

# SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY

## St. Mary's Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025 Advent 4



A very warm welcome to St. Mary's

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

### 10.30am – Choral Eucharist

Processional:	422
Gradual:	31
Offertory:	360 (omit *)
Communion:	52
Post Communion:	26
Psalm:	80 v. 1-7
Setting:	<i>Darke</i> in F / Aston
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](http://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.



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## ST MARY'S DIARY FOR THE WEEK

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

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## SERVICES FOR NEXT SUNDAY 28<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas 1

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

# WELCOME TO ST MARK'S CHURCH

Bell Street, Swanage, BH19 2SA



## SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

**10am Holy Communion** Rev Dave Richards

*Bible Theme: Isaiah 7:10-16 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25*

***Followed by ST MARK'S CHRISTMAS PARTY in the Church Rm***

6:30pm Swanage Community Christmas Celebration at St Mary's

## DIARY FOR THIS WEEK:

**St. Mark's Church & Garden Open** 10am- 4pm, Mon – Wed

Mon 22<sup>nd</sup>: **Funeral of Christine Roberts** 11am at St Mark's Church

Mon 22<sup>nd</sup>: **Choir Rehearsal** 6:15pm - 7pm Church Room

Tue 23<sup>rd</sup>: **Funeral of Peter Dykes** 11am at St Mark's Church

Tue 23<sup>rd</sup>: **St Mark's Junior Singing Club:** 2pm - 3pm Church Room

## WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve

**4:30pm Carols by Candlelight**

***A traditional Christmas Carol Service suitable for all ages***

## THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day

**10am Christmas Family Communion**

*Bible Theme: Hebrews 1:1-4 Luke 2:1-20 Rev Dave Richards*

***Followed by Celebratory Refreshments in the Church Room***

*Please talk to a Welcomer if you need a gluten-free Communion wafer*

***Thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to make our  
Christmas Services, events and activities go so well***

**NEXT SUNDAY: 28<sup>th</sup> December – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

**10am Christmas Celebration with St Mark's Band**

*The Word and the World (John 1:1-14)      Rev Dave Richards*

***Followed by Coffee and Cake in the Church Room***

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 - Team Epiphany Service, St Mark's 6:30pm**

***COLLECT (SPECIAL PRAYER) FOR ADVENT 4:*** *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.

***COLLECT (SPECIAL PRAYER) FOR 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.

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER:** 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.*

- PLEASE let Dave (07779079844) know of anyone who is unwell, in hospital or housebound who would like a visit.



**For the latest St Mark's News check out our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/StMarksHerston](https://www.facebook.com/StMarksHerston)**

**St Mark's Church, Herston, is part of the Swanage & Studland  
Team of Churches [www.swanageteam.com](http://www.swanageteam.com)**

**Donations for the Work of St Mark's Church are always welcome**  
**There's a plate for cash donations on top of the font, and a QR code on a poster on the wall near the door if you prefer to give online. Thank you.**



**Sunday 21 December 2025**  
**Morning Prayer 10.00am**  
**Rev'd Tony Higgins**

**A very warm welcome to our service this morning in St Nicholas Church, Studland**

And a special welcome if you are new to our church or are visiting the area!

Children are most welcome in our church. Do not worry if they are noisy or make a break for freedom: we are just delighted to have the children in Church with us. There are toys in the two green boxes at the back of the Church - and everyone is welcome to use them.

We do not pass around a collection plate at St Nicholas' Church, but we are most appreciative of donations to help maintain both the Church and its ministry. We have a traditional plate for cash donations with Gift Aid envelopes available as well as a contactless card payments station at the exit to the Church. If you would like to make regular donations, please consider setting up a Standing Order with your bank: if this is of interest, please contact the Treasurer, Eric Stobart at [eric@thestobarts.co.uk](mailto:eric@thestobarts.co.uk).

After the service, we serve coffee, tea and other refreshments in the Church Hall. Please do join us - and get to know us all a little better.

For regular updates on Church activities throughout the week, please find us on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) You can also follow us on Facebook. (St Nicholas Church Studland) – do give us a like or two!

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For additional information about St Nicholas Church and its services, please contact:

Associate Minister: Rev'd Dr Tony Edmonds 01929 450097 [revtonyedmonds@outlook.com](mailto:revtonyedmonds@outlook.com)

Church Wardens: Barbara Matthews 01929 450218  
Eric Stobart 01929 450222

[barmat18@btinternet.com](mailto:barmat18@btinternet.com)  
[eric@thestobarts.co.uk](mailto:eric@thestobarts.co.uk)

**SWANAGE & STUDLAND TEAM MINISTRY**  
**St. Mary's – St. Mark's – All Saints' – St. Nicholas'**

# **21<sup>st</sup> December 2025 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading for this Sunday: Romans 1, 1-7**

**Gospel Reading: Matthew 1, 18- end**

**Psalm 80 v1 – 8; v18 -20**

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!  
Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?  
You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.  
You make us the scorn of our neighbours; our enemies laugh among themselves.  
Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.  
Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.  
Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

## **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.

# TEAM NOTICES

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

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

**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](http://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](mailto: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 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026*

*Funerals in our churches:*

<b>Peter Dyke</b>	Tues 23 Dec	11.00am	St Mark's
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## Team Contact details

<b>Team Rector</b>	Revd Dr Ian Bird Tel: 01929 422916 (normal day off Friday)
<b>Team Vicar</b>	Revd Jo Levasier Tel 01929 208217 (normal day off Monday)
<b>Parish Administrator</b>	Karon Quirey <a href="mailto:swanage.team@btconnect.com">swanage.team@btconnect.com</a>

website: [swanageteam.com](http://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.