St Alban's Monthly Newsletter
DECEMBER 2026
and JANUARY 2027

Sunday at St Alban's

8.00am Sung Eucharist

@ 10.00am Sung or Choral Eucharist
Also available by zoom

EPIC Indonesian Congregation
(Old Sunday School Room)
Pastor Kian Holik

Chinese Congregation
(Lower Hall)
The Reverend Simon Pei

Sunday School in The Loft
(above the Main Hall)
Last Sunday 13 December, resumes 7 February 2027
Summer Holiday Packs will be available for children during the services

Youth @ St Alban's
Last Sunday 20 December, resumes 31 January

Combined Church Fellowship with morning tea in the main hall after services

DECEMBER and JANUARY SERVICES

Sunday 6 December – Second Sunday of Advent (Liturgical Colour Violet)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
National Church Life Survey (NCLS)
Preacher: The Reverend Phil Lui

Sunday 13 December – Third Sunday of Advent and Sunday School Presentation (Liturgical Colour Violet)
8am Eucharist with Hymns
10am Choral Eucharist – *at this service we will farewell Student Ministers and Children's Ministry Workers Aimee and David Wong as they return to Christchurch, New Zealand*
Preacher: The Reverend Phil Lui

Sunday 20 December – Fourth Sunday of Advent (Liturgical Colour Violet)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Canon David Wong
7.45pm Nine Lessons and Carols (Liturgical Colour White)

Thursday 24 December – Christmas Eve (Liturgical Colour White)
6pm Children's Service
9.30pm Festival Eucharist. *Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton*

Friday 25 December - The Birth of Our Lord: Christmas Day (Liturgical Colour White)
8.30am Festival Choral Eucharist
Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton

The choir will be on leave from 26 December and return 7 February 2027.

Sunday 27 December – First Sunday after Christmas (Liturgical Colour White)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist. EPIC Indonesian congregation will combine in this service while Pastor Kian Holik is away.
Preacher: Canon David Wong

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Sunday 3 January – Epiphany (Liturgical Colour White)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
EPIC Indonesian congregation will combine in this service while Pastor Kian Holik is away.
Preacher: Canon David Wong

Sunday 10 January – Baptism of the Lord (Liturgical Colour White)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Canon David Wong

Sunday 17 January – Second Sunday after Epiphany/Aboriginal Sunday (Liturgical Colour Green)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Canon David Wong

Sunday 24 January – Third Sunday after Epiphany/Australia Day Observance (Liturgical Colour Green)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Lachlan Shead

Sunday 31 January – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany (Liturgical Colour Green)
8am Eucharist with Hymns / 10am Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton

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Rector's Leave and Locum:
From 20 December to 31 January, while the Rector is on long service leave, The Reverend Canon David Wong, as Locum, will preside, and often preach, at our services.

An introduction to Canon David Wong, and Magdalene, is in the latest Parish Magazine on page 7. We look forward to his ministry among us.

Name Tags: It is a good time to remember to wear our name tags - at a time when we have a visiting priest, and other visitors joining us for our celebrations over Christmas. It you do not have a name tag - it is not too late to get one - please speak with Gloria Walton at church or send a note to the Parish Office.

What's on at St Alban's during December and January

Wednesdays
10am Everyday English Classes – finishes on 9 December
12noon-2pm Chinese Knowing Jesus Course - finishes on 9 December.
7.30pm Young Adults Growth Group

Thursdays
9.30am Reading, Reflection and Prayers for Healing by Zoom
10.30am Eucharist with Prayers for Healing followed by morning tea.
Finishes on 3 December 2026 and resumes 4 February 2027.

7.30pm Bible Study at North Epping. Enquiries to Ted on 0431 663 853 – finishes on 10 December.

Saturday 23 January 2027
9.30am Garden Maintenance. Extra hands, of all ages, are always helpful. Enquiries: Gill McLennan 0411 957 270.

