuckfield local market will take place on **February 8th from 9.30-12.30** providing locally sourced, sustainable goods. Support local artisans and embrace environmental stewardship with us. The church will be serving tea, coffee and soft drinks, please let Jane know if you can assist.
- **Pilgrim Gathering** - on Sunday 4th January at 2pm in the Tudor Hall. A chance to hear about our Autumn course and find out about our next one which will be in February and March 2026. Why not join us, there are 4 groups at present, but there is always room for more.
- **Prayer Partners** - If you have been praying for someone anonymously, and haven't yet let them know, please do so. A new opportunity to join the Prayer Partners scheme will be offered in the New Year.

Prayers...

Those in immediate need: Becky Parker, Ralph Colbran, Eileen Knight, Philip Chapman, Judith Aspinall, Rev'd Stephen Caple, Jill Brotherton, David Meares, Pam Sutherland

Those in long term need: Georgia, Ann Went, Julie Sadler, Wendy Hibling, Liz Graydon, Peter Graydon, Eileen MacDougall, George Snashall, Karen Leese, and Yvonne Godsmark

Those in care homes: Mary Watts, Rosemary Pardey, Janet Card, Valerie Poxon, Sally Williams

The recently departed and those who mourn: Olga Lydia, David Meredith

Those whose year's mind falls at this time. 22nd Phyllis Bell 2009, 23rd Maurice Frank Donoghue 2013, 24th Jim Driver 2011, 25th Amy Evelyn Barnes 2011, William McKay 2014, Jeremy Tapp 2018, 26th Emily Barnard, Phyllis Taylor 1993, 27th Doris Cutler, 28th Doreen Shrapnell 1993, Muriel Wheeler 2000, George Henry Flower 2002

Praying through the week...

Mon Dec 22nd - We remember all those places we visited on holiday in the Summer and pray for all who live and work in areas that rely on visitors and tourists. We pray for all whose livelihoods are dependent on the climate, especially in those parts of the world, most affected by climate crisis. We pray locally for those who live away from home and give thanks for the ways in which they continue to enrich and support their families, friends and local communities.

Tue Dec 23rd - We pray for all who work in the medical and health professions as they try to deal with an NHS service, under-staffed and under-resourced, the rounds of winter flu and other illnesses, and diseases worsened because of poverty and inadequate housing. We pray locally for Agricultural workers, that they may have a sense of the comfort and strength that comes from God.

Wed Dec 24th Christmas Eve - We pray for our local community, for all our parishioners this Christmas time. We give thanks that we are able to once again invite you to the Crib Service, offering warmth, welcome and the Christmas story. We give thanks for all who've had a hand in organising all our Christmas services and events and ask that our worship and work at Holy Trinity be blessed, that they may reflect the love, light, peace and hope of God. Locally we pray for the people of Ardingly Road, that they may find joy, light in their lives.

Thu Dec 25th Christmas Day - Through the One who was, and is, and is yet to come, We are a people of promise! We are a people of hope! We are a people of love! Abundant God, Flesh of our Flesh, Food of our Hope, Water of Life, we rejoice in your arrival; fulfil our longing for your love. Amen

Fri Dec 26th - St. Stephen, deacon, martyr was first mentioned in Acts of the Apostles as one of seven deacons appointed by the Apostles to distribute food and charitable aid to poorer members of the community in the early church. We pray for all who go hungry or thirsty in our world today. We pray for all those organisations and charities working to alleviate the plight of the poor. We pray for all the food bank volunteers and for those who rely on food banks. We pray for all businesses which are struggling and members of the community struggling with financial difficulties or debts.

Sat Dec 27th - As we commemorate Holy Innocents, we pray for all children caught up in war and violence, innocent victims of conflicts not of their making. Give us honesty and courage to seek the ways of peace and justice, and to resist voices that trade in fear and hatred. We hold before you all who suffer in the Holy Land. We pray for the people of Gaza and for Palestinians everywhere, grieving lives lost and enduring hardship, displacement, and insecurity. We pray also for the people of Israel, living with fear and trauma, longing for peace, justice, and safety. Grant wisdom and compassion to all leaders, and hope to all who long for an end to bloodshed. We pray locally for the people of Ashburnham Drive, that they may know your loving presence, especially when they feel alone, sad, or lost.

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