

# ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND CRIB SERVICE

10AM 22 DECEMBER 2024

<https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/>

*Welcome to St Hilda's. We are delighted that you are able to share in our morning worship today,*

*If you are new to the church please do take time to introduce yourself to the people at the back of the church and to the ministry team at the end of the service. We would be delighted to meet you.*

*If you are able please join us for tea or coffee after the service so we can get to know one another.*

*Should you need any help during the service please do not hesitate to ask those around you and we are sure they will be able to support you.*

*There is a children's corner in the north aisle which children are very welcome to use.*

## **Praying for peace in the Middle East**

*Bishop Sarah encourages us to join in with Archbishop Hosam Naoum of Jerusalem, who has offered the following prayer:*

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.

Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.

While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children – for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen

# **THE GATHERING**

## **Introit Hymn**

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

**Refrain:**

**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. [Refrain]**

**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 our life hath bought. [Refrain]**

*[Trad. Harmony John Stainer]*

## **The Greeting**

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

**All Amen**

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

*Words of welcome or introduction are said  
(Junior Church are with us for the whole of this service).*

## **The Lighting of the Advent Candle**

*The Fourth Candle*

Lord Jesus Light of the World  
Blessed is Gabriel who brought good news;  
Blessed is Mary, your Mother and ours.  
Bless your church preparing for Christmas;  
And bless us your children, who long for your coming .

**All Amen**

*We light the first three candles*

## **Prayer of Preparation**

**All Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Prayers of Penitence

When the Lord comes,  
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,  
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.  
Therefore in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations  
into the peace of your kingdom:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

You come in word and sacrament  
to strengthen us in holiness:  
Christ, have mercy.

**All Christ, have mercy.**

You will come in glory  
with salvation for your people:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
who in his great mercy  
has promised forgiveness of sins  
to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith  
turn to him: have mercy on you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and bring you to everlasting life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

**The Collect** - *The Collect for the week is said after a moment of silence*

Eternal God,

as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,

so we wait for his coming in glory;

bring us through the birth pangs of this present age

to see, with her, our great salvation

in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**Old Testament Reading** – Micah 5 Viv 2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,

who are one of the little clans of Judah,

from you shall come forth for me

one who is to rule in Israel,

whose origin is from of old,

from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time

when she who is in labour has brought forth;

then the rest of his kindred shall return

to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the

Lord,

in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great

to the ends of the earth;

and he shall be the one of peace.

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Reading – Luke 1: 39-45**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

**All** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **The Nativity as told by Junior Church**

### **Blessing of the Crib**

In the faith of Christ,  
and in your name, O God most holy,  
we hallow this crib of Christmas,  
to set before the eyes of your children  
the great love and humility  
of Jesus Christ your only Son;

who for us, and for our salvation,  
came down as at this time from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit  
of the Virgin Mary his mother,  
and was made man;  
to whom with you and the same Spirit  
be all honour, majesty, glory and worship,  
now and to the ages of ages.

**All Amen.**

May the grace of Christ our Saviour be with us all.

**All Amen.**

## **The Creed**

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,**



**the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid we pray to Jesus.

*The prayers end with the following:*

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

## **THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT**

### **The Peace**

In the tender mercy of our God,  
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,  
to give light to those who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

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

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*All may exchange a sign of peace.*

## Offertory Hymn

*During this hymn a collection will be taken*

**Bethlehem, of noblest cities  
None can once with thee compare;  
Thou alone the Lord from heaven  
Didst for us incarnate bear.**

**Fairer than the sun at morning  
Was the star that told his birth;  
To the lands their God announcing,  
Seen in fleshly form on earth.**

**By its lambent beauty guided,  
See the eastern kings appear;  
See them bend, their gifts to offer,  
Gifts of incense, gold, and myrrh.**

**Solemn things of mystic meaning:  
Incense doth the God disclose,  
Gold a royal child proclaimeth,  
Myrrh a future tomb foreshows.**

**Holy Jesu, in thy brightness  
To the Gentile world displayed,  
With the Father and the Spirit  
Endless praise to thee be paid.**

*[Prudentius, tr. Edward Caswall]*

*The table is prepared, and bread and wine are placed upon it.*

As this bread was scattered  
and then gathered and made one,  
so may your Church be gathered into your Kingdom.

**All Glory to you, O God, for ever.**

Wisdom has built her a house;  
she has mixed her wine; she has set her table.  
Glory to you, O God, for ever.

