

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST
ST ALBAN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, EPPING NSW
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

14 December 2025

8am Eucharist / 10am Choral Eucharist
and Sunday School Christmas Pageant and Book Presentation



Welcome whether you are joining us today in our building for this service or online. This order of service will assist you as you take part in the service. We invite you to join in the words in bold type. You are welcome to sit at any stage during the service should you feel the need.

If you wish to make an offering today towards the work of the Parish, a collection will be taken during the Offertory Hymn immediately after the 'Greeting of Peace'. You may contribute financially to the ministry of this parish by direct transfer, check the details on the back page of the Bulletin, or by tapping the card reader at the rear of the Church.

Please stand as the ministers enter.

HYMN (10am)

- 1 Hark! a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is near,' it seems to say,
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
waken, children of the day!'
- 2 Wakened by the solemn warning
let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her sun, all sloth dispelling
shines upon the morning skies.
- 3 Lo, the Lamb so long expected
comes with pardon now from heav'n;
let us meet him with repentance,
pray that we may be forgiv'n.
- 4 So when love comes forth in judgment,
debts and doubts and wrongs to clear,
faithful may he find his servants
watching till the dawn appear.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

President:

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.' Isaiah 35.3–4

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

President:

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lord Jesus, you are the light in our darkness.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Bring hope into the lives of all people.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Bless us as we gather in your name.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The third Advent Candle is lit.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you. You created us for lives filled with love and joy. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that flows from your righteousness. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, so that we may walk in the light of Christ.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. The Lord has come, and the Lord will come again.

We will be open to God's joy, and share that joy lovingly with all people.

Let us trust in God's great purposes for creation, and welcome his transforming love into our lives.

We will welcome Christ into our hearts. We will be open to the hope he offers and the joy he brings. We will go forth from this place in hope and peace and joy.

Deacon:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

PREPARATION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

And also with you.

President:

Let us pray.

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.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

President:

Sustain us, O God, with the power of your love on our journey to meet the One who is coming: strengthen our weak hands, make firm our feeble knees, and open blind eyes to the dawning of your kingdom, so that our hearts may rejoice as we behold the majesty of our God. We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD *(Seated)*

First Reading

Isaiah 35.1-10

A reading from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 35, beginning at verse 1

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Hear the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 146

¹ Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul:
while I live I will praise the Lord;

² **While I have any being:
I will sing praises to my God.**

- ³ Put not your trust in princes:
nor in flesh and blood, which cannot save.
- ⁴ **For when their breath goes from them,
they return again to the earth:
and on that day all their thoughts perish.**
- ⁵ Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob:
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
- ⁶ **The God who made heaven and earth:
the sea, and all that is in them,**
- ⁷ Who keeps faith for ever:
who deals justice to those that are oppressed.
- ⁸ **The Lord gives food to the hungry:
and sets the captives free.**
- ⁹ The Lord gives sight to the blind:
the Lord lifts up those that are bowed down.
- ¹⁰ **The Lord loves the righteous:
the Lord cares for the stranger in the land.**
- ¹¹ He upholds the widow and the fatherless:
as for the way of the wicked, he turns it upside down.
- ¹² **The Lord shall be king for ever:
your God, O Zion, shall reign through all generations.
Praise the Lord.**

Second Reading

James 5.7-10

A reading from the Letter of James, Chapter 5, beginning at verse 7

⁷ Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Hear the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

HYMN

- 1 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.
- 2 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;
his holy name - the Lord, the Mighty One.

- 3 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.
- 4 Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!

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GOSPEL

(Standing facing the reader)

Matthew 11.2-11

Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew, Chapter 11, beginning
at verse 2

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' ⁴ Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." ¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

THE SERMON (8am)

(Please sit when indicated by the Preacher.)

The Reverend Phil Lui

(Please be seated)

BOOK PRESENTATION

THE CREED

(Standing)

Deacon: Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Intercessor:

Let us pray for the world and for the Church. *(Please kneel or sit.)*

Prayers for the world, the country, the church, and those in need are offered. There is usually a simple response after each section as below, or as indicated by the leader and we join in a concluding response.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

or

Father, hear our prayer
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF APPROACH

(Remain kneeling or seated)

President:

Let us pray.

