

# Benefice of the Piddle Valley, Hilton & Ansty, Melcombe Horsey and Cheselbourne

24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Christmas  
(Altar Colour White/Gold)



**Collect - Christmas Night:** 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**

**Collect - Christmas Day:** Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; 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**

## **Isaiah 52: 7-10 (ESV)**

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

## **John 1:1-14 (ESV) - The Word Became Flesh**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**COMMENT:** This passage takes a different look at the Nativity. John's "Christmas" would be difficult to do in a children's play. There is no baby lying in a manger. There are no parents travelling to Bethlehem. There are no angels or shepherds. There is no star or magi. John doesn't give us much of a historical account of Christmas, instead he gives us a confession of faith about the incarnation of God. John isn't so concerned about exactly what happened in Bethlehem during the reign of Caesar Augustus (or King Herod). He is much more concerned about belief in Jesus, and the incarnation. The Christmas confession of John's community (note the "us" and "we" in verse 14) extends beyond a baby being born and wrapped in cloths and laid in a manger. It is the belief that he existed before creation and he comes and lives among us now. For those who might point out there is no mention of the virgin birth, this is implied and understood by the text. Verses 12-13 reveals how the believers become "Children of God" - by adoption - and yet spiritually born; "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." This leads on to verse 14, of which the Word is described as "The only Son from the father". This makes a clear distinction. In the literal translation, the Word is the only begotten of Father, i.e. the only one born of the Father. A few verses on (verse 18) this is further strengthened with a reference to the deity of the Word/Son; "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

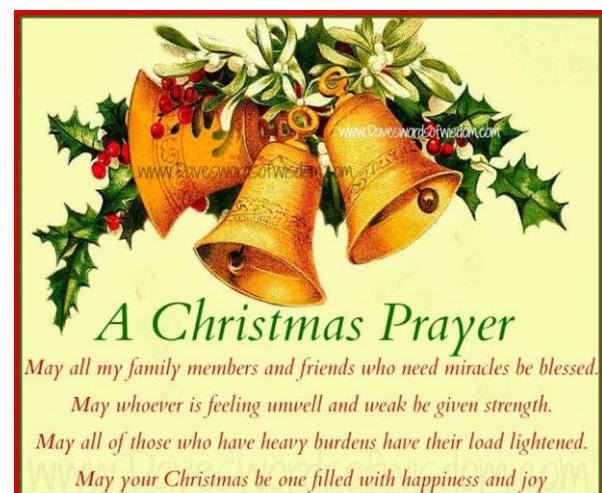
**Post Communion - Christmas Night:** God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts. To him be glory both now and for ever. **Amen**

**Post Communion - Christmas Day:** God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. **Amen**

**Blessing:** Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## Benefice Prayer list.

- ❖ Please pray for those who are suffering from poor health, those recovering from hospital treatment or surgery, for the grieving and lonely; including: Frances Mallett, Ann Lambert, Tim Jeanes, Geoff Harris, Robin Dibble, Hannah Parsons, June Kellaway, Robin Saunders, Anna Thomas, Bernard & David. For all those in care homes, and the staff, including: Roger Gray (Dorchester) and June Smith (Warminster).
- ❖ Please pray for our friends, family and neighbours, as we prepare for the joy of Christmas, remembering those who find this season difficult.



## Benefice Notices

THE  
**WEEK**  
AHEAD

*Love God, Love thy neighbour  
and follow Covid safety protocols  
set out in church.*

### **Sunday 27th December 2020**

**Christmas 1 – Altar Colour White / Gold**

9.30 Communion at Alton Pancras. 6.00pm Evening Prayer at Hilton

### **Live Streaming**

*The daily offices will continue to be streamed daily via Facebook*



Monday @ 8am Morning Prayer

Tuesday @ 8am Morning Prayer & 8pm Compline

Wednesday @ 8am Morning Prayer & 6pm Evening Prayer

Thursday @ 9am Communion & 8pm Compline

Friday @ 6.00pm Compline

Saturday @ 6.00pm Devotions / Evening Prayer



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