



PERSHORE BENEFICE
The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross with
St Nicholas' Pinvin, St James' Birlingham & St Mary's Wick
Sunday, 28 December 2025
HOLY INNOCENTS

SERVICE SHEET, BULLETIN & DIARY

The 1030 Service from the Abbey will be livestreamed and available to view on our YouTube channel. Visit www.youtube.com and search for [Pershore Abbey Community](#)
Please use this sheet in conjunction with the service booklet provided. Please take this sheet home with you and recycle when you have finished with it. If you have any queries or concerns please do speak to a sidesperson or churchwarden.

Heating Issues: We have been experiencing issues with the heating system at Pershore Abbey this week. Our engineers are working hard to resolve the issues however we cannot guarantee our heating will be working when you visit. Please therefore wrap up warm when attending services and concerts and please accept our apologies.

THE COLLECT

Heavenly Father, whose children suffered at the hands of Herod, though they had done no wrong: by the suffering of your Son and by the innocence of our lives frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice and peace; 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. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31.15-17

A reading from the Prophet Jeremiah.

Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Thus says the Lord: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the Lord: your children shall come back to their own country.

For the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1.26-29

A reading from the First Letter to the Corinthians.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. For the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 2.13-18

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, 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.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, in your humility you have stooped to share our human life with the most defenceless of your children: may we who have received these gifts of your passion rejoice in celebrating the witness of the Holy Innocents to the purity of your sacrifice made once for all upon the cross; for you are alive and reign, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**If you would like to receive a gluten-free host during communion
please let a sidesperson know**

If you need any help in accessing any of the online features mentioned in the service sheet or bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact the office or Canon Claire Lording for support.



PRAYERS

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE MIDST OF CONFLICT TODAY, PRAYING ESPECIALLY FOR ALL PEOPLES OF THE HOLY LAND AND UKRAINE. WE PRAY FOR LASTING PEACE.

We pray for those whose weddings, blessings and baptisms are taking place and for all those who are making new plans to celebrate these special life events.

We pray for all those welcoming new life into their families.

We pray for those in need.

We pray for those who have died and for their families and friends.

We pray for those whose anniversary of death occurs in the coming week.

HYMN SHEET

FIRST HYMN

A&M 666

LONDONDERRY AIR

- 1 I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship,
should set his love upon the sons of men,
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers,
to bring them back, they know not how or when.
But this I know, that he was born of Mary
when Bethl'em's manger was his only home,
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.
- 2 I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted
and stays our sin and calms our lurking fear
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden;
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.
- 3 I cannot tell how he will win the nations,
how he will claim his earthly heritage,
how satisfy the needs and aspirations
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,
and some glad day his sun will shine in splendour
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.
- 4 I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
when at his bidding every storm is stilled,
or who can say how great the jubilation
when every heart with love and joy is filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
and myriad myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, will answer,
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

[William Young Fullerton (1857-1932)]

1 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 worship and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him praise
the babe, the son of Mary.

2 Why lies he in such mean estate,
where ox and ass are feeding?
Come, have no fear, God's Son is here,
his love all loves exceeding:
nails, spear, shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you:
hail, hail, the Saviour comes,
the babe, the son of Mary.

3 So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
all tongues and peoples own him,
the King of kings salvation brings,
let every heart enthrone him:
raise, raise your song on high
while Mary sings a lullaby,
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary.

William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

THIRD HYMN**A&M 602****FRANCONIA**

1 Blest are the pure in heart,
for they shall see our God;
the secret of the Lord is theirs,
their soul is Christ's abode.

2 The Lord, who left the heavens
our life and peace to bring,
to dwell in lowliness with men,
their pattern and their King;

3 Still to the lowly soul
he doth himself impart,
and for his dwelling and his throne
chooseth the pure in heart.

4 Lord, we thy presence seek;
may ours this blessing be;
give us a pure and lowly heart,
a temple meet for thee.

COMMUNION MOTET**The Holy Boy - John Ireland**

Sung by the Pershore Abbey Choir

*Lowly, laid in a manger,
With oxen brooding nigh,
The Heav'nly Babe is lying
His Maiden Mother by.*

*Lo! The way-faring sages,
Who journey'd far through the wild,
Now worship, silent adoring,
The Boy, The Heav'nly Child -
The Heav'nly Child.*

*Leave your work and your playtime,
And kneel in homage and prayer,
The Prince of Love is smiling
Asleep in his cradle there!*

*Bend your hearts to the wonder,
The Birth, the Mystery mild,
And worship, silent adoring,
The Boy, the Heav'nly Child --
The Heav'nly Child!*

*Dim the light of the lantern,
And bare the mean abode,
Yet gold and myrrh and incense
Proclaim the Son of God.*

*Lowly laid in a manger
By Virgin undefiled,
Come worship, silent, adoring,
The Boy, The Heav'nly Child.
The Heav'nly Child!*

John Keble (1792-1866)

COMMUNION HYMN

A&M 144

1. How deep the Father's love for us,
how vast beyond all measure,
that he should give his only Son
to make a wretch his treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss;
the Father turns his face away,
as wounds which mar the chosen One
bring many souls to glory.

2. Behold the man upon a cross,
my sin upon his shoulders;
ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held him there,
until it was accomplished;
his dying breath has brought me life-
I know that 'it is finished.'

3. I will not boast in anything,
no gifts, no power, no wisdom;
but I will boast in Jesus Christ,
his death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from his reward?
I cannot give an answer;
but this I know with all my heart,
his wounds have paid my ransom.