Christmas Stall

On **Sunday 6 December** we will hold a Christmas Stall after each of the services - we are looking primarily for edible goods which would be good for the table, or as gifts. Some new craft items may also be welcome - please talk to Elizabeth Jenkins 0403 792 967 if you wish to check what will be saleable.

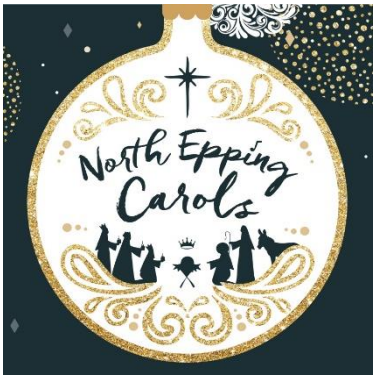
National Church Life Survey, 6 December 2026

On Sunday 6 December the whole parish will be participating in the **National Church Life Survey (NCLS)**, as we have every five years since 1996. This significant survey takes about 15 to 20 minutes to complete, and assists the Parish to value our perspective, evaluate our collective church health, and discern our future ministry directions.

We will be conducting the Attender Survey and Child Survey (8 to 15 years, with parental consent) on **6 December** during each of our Sunday morning services. Everyone will have the option to complete it on paper or online. **Please bring to church that day a black or blue pen, or a charged smartphone or tablet with mobile data enabled.**

Thank you for your valuable contribution to our church community! For more information, please visit the NCLS Research website at **https://www.ncls.org.au/research/**

The North Epping Carols 2026 will be held on Friday 11 December 2026 at Epping Oval (60 Norfolk Road, North Epping).



Food available from 6.30pm. Carols begin at 7.15pm followed by fireworks at 9pm.

After 9pm our Rector, Phil, will be speaking at the carols.

ADVENT - Changes in the Service

During Advent reflecting the penitential nature of the season there are changes in the liturgy: the Gloria is omitted, and the Confession and Absolution are in a different place. We kneel (or sit) for The Great Thanksgiving, and we are invited to kneel (where this is possible) to receive communion, so that at Christmas we can stand to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child.

Advent Wreath

Each Sunday in Advent is marked by lighting a new candle on the circular Advent Wreath of five candles. The three purple candles are coloured for the season. The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday in Advent, Gaudete Sunday ("Rejoice Sunday"), reminding us of the joy of the coming of Christ. The white candle symbolises the presence of Christ and is joyfully lit on Christmas Day.

The **first candle** symbolises **hope** and is called the "Prophet's Candle". The prophets of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, waited in hope for the Messiah's arrival.

The **second candle** represents **faith** and is called the "Bethlehem Candle". Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, which is also the birthplace of King David.

The **third candle** symbolises **joy** and is called the "Shepherds' Candle". To the shepherds' great joy, the angels announced that Jesus came for humble, unimportant people like them, too.

The **fourth candle** represents **peace** and is called the "Angels' Candle." The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace - he came to bring people close to God and to each other again.

The **fifth candle** represents **light and purity** and is called the "Christ Candle". It is placed in the middle and is lit late on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day.

CHRISTMAS

Please come and celebrate together the joy of Christmas - focusing on the meaning of Christmas - the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem - God sending his Son to bring hope, peace and salvation. This is a great opportunity to invite family and friends to join you at our Services:

On Sunday 20 December - we hold our Service of Nine Lessons and Carols - when we hear again the prophecy of Christ's coming, the obedience of Mary, and the message of the angels. Jesus, God made flesh becoming a human being just

like us - so that all may know God through him; and we enjoy the voices of our wonderful parish choir.

On Thursday 24 December - Christmas Eve - at 6pm we have our Children's Service - a time for children to experience the joy of Christ's coming as a baby, a great opportunity for parents and grandparents to share this joy with their children. Encourage your children to invite a friend.

At 9.30pm on Christmas Eve we have our first Festival Eucharist of Christmas; followed by the second **Festival Choral Eucharist on Christmas morning** at 8.30am. What a way to commence our Christmas festivities - worshipping together.

