



Sunday 21st December 2025

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

You are most welcome.

A message to new visitors is found on page 4.

Our 10:30am order of service begins on page 5.

8:00am Holy Communion (*Book of Common Prayer*)

Celebrant: The Rector

10:30am Parish Eucharist (*Common Worship*)

Celebrant: The Rector

Preacher: The Reverend Howard Pashley

Setting: 'A People's Mass - Anthony Gregory Murray with
Glastonbury Kyrie

Hymns: 186, 161, 11

Music at Communion:

'The Angel Gabriel (Gabriel's Message)' Trad arr Pettman

'There is no rose' John Joubert

'Faithful Vigil Ended' (Hymn 44, in memory of Elizabeth Weston)

Postlude: *'Prelude on 'Gabriel's Message'* Iain Farrington

6:30pm The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

For your prayers

At This Time

Gillian Kullman, Jennie Frampton, Lindsay Gorringe, Chris Pratt, Jeremy Connor, David Robertson, Margaret Thompson, HM The King, the bereaved and those suffering during warfare.

Recently Departed Year's Mind

Elizabeth Weston

Donald Macrae, Annie Elizabeth Kathleen Gardiner, Elinore Muriel-'Wendy'-Macarthur, Margaret Booton, Christopher Denne, Edith Rosamund Pittock, Vivienne Joan Docker, Richard Stanley Thornton, Thomas Raymond Bilsborrow, Mary Elizabeth Twyman

Reflection for the week

The Reverend Doctor Jeanne Males

When I was a great deal younger (well a very great deal) I had a really wonderful feeling about Christmas. Christmas was so much a reflection on what we often see on TV screens and certainly what we see on Christmas cards. There are never any muddy wet footprints in the house on a snowy day – and anyway the snow (if there is any) is always perfect. All the people in the nativity scene are dressed perfectly and look completely relaxed. Rarely do we see anyone asleep in the corner after overindulgence. And if there are animals in evidence around the Holy Family – well we couldn't imagine the sort of odours they would bring with them!

Not exactly a couple – a pregnant woman and her partner – after a long journey and a desperate search for accommodation in a busy town at night.

And it may be that the rather over perfect vision of Christmas can affect us. That we might feel that we too might need to be pretty perfect to be a part of it all. But the truth is that the mess around the 'real' Christmas would help to reflect the mess that we bring. The overwork, the need to tidy the house at the last minute, and fit extra guests around the table – they are all a part of the challenge of Christmas and what it is that we bring.

Perhaps it is the fact that as we grow and mature we realise that it is the mess and difficulties of our own lives that we bring as we prepare to meet the Christ child. That the reality of who we are and what we bring will truly make us ready to be there to greet him and to receive him

It is all here for us in the waiting.

Maybe

Maybe it is in the waiting for God
not in the wandering from store to
store
that we find our way

Maybe, just maybe, God of Advent,
this year it will be different.

Maybe, just maybe,
we will let you lead us to Bethlehem

*(from a poem by Thom M Shuman
published by Wild Goose Publications)*

New to St Clements?

Welcome! We're delighted that you're here

There has been a place of Christian prayer on this site for more than 1,000 years. All are welcome at our services - whatever your background and whatever your faith.

Many of the words of our service can be found from page five of this booklet. Feel free to join in with the words in bold, and to stand, kneel, or sit as you feel able and comfortable. Don't worry about getting it 'right', we're all learning to pray!

The service will start with notices and a hymn. We then bring to mind the times we've not loved God, our neighbours, and ourselves fully. Though it can be uncomfortable admitting we are sinners, we want to be honest with God (and ourselves) that we're not perfect. We can trust that God is utterly loving and forgiving.

A series of readings from scripture follows, and then the sermon, in which the preacher attempts to break open the scriptures and apply them to our lives today.

We pray for the needs of the Church and world, and then the altar is prepared. A collection will be taken, as 'giving' is an important part of

our Christian lives, but don't worry if you're unable to contribute as a visitor.

The priest leads the Eucharistic Prayer - the prayer of thanksgiving - during which we offer bread and wine to God, and He transforms it into the Body and Blood of Christ.

All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion (it's fine to only receive the Body or Blood if you prefer. For reasons of hygiene please don't dip the wafer into the chalice). Or do come forward holding this booklet to receive a blessing. **If you need a gluten-free wafer please let someone at the door know before the service.**

We share refreshments in the Sunley Room (accessed up the ramp behind the organ), and you are most welcome to stay. Toilets may also be found here.

The Church is open daily for peace and prayer. If you'd like to know more about our worship or faith, do talk to people in the congregation or one of the priests. You can also visit our website, www.stclementschurchsandwich.org.uk

Music at 10:30am today

Today's hymns and choir music centres unashamedly around the Virgin Mary. One of the most familiar Christmas carols about Mary is that known as Gabriel's Message or simply The Angel Gabriel. It quotes the biblical account of the Annunciation from Luke, Chapter 1, verses 26–38 and Mary's Magnificat in verses 46–55 commencing with the opening lines:-

*The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as
flame;
"All hail", said he, "thou lowly
maiden Mary, most highly favoured
lady." Gloria.*

A Basque folk carol, originally based on Angelus ad virginem, a 13th or 14th Century Latin carol, it was collected by Charles Bordes (published Paris 1897) and then paraphrased into English by Sabine Baring-Gould in 1922 who had spent a winter as a boy in the Basque country. The arrangement sung today is that by Edgar Pettman who was born in the village of Dunkirk (between Canterbury and Faversham) in 1881.

