

Collects and Readings for the First Sunday of Christmas

Collect:

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Old Testament Reading: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

¹⁸ Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord'; and then they would return to their home.

²⁶ Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the Lord and with the people.

New Testament Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

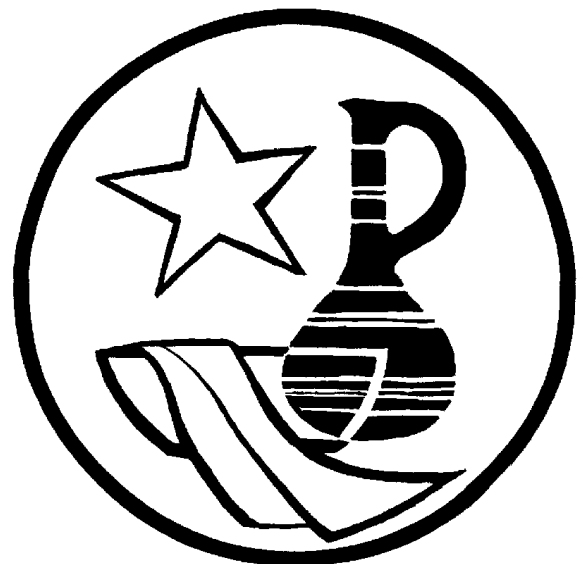
¹² As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ 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.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' ⁴⁹ He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

Post Communion Collect:

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of
an earthly home:
help your Church to live as one family,
united in love and obedience,
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Prayers for the First Sunday of Christmas

Father God, help us to remember that the Christmas story did not end in the stable but continued as Jesus grew into a man, unnoticed by the world until his appearance at the temple which was for him his spiritual home on earth. As 2024 draws to a close and a New Year begins and with it the next chapter of our lives, help us to grow in faith and wisdom and to recognise your presence with us in all we do and say.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Everlasting God, strengthen your church that we may be a Benefice united in prayer and in practical help and support for one another. We pray for courage, wisdom and guidance to stand up for our faith when it is challenged. Inspire our clergy and our lay people to lead and guide us all in our ministries as we go into 2025.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Loving God, creator and preserver of all mankind, we pray for people of every race, and in every kind of need: make your ways known on earth, your saving power among nations. We earnestly pray that the coming year will see an end to war and terrorism and pray for all who are striving to find a peaceful solution for all the war-torn parts of our world.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Gracious God, you sent the angels to sing at the birth of your son in Bethlehem; give the song of the kingdom to all who weep; to the sick and the lonely; the aged and the dying. Give the song of joy to all who are now on the road to recovery and recuperation and the song of thanks to all who helped them on that road

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Faithful God, we pray for those whose hearts have been saddened by the death of someone close and dear to them, for members of our families who have died and whose anniversary we recall. Help us to experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit within us, and the fellowship of the church family around us until we are reunited once more in your heavenly kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer

As we look forward to the year that is ahead, we have faith that God will supply every need of ours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus Merciful father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

TO HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

We bring before our loving heavenly Father those in our villages and others we know who are unwell, recovering from injury or illness and all those who need our prayers for any reason during this difficult time.

From Helmdon: Barbara Buxton, Diane Thorpe, John Thorne & Eileen Watson.

From Lois Weedon & Weston: Joan Jacobs, Lis Cockrell, Caroline Hunt, Margaret Seckington and Mike Stretten (Cardiac Health)

From Syresham: George Summers.

From Wappenham: Judy King, Claire Kennett, and Dorothy & David Nicholson.

For those known to us:

Lucy Goodwin, Margaret Reardon, Pauline Collis, Christopher Carr, Evelyn Johnson, Ollie Dotterill, Sam & Jackie Cowlshaw, Francis Potsoni, Chloë Fletcher, Mary Coates, Emily Barthelamy, May Oliver, Lily & Theo Wright, Christobel Grant and Diane Snow.

Please pray for those bereaved, and the family & friends of:

Geoff Abbey, Jean Spendlove, Vic Butler, Philip Gulliver, Jean Parks, Alice Hathaway, Jean Mackaness, Diane Watts, Peter Stubbs, Nicholas Reynell, Linda Smalley, Tony Wilmot, John Maleham, Betty Stubbs, Wendy Procter, Derek Morris, Penny Bonnymeade, David Brookhouse, Jonathan Miller, David Powell, Joyce Beech, Julia O'Brian, James Smillie.

Also, please pray for the work of the Beacon Centre, the Wolverton Mission, the Hope Centre, Katharine House Hospice, Northampton Women's Aid and The Women's Refuge. We also continue to pray for all refugees fleeing persecution, all victims of war and terror, and all those affected by the Covid-19 virus.

BENEFICE CONTACTS

Reverend Hugh White (Rector):

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*Please contact the Rector or your
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baptisms, weddings, or funerals.*

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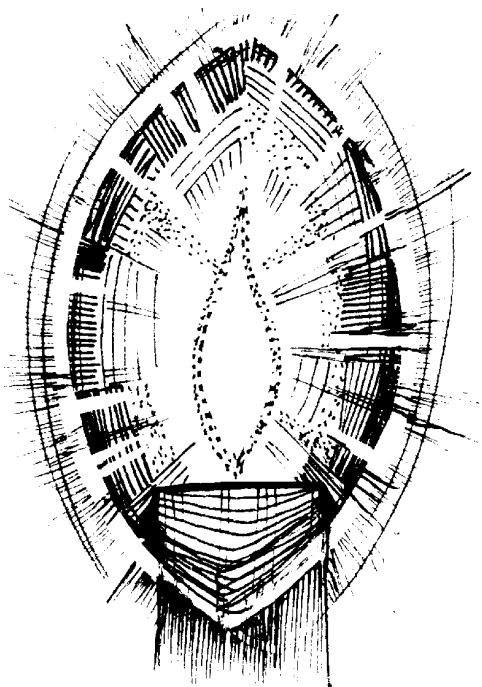
Syresham: Alice Palmer

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Wappenham: Edwin King (astwell01@aol.com) &

Sheena Warren (sheena.warren@hotmail.co.uk)

Whitfield: Claire Bonner (cbonner00@gmail.com)



Save the Date!

***Friday 30th May – Sunday 8th
June 2025***

ASTWELL FESTIVAL

***Events held across the Benefice,
with proceeds to Save the
Children and local children's
charities***

More information to follow!

Regular events held in the Benefice:

- **Helmdon Coffee Morning** is held each Tuesday, 10 am-12 noon in the Reading Room
- **Syresham Coffee Morning** is held each Thursday, 10 am-12 noon in the Village Hall.
- **Whitfield Coffee Morning** is held on the first Tuesday of the month ,10am-12 noon in the Village Hall.
- **St Mary's, Wappenham Coffee Morning**, is held on the first Wednesday of the month, 10 am-12 noon, in the Village Hall.
- **St Mary & St Peter, Lois Weedon Coffee Morning** is held from 10am until 12 noon on the first Friday of each month, in Lois Weedon Village Hall.