

SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY

St. Mary's Sunday 21st December 2025 Advent 4



A very warm welcome to St. Mary's

8.00am	HOLY COMMUNION (said)	<i>Revd Dave Richards</i>
10.30am	CHORAL EUCHARIST	<i>Canon Jeremy Oakes</i>
6.30pm	SWANAGE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION	<i>Revds Ian Bird & Jo Levasier</i>

10.30am – Choral Eucharist

Processional:	422
Gradual:	31
Offertory:	360 (omit *)
Communion:	52
Post Communion:	26
Psalm:	80 v. 1-7
Setting:	<i>Darke in F / Aston</i>
Motet: I Sing of a Maiden	<i>Berkeley</i>

6.30pm Swanage Community Christmas Celebration

In the Stillness	<i>Beamish</i>
Sir Christèmas	<i>Mathias</i>
Christmas Lullaby	<i>Rutter</i>

Readings for 8am & 10.30am

Isaiah 7:10-16
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-end

Churchwarden

Avril Harris
Ray Davis

Director of Music

Simon Lole

(please contact via the Parish Office)

Visit our Team website www.swanageteam.com

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.

Post Communion Prayer

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.

Coming to the 10.30am Sunday service at St Mary's

If you come with children, we have activity packs for them if required - please talk to a Welcomer. Also please don't hesitate to make use of our children's area.

If you find the chancel steps difficult, please ask a Welcomer to arrange communion at your seat. If you need a gluten-free wafer, please let a Welcomer know. Everyone is welcome for refreshments after the service.

Donations – All donations by whatever payment method are gratefully received. We have a contactless 'donation station' near the West (main) Door with the facility for Gift Aid or you can use the QR Code.



ST MARY'S DIARY FOR THE WEEK

Daily (Mon– Sat)	8.00am	Morning Prayer – All Welcome
Wednesday 24 th	11.00am 4.00pm 6.30pm 11.30pm	Holy Communion with Healing in the chapel Crib Service Carols by Candlelight Midnight Eucharist
Thursday 25 th	8.00am 10.30am	Christmas Communion Christmas Choral Eucharist

SERVICES FOR NEXT SUNDAY 28th December – Christmas 1

8.00am	HOLY COMMUNION (said)	<i>Revd John Cooper</i>
10.30am	CHORAL EUCHARIST	<i>Canon Jeremy Oakes</i>
6.30pm	NO CHORAL EVENSONG	

TEAM NOTICES

**Swanage Community Christmas Celebration Service this evening,
Sunday 21st December at 6.30pm in St Mary's Church.**

All Things Bright and Beautiful – there will **NO** All Things Bright & Beautiful service on December 23rd or 30th.

Community Coffee Studland's Community Coffee Morning has moved back to the Church Hall for the winter season. Please join us on Thursday mornings from 10am to 11am – for coffee, cake and conversation. We'd love to see you there.

Monthly Parish Magazines – you can access both the Church Alive! magazine and Studland Parish News on our new website swanageteam.com/team-magazine.

Cleaning at St Mary's - the existing volunteers are taking on more of the cleaning of the church buildings. If you can help, occasionally or regularly, join us at church on Saturday mornings at 9.30.

Swanage Depression Support facilitators - SDS is looking for more volunteers to facilitate this valuable support group. The group meets every other Wednesday evening. For more information please talk to Revd Natalie or contact Alan Dominy at swanagedepression@outlook.com.

Candle Wax for Ukraine - Ukraine still needs our support. Candle wax is being collected from local churches and communities to create cooking candles ("trench candles") and candles for villages without electricity. Please donate candle ends, candle wax, and unwanted candles in the box in St Mary's Church porch, from where it will be taken to a Ukraine support group.

*The Parish office will close on Christmas Eve and re-open on
Tuesday 6th January 2026*

Funerals in our churches:

Peter Dyke	Tues 23 Dec	11.00am	St Mark's
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Team Contact details

Team Rector	Revd Dr Ian Bird Tel: 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)
Team Vicar	Revd Jo Levasier Tel 01929 208217 (normal day off Monday)
Parish Administrator	Karon Quirey swanage.team@btconnect.com

website: swanageteam.com

REFLECTION

Isaiah 7: 1-16, Romans 1: 1-7, Matthew 1: 18 to the end.

The readings for the Fourth Sunday of Advent cycle through themes of prophecy, covenant, and the Virgin Birth, with Year A focusing on Isaiah's "Immanuel" prophecy and Matthew's birth narrative, Year B highlighting God's promise to David & the Annunciation in Luke, and Year C emphasising Micah's Bethlehem prophecy & Mary's visit to Elizabeth in Luke, all building towards Jesus' coming.

We are in year A and should rightly be holding Mary the Blessed Virgin close to our hearts. Nevertheless on reading through the passage I can't help but think "Let's hear it for Joseph!" The strength of our belief is measured by how much we are prepared to suffer for those beliefs. Joseph was a man of strong beliefs. He was prepared to do what is right despite the personal pain it might cause him.

He faced a dilemma, his betrothed declared that she was pregnant. Despite his love for Mary and the sincere way in which she had described her circumstance, "of the Holy Spirit," he could not put aside the fact that someone else was the child's father. Wishing to be gentle toward her he chose to "quietly" divorce her.

This was not to be the end, for in a dream, he was visited by an Angel of the Lord who reassured Joseph that it was an honourable decision to marry Mary and take the child as his own.

We know little of their family life, however it seems to me that Mary took charge of his spiritual development and Joseph his human life. We know little of Joseph, he is last mentioned when Jesus was 12 years old.

Joseph prepared him through childhood to adulthood. He educated him in the ways of a working life. He prepared him for life in society with all its strengths and weaknesses. Surely this would also prepare him for his mission and Messiahship?

On this 4th Sunday of Advent we give thanks for the commitment of two comparatively ordinary people of great faith. Each is anxious about what has been proposed for them, yet each acquiesces to God's wish. Each puts their trust in God, and each other.

Perhaps this Christmas we should do the same. We ordinary people, each serving Him as best we can, are we ready and worthy of his coming? Is the world ready to do the same?

With Advent blessings
Revd John Cooper.