Church WhatsApp Group

This WhatsApp group is a place for our church family to organise informal things, share what is happening in our lives, and grow as a community together!

If you would like to join this group, please use the QR code.

Safe Ministry Requirements for Office Holders

In 2025 the ordinance governing Parishes was altered to require various office holders, including Wardens and Parish Councillors to have completed Safe Ministry ("SM") training before being nominated for a role at the Parish AGM. SM is the Sydney Diocese requirements to protect vulnerable people. The Wardens and Parish Council elected in March 2026 all completed the required training.

Although it is several months until the next AGM (scheduled for March 2027), it is time for people who may wish to serve the Parish in 2027 to complete training so that they can be nominated.

Background

As you will be aware from the media, there is unfortunately an ongoing number of reports of inappropriate behaviour towards vulnerable people including children, the elderly, those with disabilities, and women across society, both historical and current. The Diocese, in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, instituted policies and guidelines to protect all people within the Church, in particular children and vulnerable adults. SM requirements are in addition to any statutory requirements such as mandatory state legislated Working With Children Checks.

Parish Response

The Parish adheres to SM requirements. We have our own processes; a SM Representative; you will see the regular notices reminding people of how to report issues. Within the Parish every ministry/leadership role, both ordained and lay, needs to be assessed and the person needs to complete and meet varied requirements. Those working with children have the most significant requirements.

Safe Ministry and the Annual General Meeting
The changes to the ordinance means that at the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") in March 2027, office holders will need to have completed SM training **before** they can be nominated for election. This is mandatory, the only exception is for appointments made by the Rector (which are made after the elections, and sometimes after the AGM). These people will have a short period in which to complete requirements.

SM is mandatory for Wardens and Parish Councillors. Other roles such as Nominators, Synod Representatives, Treasurer, et al., are encouraged to undertake the training.

What Does This Mean For People Considering Nomination?
For people who are already undertaking some form of leadership or ministry, you may have already completed the required training. If SM training has not been undertaken then you will need to complete the training before you can accept a nomination for a role. The training is not onerous. There is several hours of online units to complete, which you can do at home at your own pace, followed by a webinar.

You are encouraged to consider **NOW** ways that you can serve the Parish. Too often we leave this thinking and discussion until the new year, in the weeks leading up to the AGM, but we need to be doing this earlier and perhaps even undertaking the training, even if you may decide not to nominate.

We want a Parish Council that is representative of the whole Parish, in age, diversity, skills, experiences, etc. We need to have new people coming onto Parish Council in these important roles to bring fresh ideas as well as allowing others to take a step back.

We need to ensure that we are meeting our statutory obligations, but more importantly that our Parish is a safe place for all people, especially the young and vulnerable, reflecting the love of Christ to all. May I ask you to be giving this prayerful consideration for yourself and others whom you feel would make a contribution to the leadership of the parish.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to Fr Phil or one of the Wardens.

For Your Prayers

Parishes in our Mission Area
Beecroft, St John the Evangelist; Eastwood, St Philip; Gladesville, Christ Church; Macquarie, St George and St Dunstan; North Epping, All Saints; Ryde, St Anne; Soul Revival; West Ryde, St Columb; North Ryde, St John; Bridge, Trinity Chapel.

Ecumenical Churches in our Area
Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford; Uniting Church Parishes of Epping and West Epping; Epping Presbyterian Church; and Epping Baptist Church.

Our Parish Community
Pray for our Rector Phil, Becky and their family may their long service leave be a time of leisure and refreshment, and that they may be safe in their travels; give thanks for Canon David, and for our Assistant Minister Bill and pray for their leadership and service at this time. Give thanks for God's provision and goodness to us as we pray for each of our congregations and their leaders - Pastor Kian (Indonesian congregation) and The Reverend Simon (Chinese congregation). Give thanks for all who minister here, all who volunteer their time and skills for the service of the parish community.

