

THE FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT

O Morning Star, splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness:
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Regular Services

St Mary's: Sundays at 8am and 9.30am, Wednesdays at 10.30am

St Paul's: Sundays at 11.15am, Thursdays at 9.30am

Today

4pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, with mulled wine & mince pies – **at St Paul's**

Christmas Eve

4.00pm: Family Crib Service, St Mary's

Children can dress as angels, animals, kings, Mary & Joseph etc
(in support of the Children's Society)

8pm: 'Early bird' Midnight Mass, St Paul's

11.30pm: Midnight Mass, St Mary's

Christmas Day

9.30am: Family Mass, St Mary's

Notices

Cancellations and alterations: St Mary's - there will **NOT** be a Wednesday morning service on Christmas Eve or an 8am service on Sunday 28th December. On Wednesday 31st December there will be a service of Morning Prayer at 10am.

St Mary's Christmas Board: Post any greetings or cards on the board at the back of church

Community Fridge - Christmas Support Initiative: See the insert from previous notices, view our website or speak to a Churchwarden for more details of how you can help with this important appeal.

Bishop Rob Wickham will preside at St Paul's Patronal Festival on January 25th when, as well as celebrating St Paul and St Paul's church, we will also say 'farewell and thank you' to Norma Howie and Sheila Neep. The Churchwardens are organizing a suitable presentation which you can support via an envelope or bank transfer marked 'office farewell'.

Next Sunday of the Holy Family, no 8am.

St Mary's Churchwardens: stmarychurchwarden@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

Andrew Darby Tel: 01582 943200

Rosamund Russell Tel: 01442 217754

St Paul's Churchwarden: stpaulchurchwarden@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

Gordon Gaddes Tel: 07561 450633

Rosina Gaddes Tel: 07720 897037

Team Rector: The Revd Canon John Williams:

Tel: 07522 504087 vicar@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

Team Clergy:

St Albans, Warners End: The Revd Pete Stevenson Tel: 01442 251897 rev_pete@onetel.com

St Barnabas, Adeyfield: The Revd Matt Renyard Tel: 0749 355742: revmattrenyard@gmail.com

The COR, Grovehill & Woodhall Farm: The Revd Austin Janes Tel: 01442 270585: revaustin@sky.com

Team Office:

Norma Howie Tel: 07901 359117 admin@stmaryandstpaulhemel.org.uk

Newsletter: News to the Team Rector by close of play on Wednesday.

Payments: Cheques should be made payable to "St Mary and St Paul PCC".

READINGS

COLLECT

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**

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

(7: 10-16)

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord make his paths straight and all flesh shall see the salvation of God **Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

(Matt 11: 2-11)

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

POST COMMUNION

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. **Amen.**