**All Amen.**

## **Eucharistic Prayer**

The Lord is here.

**All His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;  
in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away  
you did not reject us,  
but came to meet us in your Son.

**All You embraced us as your children  
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life  
that we might live in him and he in us.

**All He opened his arms of love upon the cross  
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed,  
at supper with his friends  
he took bread, and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to them, saying:  
*Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.*

**All** **Father, we do this in remembrance of him:  
his body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,  
he gave you thanks, and said:  
*Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins;  
do this in remembrance of me.*

**All** **Father, we do this in remembrance of him:  
his blood is shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory,  
send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine  
may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**All** **As we eat and drink these holy gifts  
make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

With your whole Church throughout the world  
we offer you this sacrifice of praise  
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

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

*(Silent reflection)*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Awaiting his coming in glory,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**All 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.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

*The president breaks the consecrated bread.*

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

## **Agnus Dei**

**Lamb of God,  
All you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

## **Giving of Communion**

Jesus is the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*The president and people receive communion.*

## Communion Hymns

Mary did you know

*[Mark Lowry]*

**Silent night! Holy night!  
Heaven is near, earth is bright  
Angel songs are heard above  
As the Child of peace and love  
Sleeps in Mary's arms,  
Sleeps in Mary's arms.**

**Silent night! Holy night!  
Skies are clear, stars are bright,  
Now the shepherds wend their way,  
Homage to this Christ to pay  
He is Christ the Lord,  
He is Christ the Lord.**

**Silent night! Holy night!  
Christ is here, all is light  
Shadows of the past are gone  
With the advent of the Son  
Born to save us all,  
Born to save us all.**

*[JB Timms; Franz Gruber]*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;  
The stars in the bright sky look down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.**

*[Anonymous]*



## **Prayers after Communion**

*Silence is kept after which the Post-Communion prayer is said.*

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.

**All Amen.**

**All Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out  
in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.**

<b><i>Notices</i> - see pages 21 - 23</b>
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## THE DISMISSAL

### Blessing

May God the Father, judge all-merciful,  
make us worthy of a place in his kingdom.

**All Amen.**

May God the Son, coming among us in power,  
reveal in our midst the promise of his glory.

**All Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit make us steadfast in faith,  
joyful in hope and constant in love.

**All Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

Our Lord says, 'I am coming soon.'

**All Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

May the Lord, when he comes,

**All find us watching and waiting.**

**Amen**

## **Recessional Hymn**

**See him lying on a bed of straw:  
A draughty stable with an open door;  
Mary cradling the babe she bore  
The prince of glory is his name.**

**O now carry me to Bethlehem  
To see the Lord of love again:  
Just as poor as was the stable then,  
The prince of glory when he came.**

**Star of silver, sweep across the skies,  
Show where Jesus in the manger lies;  
Shepherds, swiftly from your stupor rise  
To see the saviour of the world!  
O now carry me...**

**Angels, sing again the song you sang,  
Sing the glory of God's gracious plan;  
Sing that Bethl'em's little baby can  
Be the saviour of us all.  
O now carry me...**

*[Michael Perry, Mrs B Perry, Jubilate hymns*

## **Please remember in your prayers this week:**

### **THOSE FOR WHOM OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ASKED:**

Michael Brown	John Hunt	Ben
Kariss Clarke	Pat Kyle	David
Ros Clifton	Ray Nation	Fiona
Tony Diggins	Pat Parish	John
Shelia Freeman	Massimo Pellizzari	King Charles
Kathy Ford	Lena Richardson	Catherine, Princess of Wales
Gemma Hart	Martine Simpson	
Matthew Hutnell	Delia Woodley	

*If you would like a name added to or removed from the prayer list, please contact the Parish Office. If you know of someone ill or in hospital in need of prayer and support please tell our LLM Rosalyn Young (contact details on back cover).*

### **THE RECENTLY DEPARTED**

John Hollister  
Edward Harris

### **THOSE IN OUR MEMORIAL BOOK THIS WEEK**

Joseph W Lovell	Herbert Salter
Doreen Ann Beaver	Isobel Johnson
Eric Leonard Hine	Alfred George Barnes
Phoebe Eleanor Spence	Elsie Goodbarne
Alexander Milton	Verna Rose Bembridge
Louie Maud Batchelor	Dorothy Madeline Smith
Edward George Clayton	