It is followed by a much more recent anthem about Mary – John Joubert's 'There is no rose of such virtue'. Born in Cape Town, Joubert lived in

and around Birmingham (where, incidentally his daughter played alongside Beryl in the Birmingham Schools Symphony Orchestra) and composed in many genres—operas, concertos, symphonies, chamber and much choral music. His choral works remain his best known, although he disliked being 'pigeon-holed' as a composer of this carol written in 1954 whilst others might also argue the same of the children's classic carol 'Torches'. There is no rose is however a sublime and serene setting of 15th century words in which the composer features the ladies vocal lines in a parallel duet, followed by the men taking over the melody, and ending with a very gentle and sombre request to "leave we all this worldly mirth and follow we this joyful birth, transeamus" (Latin for "let us go" or "let us cross").....to Bethlehem)

The outgoing voluntary is a quiet and reflective piece by the contemporary composer Iain Farrington based on the melody of the Angel Gabriel which has been sung earlier. The tune is not difficult to spot!

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Order of Service

The Gathering

Notices are given before the service. Stand as the Choir enters. They sing the first part of the ancient 'Advent Prose'. All are invited to join in the second time they sing:

Pour down, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness. Comfort my people, comfort them; my salvation shall not be delayed. I have swept your offences away like a cloud; fear not, for I will save you. I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your redeemer. **Pour down, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness.**

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

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

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confessing our Sins

The Celebrant introduces a period of silence in which all call to mind their sins. Then all kneel or sit.

Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

The Choir sing 'Kyrie/Christe Eleison' ('Lord/Christ have mercy'). Absolution is given, then the Celebrant says: Let us pray: 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. *All say Amen.*

The Scriptures

Isaiah 7.10-16

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.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Remain seated as the Choir sing Psalm 80 v1-8, 17-19

*Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel,
thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep
: shew thyself also, thou that sittest
upon the cherubims.*

*Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and
Manasses : stir up thy strength, and
come, and help us.*

*Turn us again, O God : shew the
light of thy countenance, and we
shall be whole.*

*O Lord God of hosts : how long wilt
thou be angry with thy people that
prayeth?*

Thou feedest them with the bread of

*tears : and givest them plenteousness
of tears to drink.*

*Thou hast made us a very strife unto
our neighbours : and our enemies
laugh us to scorn.*

*Turn us again, thou God of hosts :
shew the light of thy countenance,
and we shall be whole.*

*Thou hast brought a vine out of
Egypt : thou hast cast out the hea-
then, and planted it.*

*Let thy hand be upon the man of
thy right hand : and upon the son of
man, whom thou madest so strong
for thine own self.*

*And so will not we go back from thee
: O let us live, and we shall call upon
thy Name.*

*Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts
: shew the light of thy countenance,
and we shall be whole.*

Romans 1.1-7

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. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn Number 186

Turn to face the Book of the Gospels as it moves to the centre of the nave. 'Alleluia' is sung.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew 1.18-end

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 is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

A sermon is preached.

The 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 the 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.

The Intercessions & Peace

Kneel or sit to pray. 'Kyrie/Christe Eleison' ('Lord/Christ have mercy') is sung after each petition.

At the end: Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your

Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Stand for the Peace The peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you.

The altar is prepared while we sing.

A collection, taken as the congregation arrived, is offered up to God. If you would like to make a donation please leave it in the safe beside the north porch after the service, use the cardreader there, scan the QR code here, or head to :



*www.stclementsandwich.org.uk/donate
Thank you.*

Hymn Number 161

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Celebrant prays over the offerings, and all respond Amen.

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.

The Celebrant prays the Preface, leading into:

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. *All kneel or sit*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness; grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit, and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; who in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross, his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world; rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming in glory, we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, we bring before you this bread and this cup and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people and gather into one in your kingdom all who share this one bread and one cup, so that we, in the company of Mary, Clement, Peter, Paul, and all the saints, may

praise and glorify you for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. *All say boldly: Amen.*

Preparation for Communion

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.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ. **Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.**

Jesus, lamb of God, have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us. Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.

Behold 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.**

In Advent, we say **We do not**

presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us. Amen.

Holy Communion

Sidespeople will indicate when to move for Holy Communion. All who are baptised are welcome to receive Communion, or do bring this booklet with you to indicate that you wish to receive a blessing instead.

After all have received Holy Communion, Stand as the Celebrant says 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. *All say Amen.*

All say 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.

Hymn 11

Going out into the World

All remain standing for the blessing and dismissal:

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

The Celebrant blesses and dismisses the congregation.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ, Amen!

