



The Parish of St James's Elmers End
28th December 2025 – 9.15am Parish Mass
THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

OPENING HYMN (CHFE 305)

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him,
nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, Whom cherubim,
worship night and day,
Breastful of milk,
and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him,
Whom angels fall before,
The ox and ass and camel
which adore.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air;
But His mother only,
in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved
with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man,
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him:
give my heart.

THE GREETING

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the
Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

*The priest invites those present to confess
their sins*

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and
Prince of peace:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Son of God and
Son of Mary:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Word made flesh
and splendour of the Father:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
Forgive us our sins and bring us to
everlasting life. **Amen.**

THE GLORIA

**Glory be to God on high!
All heav'n with praise is ringing.
Angels fill the Christmas sky,
And 'peace to earth' are singing.
GLORIA ..!
Hosanna in excelsis!**

**Christ, our rescuer from sin
and from eternal danger,
our salvation comes to win
and lies in Bethlem's manger
GLORIA..!
Hosanna in excelsis!**

**Praise you, God of Heaven above!
You've shared our human story.
To you, Trinity of love,
We sing our song of 'Glory'
GLORIA..!
Hosanna in excelsis!**

Tune: Ding dong! Merrily on high

THE COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

The Lord honoured the father above the children, and he confirmed the judgement of the mother over her sons. Whoever honours his father atones for sins, and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. Whoever honours his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. Whoever glorifies his

father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother.

O son, help your father in his old age and do not grieve him as long as he lives; even if he is lacking in understanding, show indulgence; in all your strength do not despise him. For kindness to a father will not be forgotten, and against your sins it will be credited to you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 128(127):1-2. 3. 4-5. R1a

**R Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways**

Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.

You will be blessed and prosper. **R**

Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive
around your table. **R**

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the husband who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Sion.
May you see Jerusalem prosper
all the days of your life! **R**

SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-17

Brothers and sisters:
Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body.

And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL (STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts;

let the message of Christ find a home with you.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (2:13-15, 19-23)
Glorify to you, O Lord.

When the Magi had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Out of Egypt I called my son.'

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.' And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

THE SERMON

We STAND to sing

THE CREED

I believe in one God
**the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father
before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the
Father, by whom all things were
made; who for us men and for our
salvation came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy
Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man,
and was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered and was buried,
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of the Father.**

**And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the
dead:**

whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father
and the Son, who with the Father
and the Son together is worshipped
and glorified, who spake by the
prophets.

And I believe one holy catholic
and apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism
for the remission of sins.

And I look for the resurrection of
the dead, and the life of the world
to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

In the power of the Spirit and in union
with the Son let us pray to the Father.

After each bidding is said:

Lord, hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

at the end of the prayers

Merciful Father.

**accept these prayers for the sake of
your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

We STAND for our

OFFERTORY HYMN (CHFE 223)

**God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.**

**In Bethlehem, in Judah,
This blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger
Upon this blessed morn,
The which his Mother Mary
Did nothing take in scorn:**

**From God our heavenly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:**

**'Fear not,' then said the angel,
'Let nothing you affright,
This day is born a Saviour,
Of a pure virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan's power and might.'**

**The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem
straightway,
This blessed Babe to find:**

**But when to Bethlehem they came,
Where our dear Saviour lay,
They found him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling down
Unto the Lord did pray:**

**Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and friendship
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface:**

THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERING

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that my
sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to
God the Almighty Father.

**May the Lord accept this sacrifice
at your hands, for the praise and
glory of his name, for our good, and
the good of all his holy Church.**

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of
conciliation, humbly asking that,
through the intercession of the Virgin
Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you
may establish our families firmly in your
grace and your peace.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

The Eucharistic Prayer continues until:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might:
Heaven and earth are full of your
glory, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna
in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest..**

The Eucharistic Prayer continues until:

The mystery of faith:

**Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.**

The Eucharistic Prayer continues until:

... for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every
evil, graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy, we may
be always free from sin and safe from all
distress, as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour,
Jesus Christ.