May we all use the time, talents and resources that God has bestowed on us to worship him, praise him and for the benefit of our community of faith. Pray for guidance and vision for our Wardens and Parish Council as they seek to enable and manage the growth of the parish, and address all the issues related to the maintenance and use of our buildings.

Pray for all those in the parish, and known to us, who are ill or hurting in body, mind or spirit. Pray for God's healing touch to restore strength, and bring peace to anxious minds. Pray for medical personnel and carers and all who seek to ease the pain of others.

Pray for the members of our Indonesian Congregation - thank God for another year of ministry among Indonesians and returnees in Epping; pray for those who are returning to Indonesia for good: Richy; and pray for those who will be on holiday.

Please be praying over the Summer for our Youth and their leaders- give thanks for our Youth @ St Alban's Term 4 series looking at Two Ways to Live and the key elements of the Christian faith; pray that our Youth will use this outline to share their faith with friends and family. Give thanks for Youth @ St Alban's this year, especially for the growth in both numbers and maturity of the Youth in our church. Give thanks for the investment of our entire church family this year into seeing our Youth grow. Pray for rest for leaders and Youth over the Summer Holidays. Pray that we will continue to grow in trust and commitment to Jesus throughout 2027.

Pray for our children and their families, and all who are on holidays - may all who are travelling be safe on the roads, and in the water. May family time be a time of joy for families.

At this time we also remember the lonely, those who have empty places at the table, may God bless them and may they be comforted in the knowledge of God's love for them.

Our World: Pray for peace, for leaders of countries to find diplomatic solutions that will bring harmony between nations, and for wars, conflicts and oppression to end. Guide leaders towards fair and wise decisions, calming the anger and fear.

Anniversary of Death: *(December)* Hester Taylor; Rose Pitts; Doreen Blevin 1/12; Josephine Moron 2/12; Ron Nyholm 4/12; Bill Sheather 4/12; Alison Wells 5/12; Carol Richardson 6/12; Elwyn Russel-Jones 6/12; James Peebles 6/12; Norman Haywood 7/12; Margaret Ewart 8/12; Dorothy Rushforth 9/12; Clifford Harvie

11/12; Norman Peverell 13/12; Irene Rogers 14/12; Lillian Schaefer 14/12; Cath Taylor 14/12; Ian Graham 15/12; Joy Downes 15/12; Audrey Turner 15/12; Jean Hempsall 15/12; Philip Dowe 16/12; John Hempsall 17/12; Phyllis Rook 17/12; Nell Glanville 18/12; Michael Stannard 18/12; Russell Waters 20/12; Jean Drew 21/12; Sylvia Wickremesinghe 22/12; Betty Hunt 22/12; William Simpson 23/12; Jim Harrison 24/12; Beulah Gray 24/12; Kim Boyley 25/12; Virginia Bridgford 25/12; Eileen Ashton 26/12; Olga Shaw 30/12; Marion Brown 31/12

(January) Benjamin Cole 2/1; Alan Davis 2/1; Jean Collett 3/1; Doug Carruthers 3/1; Emelie Fraser 5/1; Norman Pollock 6/1; Ronald Dougall 6/1; Deborah Riedel 8/1; James Parsons 9/1; Shirley Tait 9/1; Charles Johnson 10/1; John Telfer 13/1; Brenda McLeod 13/1; Sheila Colling 13/1; Brian McLeod 14/1; Robin McLeod 14/1; Betty Farrar 14/1; Patricia Evans 16/1; Doreen Edwards 16/1; Albert Jayaratnam 16/1; Jacob Chelladurai 17/1; Gordon Young 18/1; Bobbie de Boos 19/1; Katie Dickinson 19/1; Kathleen Woodman 20/1; Val Dougall 21/1; Anthony Moon 23/1; Dora Perry 24/1; Doreen Peacock 24/1; Dorothy Partington 26/1; Nicholas Brayner 26/1; Lionel Nash 26/1; Gertrude Simmons 27/1; Roger Holloway 29/1; Kate Hindley 30/1; Derrick Evans 30/1

Thoughts and Prayers for Reflection for December 2026 is now available and is produced within the parish with a thought and prayer for each day of the month, as well as weekly prayers.