[Stuart Townsend (b.1963)]

FINAL HYMN

A&M 498

1. Lord, thy church on earth is seeking,
Thy renewal from above;
Teach us all the art of speaking
With the accent of thy love.
We would heed thy great commission:
'Go now into every place-
preach, baptize, fulfil my mission,
Serve with love and share my grace'.

- 2 Freedom give to those in bondage,
lift the burdens caused by sin.
Give new hope, new strength and courage,
grant release from fears within.
Light for darkness; joy for sorrow;
love for hatred; peace for strife:
these and countless blessings follow
as the Spirit gives new life.
3. In the streets of every city
where the bruised and lonely dwell,
let us show the saviour's pity,
let us of his mercy tell;
to all lands and peoples bringing
all the richness of thy word,
till the world, thy praises singing,
hails thee Christ, Redeemer, Lord.

[Hugh Sherlock (1905-1998)]

Organ Voluntary: Noel—Louis Dacquin

The congregation are invited to remain seated and listen to the voluntary

**PERSHORE ABBEY & BENEFICE
28 DECEMBER 2025**

As a Kingdom People we are churches that seek to:

- Worship God
- Welcome All
- Reach out to the World

Vicar: The Revd Canon Claire Lording

Email: vicar@pershoreabbey.org.uk

Assistant Curate: The Revd Jayne Parker

Email: curate@pershoreabbey.org.uk

Abbey Wardens: Mrs Sam Andrews 07443904635 Mr Martin Fowler (01386) 552243

The Benefice Office of Pershore with Pinvin, Wick & Birlingham

Alveston House, 11, Broad Street, Pershore, WR10 1BB (01386) 552071

BENEFICE OFFICE OPENING HOURS

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY 1100 - 1200 ONLY (excluding Bank Holidays)

The office staff will also be available to answer enquiries by phone or email on
weekday mornings from **0930 –1300**

**Please email your enquiry to office@pershoreabbey.org.uk or leave a message on
01386 552071 and they will get back to you as soon as they can.**

**PERSHORE ABBEY AND BENEFICE OFFICE
CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS**

The Pershore Abbey and Benefice Office will not be staffed over the Christmas period.

Our office staff will be on annual leave from:

12 noon on Tuesday 23 December 2025 until Friday 2 January 2026

All email enquiries and answerphone messages will be dealt with on their return.

If your enquiry is urgent please call the answerphone service on
01386 552071 to access the latest emergency contact details.

**We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Pershore Benefice
a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year**

BENEFICE BULLETIN NOTICES

Please pray for Bishop Hugh

Gracious and loving God, through your Son Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, you have called us into the fellowship of your universal Church: we thank you for calling your servant Hugh to be Bishop of Worcester; sustain him by your love, strengthen him in faith encourage him in hope and grant him the needful gifts of grace; that through his ministry among us we may live and grow as Kingdom People sharing faith, hope and love in Jesus' name. Amen



The Dean of Worcester
warmly invites you to attend a
Service of Welcome and Installation
for

The Right Reverend Hugh Nelson
114th Bishop of Worcester

on Saturday 17 January 2025 at 2pm in

The Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Mary the Virgin of Worcester

POST-CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA

MONDAY 29 DECEMBER

1430-1630

ST ANDREW'S CENTRE

*Come along and enjoy tea, cake and good company.
All welcome.*



EPIPHANY CAROL SERVICE



SUNDAY 4 JANUARY

15:00

Pershore Abbey

Please join us for a celebratory service of singing and praise

*This service will be livestreamed on our YouTube Channel:
Pershore Abbey Community*

ABBEY & BENEFICE DIARY

Canon Claire is on annual leave this week.

Sunday 28 December Holy Innocents

08:00 Eucharist (*Pershore Abbey*)

09:15 Choir Practice (*Pershore Abbey*)

10:30 Benefice Sung Eucharist with
LIVESTREAM (*Pershore Abbey*)

12:00 Set up for Post-Christmas Afternoon Tea (*St Andrew's Main*)

PERSHORE ABBEY DAILY OFFICES

0800 Silent Prayer

0830 Morning Prayer

1700 Evening Prayer

Monday 29 December

14:30 Post-Christmas Afternoon Tea
(*St Andrew's Main*)

18:30 Bell Ringing (*St Andrew's*)

19:30 Bell Ringing (*St Andrew's*)

Tuesday 30 December

10:15 Foodbank staff arrive
(*St Andrew's Main*)

11:00 CTiP Foodbank (*St Andrew's Main*)

Wednesday 31 December - New Year's Eve

10:00 Midweek Holy Communion
(*Pershore Abbey*)

12:00 Organ Practice (*Pershore Abbey*)

18:30 Bells - Quarter Peal (*Pershore Abbey*)

23:15 Bells - Ringing the Old Year out and
the New Year in (*Pershore Abbey*)

Thursday 01 January - Naming of Jesus

11:00 Eucharist (*Ganderton Court*)

Friday 02 January

12:00 CTiP Foodbank (*St Andrew's Main*)

18:00 Choir Practice (*Pershore Abbey*)

19:30 Bells - Surprise Major Practice
(*St Andrew's*)

Saturday 03 January

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Sunday 04 January - Epiphany

08:00 Eucharist (*Pershore Abbey*)

09:15 Choir Practice (*Pershore Abbey*)

10:30 Sung Eucharist with Fair Trade stall
and with LIVESTREAM (*Pershore Abbey*)

10:30 Holy Communion (*St Nicholas', Pinvin*)

15:00 Epiphany Carol Service (*Pershore Abbey*)



www.pershoreabbey.org.uk

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