**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

THE PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your
Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I
give you, look not on our sins, but on
the faith of your Church, and graciously
grant her peace and unity in accordance
with your will. Who live and reign for
ever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you
always
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

THE AGNUS DEI

**Lamb of God, you take away the
sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the
sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God you take away the
sins of the world, grant us peace.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him
who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of
the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you
should enter under my roof, but
only say the word and my soul shall
be healed.**

*The people receive communion. If you wish
to receive a blessing, please bring this Order
of Service with you.*

COMMUNION HYMN (CHFE 794)

**What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping,
Whom angels greet
with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch
are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard
and angels sing;
come, greet the infant Lord
The babe, the son of Mary!**

**Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear:
for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall
pierce him through,
The Cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word Made Flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring Him incense, gold,
and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him!
The King of Kings
salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him!
Raise, raise the song on high!
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy! joy! for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this
heavenly Sacrament, most merciful
Father, to imitate constantly the example
of the Holy Family, so that, after the
trials of this world, we may share their
company for ever.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE SOLEMN BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The congregation **STAND**

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

May the God of infinite goodness,
who by the Incarnation of his Son has
driven darkness from the world and by
that glorious Birth has illumined this
most holy day, drive far from you the
darkness of vice and illumine your hearts
with the light of virtue.
Amen.

May God, who willed that the great joy
of his Son's saving Birth be announced to
shepherds by the Angel, fill your minds
with the gladness he gives and make you
heralds of his Gospel. **Amen.**

And may God, who by the Incarnation
brought together the earthly and
heavenly realm, fill you with the gift of
his peace and favour and make you
sharers with the Church in heaven.
Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy
Spirit, come down on you and remain
with you for ever. **Amen.**

Go forth, the Mass is ended.
Thanks be to God.

FINAL HYMN (CHFE 692)

**The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in
fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay,
keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night
that was so deep.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued
both day and night.**

**And by the light of that same star
three wise men came
from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star
wherever it went.**

**This star drew nigh
to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place
where Jesus lay.**

Then entered in those
wise men three
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh,
and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
that hath made heaven
and earth of nought,
and with his blood
mankind hath bought.

THIS WEEK IN THE BENEFICE

Monday

Fr Russell's rest day

Tuesday

10.00am Mass (*St James*)

Wednesday

10.00am Mass (*St Michael*)

Thursday

10.00am Mass (*St James*)

Friday

10.00am Mass (*St Michael*)

Saturday

10.00am BCP Communion (*St James*)

PRAYERS

For those in need:

Bill, Roger, Derek, Pippa, Jeanette, Joyce,
Lucy, Vercilla, Chris, Pauline, Carol,
Wendy, Ross, Adrian, Alison, Jean, Bob,
Matt, Barbara

Anniversaries of death:

Thomas Lowe, Barry Vestey,
Alfred Simmons, Grant Dalton,
May Pritchard, Emma Ware,
Ernest Andrews, Charles Taylor,
Betty Graham, David Thompson,
Cynthia Kingson, Peggy Cork,
Peggy Mason, Emily Gray
Sylvia Macfall, Elsie Ellis, Dorothy Clark

ST. MICHAEL'S EPIPHANY LUNCH

Sunday 4th January 2026
12.30 p.m.

To book your place please speak to
Fr Russell.
(Just bring yourself and a drink!)

ST. JAMES'S NEW YEAR MEAL

Saturday 10th January 2026
6.00 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

St. James's Church Hall
Tickets £10 from Jan (07939 088820)
Please bring your own drinks

THE BIBLE COURSE

Do you know your Bible?
If you don't or would like to know more
or just as a refresher we will be running
the Bible Societies Bible Course in
January. It's an 8-session course looking
at the books of the bible and the timeline
of events. I plan to run two sessions the
first on a Wednesday evening at 7.30pm
at St Michael's and the second at 2pm on
Thursday at St James's. If you plan to
attend, please sign up as we will need to
purchase the correct number of books.

The course will start on the
14th/15th January

MESSY CHURCH

As we look to the new year, we are
planning to start a monthly 'Messy
Church' the first ones will take place at
St James's on Sunday 18th January and St
Michael's on Sunday 1st February both at
4pm. For those who don't know what
Messy Church is, it's a service for all the
family start with refreshment and craft
activities followed by a short act of
worship.

I am looking for volunteers to help with
these even. If you can help, please have
a word with Fr Russell.

THANK YOU

Fr Russell would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make our Christmas Service so beautiful especially Andrew and the Choir, the server, the flower ladies, the sidespeople and the Social committee

And also thank you for all the cards and gifts.

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