**Please pray for our ALMA twin Parish, Holy Cross Murrupula, and for  
Fr. Domingos and his family**

also for Christians facing persecution in countries such as North Korea,  
Somalia, Libya, Eritrea and Yemen.

for more details see <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

## SERVICE TIMES

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 11pm Midnight Mass**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am Parish Eucharist**

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 10.00am**

The Sunday service is livestreamed and can be viewed later our Facebook page

[https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/live\\_videos](https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/live_videos)

or see: <https://www.youtube.com/@sthildachurch8263>

## NOTICES

*The deadline for items for the Service Sheet is noon on Thursday.  
Please send any items to the Parish Office.*

### **There will be no Community Lunch on Christmas Day or New Year's Day**

Lunches will resume on Wednesday 8th January at 12 noon

Do join us!

If you are able to help, even once a month, please liaise with Bobbie.

### **Bible Study Group**

This will also not meet on Christmas Day or New Year's Day, but will resume on 8th January.

We meet in Church on most Wednesday evenings at 7.45pm

We will be continuing our look at John's Gospel.

You are very welcome to join us.

### **Ambling through Acts course – Thursday 2nd January at 7.30pm**

(7:30pm on the first Thursday of each month)

Everyone is very welcome to attend. There will be refreshments at the end. We finish by saying Compline (Night Prayer) together round about 9pm. I hope to see you there. Please bring a bible – ideally the NRSV, but any version will do.

## **Bible Reading Fellowship Notes**

For some years now I have been ordering BRF Notes for members of the congregation. BRF Ministries has been publishing Bible reading notes since 1922. Each series has a distinctive approach to suit different needs and preferences, offering a variety of ways to resource your spiritual journey and help you understand and apply scripture to your daily life.

**New Daylight**: is for everyone on their daily journey with God.

**New Daylight Deluxe**: all the content of New Daylight, but with bigger text

**Guidelines**: Bible reading notes aimed at church leaders, students and those who seek to interpret and apply the biblical text with confidence in today's world.

**The Upper Room**: written by its readers all over the world, The Upper Room focuses on finding God in daily experience.

**Day by Day with God**: this series is written for women, by women who have themselves found the Bible a source of strength and inspiration for life.

**Bible Reflections for Older People**: these Bible reflections aimed at older people will bring hope, assurance and sustenance to the reader.

If you would like to know more about any of these reading notes please see me after the main Sunday Service.

*Liz Brian*

## **St Hilda's Newsletter**

The latest issue of the Newsletter is available via the St. Hilda's web site (under "About Us"). Please leave the printed copies for people without internet access and for visitors.

The newsletter is now produced every two months, and unless more people provide material the Newsletter will end.

The deadline for items for the December/January issue is **1st**

**December**. Please send your contributions to: [editor@sthilda.org](mailto:editor@sthilda.org)

**\*\*\* NEEDED \*\*\***

**Computer-literate people prepared to give time to help the church**

We are looking for people to do several important jobs:

1. Manage Gift Aid claims. We have just recovered over £8,500 from HMRC from donations in 2022. We need to make the claim for 2023 by next September - we expect this to involve at least 30hrs work, mostly data input. A team will help explain the system to be used and will provide the data. Then we need to document the process and work on this year's donations...
2. Edit the Newsletter. Our current Editor is moving from the area. She has offered to produce the December/January edition but we need someone to take it on from next year. This involves 8-10hrs work every other month.

For more details of what is involved speak to one of the Church Wardens.

**The Parish Office** is available by phone or email.

Any appointments in person must be booked.

Our parish administrator is Laura Goodman. Her office hours are:

Monday:	3.30-5pm
Wednesday:	3.30-6.30pm
Thursday	6.30-9.30pm
Saturday:	9.45-11.15am

# Contact Information

## Vicar

Fr. Onyekachi Julius Anoize (Temp. email address) [.office@sthilda.org](mailto:office@sthilda.org)

## Licensed Lay Minister

Rosalyn Young [rosalyn@sthilda.org](mailto:rosalyn@sthilda.org)

## Churchwardens

Paula Gething

Stuart Young

## PCC Secretary

Liz Brian

Email: [secretary@sthilda.org](mailto:secretary@sthilda.org)

## PCC Treasurer

Khadijeh

[treasurer@sthilda.org](mailto:treasurer@sthilda.org)

## Church Hall Bookings

Chris Davenport

01784 252170

## The Parish Office:

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