

Collect for Today

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

Readings for This Week (may vary)

Isaiah 7.10-16
(Psalm 80.1-8,18-20*)
Romans 1.1-7
Matthew 1.18-25

Readings for Next Week (may vary)

Isaiah 63.7-9
(Psalm 148*)
Hebrews 2.10-18
Matthew 2.13-23

Verse for the Week:

‘The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’, which means ‘God with us’.
Matt 1: 23

Prayer & Reading Diary Okehampton

Monday

Read: Isaiah 63.7-9

Prayer: Pray for the work of the Salvation Army and other organisations like Shelter, Centre Point, Crisis at Christmas, who support those who will be hungry, homeless, frightened or alone this Christmas time and throughout the year.

Tuesday

Read: Psalm 148*

Prayer: Pray for the work of the women’s refuge in Torbay who provide practical, non-judgemental support, advice and protection for all victims of domestic abuse.

Wednesday: Christmas Eve

Read: Hebrews 2.10-18

Prayer: As our Posada figures of Mary and Joseph complete their journey around homes in our parish pray that in the midst of our own preparations we will put the birth of our saviour Jesus Christ at the centre of our thoughts.

Thursday: Christmas Day

Read: Matthew 2.13-23

Prayer: Pray that the Christ Child will be in the midst of our celebrations today and also give comfort to all those who find Christmas Day difficult for whatever reason.

Friday: Boxing Day

Read: Isaiah 35.1-6

Prayer: On the Feast of St Stephen, who rode out and brought food, wine and fuel to a poor man, pray that we will reach out and offer hospitality and friendship to all we meet.

Saturday

Read: Galatians 3.23-29

Prayer: We may think that Christmas is over but it’s only the beginning .Pray that we will all feel the Joy of the Christ child not just one day but in our lives.

Notices:



* Saturday 20th December: Moor Harmony concert

St Mary's Church, Belstone invites you to their 'Moor Harmony' concert in the Church on Saturday 20th December at 5.30pm. An hour of Carols and Christmas themed music. Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. Retiring collection will be split between the Church and Moor Harmony. We look forward to seeing you.

* **Okehampton All Saint’s Parish Church** is open every Tuesday morning between 10am and 12 noon for prayer. This is an opportunity to meet and pray with others, or just to sit quietly. Refreshments will be available.

* **St James Chapel**, in the centre of Okehampton, is open all day, every day. **Every Thursday:** 10am Communion at St James, Okehampton.



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Church Services:



Thursday 18th December:

Meeth – Carol Service @ 7pm

Inwardleigh – Candlelit Service @ 7:30pm

Saturday 20th December:

Bratton Clovelly – Carols & Readings @ 4pm

Christmas Eve:

4:00pm

Okehampton – Blessing of the Crib

Belstone – Crib Service

Exbourne – Carol Service

Northlew – Carol Service

Lydford - Christingle

7:00pm

Hatherleigh – Carols in the Square

8:00pm

Okehampton - First Communion of Christmas

11:30pm

Bratton Clovelly - Midnight Mass

Bridestowe – Midnight Mass

Northlew – Midnight Mass

Christmas Day:

9:30am

Inwardleigh – Morning Prayer

Belstone – Holy Communion

10:00am

Okehampton – Holy Communion

Jacobstowe – Christmas Family Service

10:30am

Lydford – Christmas Communion

11:00am

Hatherleigh – Christmas Family Communion

Church Services:



Sunday 21st December

(4th Sunday of Advent)

8:30am

Sticklepath - Holy Communion

9:30am

Bratton Clovelly - Holy Communion

Northlew - Holy Communion

Jacobstowe – Holy Communion

11:00am

Hatherleigh – Morning Service

Lydford - Morning Prayer

Meeth - Holy Communion

6:30pm

Okehampton - Carols by Candlelight

Belstone - Carol Service

Exbourne – Carol Service

Bridestowe – Joint Carol Service

Sunday 28th December:

Okehampton – Joint Benefice HC @ 10am

Hatherleigh – Five Parish Service @ 11am

Bratton Clovelly – Christingle @ 3pm

Bridestowe – Holy Communion @ 4:30pm

Lydford – Holy Communion @ 11am

Grapevine

4th Sunday of Advent

21st December 2025



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www.northmoorteam.org.uk

This Sunday we'll have all four advent candles lit [no jokes please] for the last Sunday before Christmas, and this week, our focus is Mary.

I often wonder, what did she really know about God before Gabriel turned up? We can't really know, but it's a guess she attended synagogue and heard plenty of sermons. But the experience she had with Gabriel went beyond any Saturday sermon and was new ground for her; what would it all mean? What would it cost? At that moment she had no idea. Her unreserved 'Yes' is astonishing, and a provocation to us all.

When I think back to my own conversion, I wonder the same; what did I know, the night I gave myself to Jesus? Not much, but enough to want to give him my life. Did I become perfect overnight? No, I was still a scallywag, and sometimes I still am [to my shame], like everyone, I'm on a journey. Justification comes in a moment, sanctification takes the rest of our lives. Not knowing much and being a beginner didn't stop me, didn't stop Mary, and we shouldn't let it stop anyone else either.

God is up to something big in this country, and it might not look like what we've been expecting while praying for God to move. Let's be ready to work with His programme, over and above our own. Mary gave birth to the saviour, what might be born of our obedience and sacrifice?

A blessed and peaceful Christmas season to you all,

Leigh Winsbury