The organ postlude is part of our act of worship, please remain quiet. If you are able, do please stay for refreshments after the service - served from The Sunley Room (behind the organ)

CHRISTMAS

AT ST CLEMENT'S



NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

SUNDAY 21ST DEC. + 6:30PM

CHILDREN'S CHRISTINGLE CRIB SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE + 4:00PM

MIDNIGHT MASS

CHRISTMAS EVE + 11:00PM

HOLY COMMUNION

CHRISTMAS DAY + 8:00AM

FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

CHRISTMAS DAY + 11:00AM



www.stclementsandwich.org.uk

Reimagining our Worshiping Space

Copies of the 'Reimagining our Worshiping Space Together' booklet, with their response forms, are available by the font. A huge thank you to those who have graciously and imaginatively returned forms so far.



Christmas Cards

Christmas cards between members of the congregation await collection in the Sunley Room. A huge thanks to those who have arranged the postbox this year.

Zoom Compline

Our next online Compline will take place this Tuesday 23rd December, and will be a special service marking the end of Advent as we look towards the joy of the Christmas season. We would love to have as many people as possible join us — the service lasts around 25 minutes and is an important part of our Warm Welcome Project.

If this will be your first time joining us, please speak to Derek, who can offer guidance on how to connect. Full details are also available on the church website under Services.

www.stclementsandwich.org.uk/zoom-compline

Pastoral Care Group

It was lovely to see over 20 people attend the “Come and See” event for the new pastoral group, which is an important part of the Warm Welcome project.

If you would like to know more or register your interest, please email Derek on d.kirkaldie@stclementsandwich.org.uk. There are also leaflets on display, or feel free to have a chat with Derek or the Rector.

Parish Diary

December

Sunday 21st	6:30pm	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols <i>A highlight of the year, the traditional service recalling the story of Christ's birth in word and music</i>
Tuesday 23rd	7:30pm	Zoom Compline <i>December's Zoom Compline will reflect on Advent, as we draw nearer to Christmas. Speak to Derek or see www.stclementsandwich.org.uk/zoom-compline</i>
Wednesday 24th (10:00am Holy Communion as normal)	4:00pm	Children's Christingle Crib Service <i>Children and families are especially welcome to this interactive service celebrating light in the world</i>
	11:00pm	Midnight Mass <i>The traditional way to bring in Christmas, a Eucharist celebrated with the Choir and Carols</i>
Thursday 25th December	8:00am	Holy Communion <i>A thirty minute said service, according to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer</i>
	11:00am	Family Christmas Celebration <i>Readings and carols to celebrate Christmas Day</i>

Parish Directory

PARISH OFFICE

Caroline Flynn
Parish Administrator

St Clement's Hall,
Church Street St Clement's,
Sandwich. CT13 9EH.

Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:30pm (1:00pm Fridays)

020 3089 4745 - please leave a message with BT Callminder.

admin@stclementsandwich.org.uk

www.stclementsandwich.org.uk

THE RECTOR

The Reverend Sebastian Hamilton
fr.sjm.hamilton@gmail.com + 01304 746033

Day of Rest: Monday, Study Day: Saturday

CHURCHWARDENS

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Ros Daniels + Secretary@stclementsandwich.org.uk

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Steve Kirkpatrick + treasurer@stclementsandwich.org.uk

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Julian Sampson + sampson@supanet.com

SACRISTAN

Diane Collier + d.collier@stclementsandwich.org.uk

The week ahead

Monday 22nd December - O Rex Gentium

Tuesday 23rd December - O Emmanuel

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

10:00am Holy Communion (*Book of Common Prayer*)

4pm Christingle Crib Service

11:00pm Midnight Mass

Thursday 25th December - The Nativity of the Lord

8:00am Holy Communion (*Book of Common Prayer*)

11:00am Family Christmas Celebration

Friday 26th December - The Feast of St Stephen, D, M

9:45am Morning Prayer

10:00am Eucharist

Saturday 27th December - The Feast of St John the Evangelist

Sunday 28th December - The First Sunday of Christmas

8:00am Holy Communion (*Book of Common Prayer*)

10:30am Parish Eucharist (Common Worship)

Celebrant and Preacher: The Reverend Robin Bendall

Day	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Monday	Ps 124, 125, 126, 127 + Malachi 1.1, 6-end	Ps 24, 48 + 2 Peter 1.1-15
Tuesday	Ps 128, 129, 130, 131 + Malachi 2.1-16	Ps 89.1-37 + 2 Peter 1.16-2.3
Wednesday	Ps 45, 113 + Malachi 2.17-3.12	Ps 85 + Revelation 1.1-8
Thursday	Ps 110, 117 + Isaiah 62. 1-5	Ps 8 + Philippians 2.5-11
Friday	Ps 13, 31.1-8, 150.1-end + Jeremiah 26.12-15	Ps 57; 86 + Matthew 23.34-end
Saturday	Ps 21, 147.13-end + Exodus 33.12-end	Ps 97 + 1 John 2.1-11

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