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Deacon:

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Sung at 10am:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

President:

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE *(Standing)*

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Please turn to those nearby, and offer a simple greeting of peace.

During the singing of the following hymn, the offertory will be brought forward to the Sanctuary.

HYMN

- 1 O day of God, draw near
in beauty and in power,
come with your timeless judgment now
to match our present hour.
- 2 Bring to our troubled minds,
uncertain and afraid,
the quiet of a steadfast faith,
calm of a call obeyed.
- 3 Bring justice to our land
that all may dwell secure,
and firmly build for days to come
foundations that endure.
- 4 Bring to our world of strife
your sovereign word of peace,
that war may haunt the earth no more
and desolation cease.
- 5 O day of God, draw near
as at creation's birth;
let there be light again, and set
your justice in the earth.

Robert Balgarnie Young Scott (1899-1987) seeking copyright

OFFERTORY PRAYER *(Remain standing)*

President:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept all our offerings, those we bring this morning and those we make by other means, that they may be used for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

(During Advent please sit or kneel)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

President:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us.

By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

We thank you that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may with joy behold his appearing, and in confidence stand before him who redeems us from sin and death and makes us heirs of everlasting life.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Merciful God, we thank you for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine, and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit, we who eat and drink them may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread; and when he had given you thanks he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

'Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup, and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying,

'Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded: proclaiming his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and looking for his coming again, we celebrate, with this bread and this cup, his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit, unite us in the body of your Son, and bring us with all your people into the joy of your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father, in songs of never-ending praise:

Blessing and honour, glory and power are yours for ever and ever.

Amen.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

Deacon:

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

While it is a matter of personal choice whether you stand or kneel to receive the bread and wine, we suggest that during Advent people kneel to receive the Sacrament, if that is practical for you.

Members of all Christian churches are invited to receive Communion at Saint Alban's. If you do not wish for any reason to receive the bread and wine, you are very welcome to come forward for a simple prayer of blessing: keep your hands by your side and one of the clergy will give you a blessing.

We receive bread in the form of a wafer, then wine in a small individual disposable cup. If you prefer you could receive wine from the chalice. Gluten-free wafers and non-alcoholic grape juice are available. Please indicate to the clergy as they approach you at the Altar Rail. Please move to the Chancel Steps by the centre aisle to receive the bread and wine.

Return to your place by a side aisle, placing your used cup in the container at the end of the front pew. If you need to receive communion in your seat, please let a duty parishioner know and the clergy will come to you in the pew.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

(Remain kneeling or seated)

President:

God for whom we wait, we thank you that you have fed us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. As we joyfully await your Son, keep us ever watchful, that we may be ready to stand before him on the day of his coming.

Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love. Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS *(Seated)*

HYMN

- 1 I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun:
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
at Bethlehem I had my birth:
*Dance then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the dance, said he;
and I'll lead you all where ever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*
- 2 I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
but they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John,
they came with me and the dance went on:
- 3 I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
the holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
and they left me there on a cross to die:
- 4 I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone;
but I am the dance and I still go on:
- 5 They cut me down and I leap up high,
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you as you live in me:
I am the Lord of the dance, said he:

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BLESSING

President:

Christ the Sun of righteousness shine upon you,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among
you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Deacon:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

UPCOMING SERVICES

Sunday 21 December
Fourth Sunday of Advent
8am and 10am Eucharists
Preacher: The Reverend Michael Robinson
7.45pm Service of Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 24 December
Christmas Eve
6pm Children's Service
9.30pm Festival Eucharist

Thursday 25 December
Christmas Day
8.30am Festival Choral Eucharist
Preacher: Pastor Kian Holik

Sunday 28 December
First Sunday after Christmas
8am and 10am Eucharists
President and Preacher: The Reverend Michael Robinson

Thursdays
9.30am - Reading, Reflection and Prayers for Healing by Zoom
10.30am - Eucharist with Prayers for Healing at St Alban's
Final service 18 December 2025