

HOLY TRINITY CUCKFIELD

Joyfully serving Jesus



Readings, devotions and prayers

Midnight Mass

24 December 2022

So just what is all the fuss about? What are we celebrating at Christmas? The winter solstice and the beginning of lengthening days and the return of the sun? The ability of the market to satisfy our wildest dreams, at a price? The joy of sharing within a family or community? Or an event in time that changed the world? Or do we perhaps recognise, maybe dimly, that Christmas is a celebration of God's Love filling all our lives, day in and day out, with trust in ourselves and the world around us, with hope in our futures and with an overflowing love for the whole of creation. We do hope so as we join with the whole team here at Cuckfield in wishing everyone a very happy, joyful and loving Christmas.

Brian & Jane

Church website: www.holytrinitycuckfield.org

Midnight Mass (24th December 2022)

11.15pm *(in church & online)*

Readers: Graham Johnson & Carolyn Ponder;

Hymns: All in booklet

Christmas Day (25th December 2022)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

9.45 Family Eucharist for Christmas Day *(in church & online)*

We welcome Bishop Ruth Bushyager as our Celebrant & Preacher at this service

There are no Midweek Services this week

Next Sunday: Second Sunday of Christmas (1st January 2023)

8.00 Holy Communion *(in church)*

9.45 Family Eucharist *(in church & online)*

For services live on Zoom: Click the blue link on the front page of the church website

The Collect for Midnight Mass

Eternal God,
in the stillness of this night
you sent your almighty Word
to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

The Post Communion Prayer:

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.
Amen.

Isaiah 52: 7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion.

Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord has bared his holy arm efore the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Hebrews 1: 1-4

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

John 1: 1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

A thought: Christmas Eve (John 1. 1-14)

We rejoice as we recall the miraculous birth of the baby born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary. We retell the story of the incarnation of God who came into the world in the humblest of circumstances. Jesus was born in a barn, wrapped in a blanket, and laid in an animal trough as his bed. His humble start did not begin to reflect the story of his true nature.

The Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson used to sing a beautiful rendition of the hymn,

Sweet Little Jesus Boy:

Sweet little Jesus boy,

They made you be born in a manger.

Sweet little holy child,

We didn't know who you were

Didn't know you'd come to save us, Lord,

To take our sins away.

Our eyes were blind, we could not see

We didn't know who you were.

The Gospel of John offers us a profound explanation of who that sweet little Jesus boy was. John writes, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

Jesus came into the world to know human suffering and to teach important lessons that would serve humankind forever.

Ultimately, Jesus, the light of the world, came to point us towards salvation. He is God made flesh.

A prayer for this time of Vacancy:

Send us your Holy Spirit at this time of change and uncertainty, to fill us with vision, energy and faithfulness in prayer that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community; and guide with your heavenly wisdom those who are to choose a new priest for this Benefice, so that the one whom we receive may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people, ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith, and to lead us by example, in loving obedience to your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Please remember those for whom we pray:

Immediate need: John Bernardi (priest), Paul Simpson, Martin Packham, Val Thompson, Becky Parker, George Snashall, Eileen Macdougall, Eileen Caple, Karen Leese, Hilary Turner-King

Long Term Need: Young Georgia, Joshua and Reggie, Wendy, Ann Went, Julie Sadler, Wendy Hibling, Yvonne Godsmark, Carla Spear, Pam Sagar, Eileen Knight, Maureen Griffiths, Carol Cox, Liz Graydon

Those in Care Homes: Jean Simmons, Mary Watts, Ruth Baker,, Rosemary Pardey, Janet Card

Please remember the recently departed and their families: Jill Rockey, Paul Dupee

In our Book of Remembrance this week we remember: 24th Amy Barnes, Wiliam Mckay, Jeremy Tapp, 25th Emily Barnard, Phyllis Taylor, 26th Doris Cutler, 27th Doreen Shrapnell, Muriel Wheeler, George Flower, 28th Ann Carr, Eileen Gerrish, 29th Peter Burrowes, Kathleen Knight, Margaret Hall, Matthew Gallagher, 30th John Fisher, Harry Grieve, Rosemarie Cruse, John Tomkins, Alan Searle, Anthony Harris, 31st Dennis Bennett, Ernest Palmer, Margaret Page, Phyllis Bowring, Florence Martin, Darryl McIlvride, John Skeldon