

Collect for Today

(Christmas Eve)

Almighty God,

you make us glad with the yearly remembrance

of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:

grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,

so we may with sure confidence behold him

when he shall come to be our judge;

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Readings for This Week (may vary)

(Christmas Day – Set III)

Isaiah 52.7-10

(Psalm 98)

Hebrews 1.1-4 [5-12]

John 1.1-14

Readings for Next Week (may vary)

(First Sunday of Christmas)

Isaiah 61.10 - 62.3

(Psalm 148*)

Galatians 4.4-7

Luke 2.15-21

Verse for the Week:

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us”

John 1:14

Prayer & Reading Diary Bridestowe

Monday

Read: Isaiah 62.6-12

Prayer: We thank you for Celebration of new life for us all which came with the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ and we pray for all those around us who do not yet know him.

Tuesday

Read: Psalm 97

Prayer: We pray for anyone in our community for whom Christmas is not a happy time because it increases their feelings loneliness and isolation. Help us to help them.

Wednesday

Read: Colossians 1.9-20

Prayer: We pray for the safety of friends and family travelling today.

Thursday

Read: Luke 2.41-52

Prayer: We pray for our local doctors and hospitals as they struggle with strikes and staff shortages and for all for whom this causes fear of cancellation of appointments and treatment.

Friday

Read: Zechariah 8.1-8

Prayer: We thank you for the privilege of living in this peaceful part of the world and pray for all those suffering from the effects of war, conflict and climate change.

Saturday

Read: Luke 2.41-52

Prayer: We pray for the covenant between St. Bridget's and the Methodist Church that it may be strengthened and flourish in the coming year.

Notices:



- For the first time for many years, **St Mary's Belstone** will have a service of Holy Communion on **Christmas Day** at 9:30 am. There will be no late evening service on Christmas Eve.

- There will be a **Celtic Reflective Service: 'Celtic Epiphany'** - taking place in Jacobstowe on Wednesday 10th January, starting at 7pm. If it goes well, it will hopefully be followed up with a regular version.

Dates for your Diary:



- Thursday 21st December**
Inwardleigh - Candlelit Service at 7:30pm

- Saturday 23rd December**
Bridestowe – Walking Nativity at 2pm

Church Services:

Sunday 31st December:

09:30am

Inwardleigh – Holy Communion

Bridestowe – Family Service

11:00am

Okehampton – Holy Communion

Hatherleigh – Group Morning Service

Lydford – Holy Communion



Contact Details:



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Church Services:

Sunday 24th December:

Christmas Eve

9:30am

Jacobstowe – Holy Communion

11:00am

Hatherleigh – Morning Service

4:00pm

Okehampton - Crib Service

Lydford – Christingle

Exbourne - Crib Service

Northlew - Crib Service

Belstone – Crib Service

6:00pm

Bratton Clovelly – Carols in the Square

7:00pm

Hatherleigh – Carols in the Square

10:00pm

Northlew – Holy Communion

11:00pm

Okehampton – Holy Communion

11:30am

Bridestowe – Midnight Mass

Exbourne – Midnight Mass



Christmas Day Services:

9:00am

Sourton – Holy Communion

9:30am

Northlew – Joint Service with Methodists

Belstone – Holy Communion

Inwardleigh – Holy Communion

10:00am

Bridestowe – Service at Methodists

10:30am

Okehampton - Holy Communion

Germansweek – Holy Communion by ext'n

Lydford – Holy Communion

Sticklepath – Holy Communion

11:00am

Hatherleigh – Holy Communion Gp. Service

Grapevine

4th Sunday of Advent

24th Dec 2023



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The Advent Antiphons are historically said or sung with the Evening Prayer Magnificat throughout the week before Christmas. The author is unknown, but they are thought to have been written very early – they were first mentioned in writing in 6th Century Italy, so were likely to be earlier. They use ancient biblical names for Christ such as Sapientia (Wisdom), Adonai (Lord), Radix Jesse (Root of Jesse), Clavis David (Key of David), Oriens (Morning Star), Rex Gentium (King of the Nations), Emmanuel (God-with-us). The carol *O Come; O Come Emmanuel* is an adaptation of them.

The Christmas story is an ancient one but has never stopped happening – that story of God in human form continues today in you and me. The story is just as radical as it ever was. Have you ever noticed that the male protagonists are quiet in the nativity stories? Zechariah, Joseph? The women, however, are loud – centre stage is given to God's interaction with women of low status – Elizabeth, Mary – and their holy responses to that. Then it spreads. The shepherds, stinky, dirty, unwashed shepherds (and if you've worked with sheep, you will know how that smell "clings"!) are honoured with a whole host of angels. Why save this delight for a few shepherds? Why not the whole world? These are all signs of God's other-worldly priorities. Hear the words of Mary "he has cast down the mighty from their seat" "he has raised up the humble and meek". This story is as radical today as it ever was.

So, as we approach the baby Jesus with wonder, what ancient name for the cosmic Christ might you use?
With every blessing at this Christmas-tide and beyond,
Gill