

**PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY, PULBOROUGH**



**11.00pm Midnight Eucharist  
celebrating the  
Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December, 2025**

*We are very grateful that the Service leaflets this  
night have been sponsored.*

**'In memory of those we love but see no longer'**

**Toni Hayes and Frances Usher-Smith**

*Please take this booklet home with you after the Service*

# Welcome to Midnight Mass

Celebrant: Fr Paul  
Preacher: Austen Hindman ALM  
Organist: Peter Allwood  
Setting: Thorne  
The Reading: Alyson Heath  
Intercessions: Toni Hayes  
Ministers of Communion: David Hayes and Tony Holloway

*. In the event of a fire or emergency in the Church, the exits available are: the West Door, the North Door, the South Door in the Chancel and the door through the Vestry. Please leave the building by an exit nearest to you.*

*If you feel able to make a donation during the offertory hymn and you are a UK taxpayer, please use and complete the details on the Gift Aid white envelope you will find in your service leaflet. We also have **contactless facilities** available by the organ at the back of the church. Thank you.*



Opening organ music: J S Bach: *Sheep may safely graze*  
(from the Birthday Cantata)  
Elgar: *Chanson de Nuit*

*At 11pm the church lights will be switched off for a brief time. When they are turned on again, **please stand to sing the first carol.** While this is sung, the altar party will enter and Fr Paul will place the figure of the infant Jesus in front of the altar. The figure will then be placed in the Crib scene later in the service.*

The Entrance Hymn: NEH 25  
English Carol 18th Century

1 God rest ye merry, gentlemen,  
let nothing you dismay,  
remember Christ, our Saviour  
was born on Christmas day,  
to save us all from Satan's power  
when we were gone astray:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

2 From God our heavenly father,  
a blessed angel came,  
and unto certain shepherds  
brought tidings of the same;  
how that in Bethlehem was born  
the Son of God by name. *Refrain*

3 But when they came to Bethlehem  
where our dear Saviour lay;  
they found him in a manger  
where oxen feed on hay;  
his mother Mary, kneeling down  
unto the Lord did pray. *Refrain*

4 Now to the Lord sing praises  
all you within this place,  
and with true love and brotherhood  
each other now embrace.  
This holy tide of Christmas  
all other doth efface. *Refrain*

The Gathering

✠ In the name of the Father, and  
of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
**and also with you.**

*Fr. Paul introduces the night's celebration and invites people to make an act of penitence*

## **The Prayers of Penitence**

Christ the light of the world has come  
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.  
In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

God our Father,  
you sent your Son full of grace and truth:  
forgive our failure to receive him.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus our Saviour,  
you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:  
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Spirit of love,  
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:  
forgive the hardness of our hearts.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen**

**The Thorne Gloria**

***Glory to God, Glory to God, glory to God in the Highest.***

**Glory to God in the Highest, and  
peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, Heav'nly King,  
Almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God, glory to God in the Highest.***

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away  
the sin of the world; have mercy on us;  
You are seated at the right hand of the  
Father: receive our prayer.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God, glory to God, in the Highest.***

**For you alone are the Holy one,  
You alone are the Lord,  
You alone are the most high,  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the  
Glory of God the Father.**

***Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the Highest***

**The Collect for the Day**

**Eternal God, who made this most holy night  
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:  
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth, to see  
the radiance of your heavenly glory;  
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. **Amen****

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

***Please sit***

### **The First Reading: Isaiah 9. 2-7**

*A reading from book of the prophet Isaiah*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has  
shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled  
in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of  
Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless  
peace for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

***Please stand***

**The Gradual Hymn: NEH 36 Verses 1,2 and 6**  
**Traditional**

- 1**     **The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay:  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep:  
          *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
          born is the King of Israel.***
- 2**     **They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east, beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night:     *Chorus***
- 6**     **Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
who with the Father we adore  
and Spirit blest for evermore:     *Chorus***

**The Gospel Reading: Luke 2. 1-14**

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke  
**Glory to you, O Lord**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in

bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please sit*

**The Homily**

*Please stand*



## The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came  
down from heaven, was incarnate from  
the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the  
Scriptures; he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is  
worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of  
sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

***Please kneel or sit***

## **The Prayers of Intercession**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.  
Father, in this holy night your Son our Saviour  
was born in human flesh.  
Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night there was no room for your Son in the inn.  
Protect with your love those who have no home  
and all who live in poverty.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour,  
brought your Son to birth.  
Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the  
darkness.  
Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on  
earth.'  
Strengthen those who work for peace and justice  
in all the world.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy.  
Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family,  
and saw the baby lying in the manger.  
Bless our homes and all whom we love.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth,  
and earth is raised to heaven.  
Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the  
hope of your coming kingdom.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.  
Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.  
Holy God  
**hear our prayer.**

***Those who are now in need of healing:***

*Patrick Carr, Fr Barry Smart, Toni Hayes, Sarah and James  
Ross, Carole Brooke, Richard Cromwell, Jim Crowley,  
Charlie Goldsmith, Ian Cockburn, Frances Usher-Smith and  
Matt*

***Pray to rest in peace:*** *Jeanette Brickell and Dinah Hilton  
And Vivienne Rathband*

***Anniversary of death:*** *Ivy Risdon, Elaine Crossley,  
Margaret Holloway, Carmel Williams*

*Fr Paul concludes...*

Father,

in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at  
the manger throne.

Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary,

Joseph and the saints

through him who is your Word made flesh,

our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

***Please stand***

**The Peace**

*Fr. Paul introduces the Peace*

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,  
And his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us offer each other the sign of peace



**The Offertory Hymn: NEH 29**

**Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810-1876)**

*(During this hymn a collection will be taken in aid of 'Turning Tides',  
a local charity supporting the homeless)*

- 1      It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
'Peace on the earth, good - will to men  
from heaven's all-gracious King!'  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.
- 2      Still through the cloven skies they come,  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world:  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing;  
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds  
the blessed angels sing.
- 3      Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and man, at war with man, hears not  
the love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing!
- 4      For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophet bards foretold,  
when with the ever-circling years,  
comes round the age of gold:  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.

Pray dear brothers and sisters that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy church.**

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Lord, let praise and thanksgiving be the pure offering of this day's feast, and as your eternal Word takes up our human nature, so by a holy exchange may we be taken up into the divine life of Christ, who is alive, now and forever. **Amen.**



### **The Eucharistic Prayer**

The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts  
**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God  
**It is right to give thanks and praise**

*Fr. Paul continues with the prayer*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest**

*Fr. Paul continues until the following is used:*

**Great is the mystery of faith,  
Christ has died  
Christ is risen  
Christ will come again.**

*Fr. Paul continues and leads into the conclusion of the prayer to  
which all say: **Amen***

***Please kneel or sit***

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

We break the bread of life,  
and that life is the light of the world.

**God here among us,  
light in the midst of us,  
bring us to light and life.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**



## The Giving of Communion

*Fr Paul issues the invitation to communion in these or very similar words:*

Jesus is the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.  
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*Communion is administered in both kinds. Receiving consecrated wine directly from the chalice is offered for those who feel comfortable to do this. **Please do not dip the consecrated wafer into the chalice.** Please wait to be directed to communion*

**Communion Hymn: O&N 597**  
***Stille nacht! Heilige Nacht!* Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)**  
**translated John Freeman Young (1820-1885)**

- 1 Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright,  
round yon virgin mother and child;  
holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace.  
sleep in heavenly peace.**
- 2 Silent night, holy night.  
Shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heav'nly hosts sing 'alleluia:  
Christ, the Saviour is born'.  
Christ, the Saviour is born'.**
- 3 Silent night, holy night.  
Son of God, love's pure light,  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace:  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.**

**Post-Communion Hymn: NEH 32**  
**Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)**

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee to-night.**

- 2      O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to men on earth;  
for Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.**
- 3      How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
so God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.**
- 4      O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.**

### **The Prayer after Communion**

God our Father,  
in this night you have made known to us again  
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him  
until the day dawns  
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.  
To him be glory both now and for ever. **Amen**

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**Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son  
Jesus Christ.**

**Through him we offer you our souls and  
bodies to be a living sacrifice.**

**Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen**

*Please stand*

**The Recessional Hymn: NEH 30  
Adeste fideles – Latin 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880),) and others**

**1 O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him,  
born the King of angels:  
*O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!***

**The Blessing and Dedication of the Crib and  
the new crib figures**

*The figure of the infant Jesus is now placed in the crib scene*

*(The new crib figures have been given in memory of Gill Chaloner  
by her family. Gill regularly attended this Midnight Eucharist in  
Pulborough.)*

*The white central candle on the Advent wreath is now lit to mark the  
beginning of the Saviour's birthday.*

## The Blessing

## The Dismissal

**2**      God of God,  
Light of light,  
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
very God,  
begotten, not created:

**3 See how the shepherds  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps: *Chorus***

**4 Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:  
'Glory to God in the highest:' *Chorus***

**5**      **Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given:  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing:**                      *Chorus*

*Final Organ Voluntary: Widor: Toccata  
(from Organ Symphony no. 5)*

Fr Paul would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their seasonal greetings and cards. It is much appreciated