The Parish Magazine - The current edition of The Parish Magazine, November 2026 – January 2027, is available in the porch and on the parish website https://www.eppinganglicans.org.au/

The Parish Magazine records recent events in the parish, gives details of parish activities and publishes articles of general interest and articles which set out opinions on a range of matters the subject of discussion within the Anglican Church community. The Editor, Julie Evans encourages articles for the magazine. The deadline for contributions to the next edition is 8 January 2027 - julie.evans@ihug.com.au

Hospital Visiting Supplies

On behalf of the St Alban's Mothers Union Members, thank you for the parishioners who have assisted with sewing up, and knitting small bears, beanies and booties and donating baby bibs and socks to give to the new mothers we visit. The hospitals visited are Royal North Shore, Norwest Private and The San.

It would be useful for more supplies of the above items.



The size range for the socks is newborn 0 to 3 months age or up to 6 months age. Bibs can be bigger. If anyone can assist with knitting booties (up to 6 months of age) it would be appreciated too. Many thanks in advance.

Enquiries to Jane Bryant 9894 0439.

The Feast of Nicholas Ferrar - Patronal Festival
6pm Eucharist, Friday 4 December at St Paul's Burwood, 205-207 Burwood Rd Burwood.

After the Eucharist a lecture will be delivered in the hall by Dr Jamie Dunk, the Director of the St James Institute, followed by supper.

Giving in offertories and donations to September 2026 - Offertories and donations totalled $164,669 against a budget of $144,270, placing us $20,399 ahead. This is also $27,005 (20%) higher than at the same time last year. These figures do not include giving from the Indonesian and Chinese congregations, as their offerings mostly support their own ministry resources.

It is encouraging that this continues to be a somewhat steady and robust upward trend. This will further reinforce confidence to enable us to seriously consider candidates to fill some key roles to build on this growth trajectory that we are experiencing. The Wardens continue to be thankful for this positive result in giving and are greatly encouraged by it. We continue to pray that this momentum will continue, helping us remain faithful in the Parish's mission through the rest of 2026 and into 2027. The Wardens.

Mission of the Month, December 2026
Sharing God's love through the Christmas Bowl

For 77 years, Australians have given to the Christmas Bowl as an act of faith, generosity, and hope. Born in the aftermath of World War II, it began as a simple idea: churches of all denominations across the country joining together at Christmas to share what they could so that others, far away, could have food, shelter and safety.

Decades later, the Bowl still carries the prayers, gifts, and compassion of Christians across generations. It is a tradition that has quietly reshaped lives in places most of us will never see. Year after year, you and other believers step forward in love, often unseen. Your gifts have supported refugees, rebuilt homes after disaster, and reminded people in crisis that they are not forgotten.

For further details, please refer to the display on the Narthex board or visit the Act for Peace website **www.actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl**

There are a few ways to donate to the Christmas Bowl. Use the Christmas Bowl donation envelopes available in the church porch, or use the 'Beyond the Parish' side of your weekly offertory (please write 'Christmas Bowl' next to the stamped date) or use a plain envelope marked 'Christmas Bowl'. Alternatively, transfer funds electronically to the St Alban's account - please use the tag 'Christmas Bowl', or donate funds at a unique donation webpage set up for the Epping Anglican Parish **mycb.link/45776**



Mission of the Month, January 2027
Anglicare Chaplaincy

Alongside its wide-ranging work with people in need, Anglicare provides chaplains and chaplaincy services throughout Sydney and the Illawarra - in hospitals, prisons, mental health centres, aged care services, and in the community, ministering to people in need of personal and spiritual support. Some funding support is given by the government for these ministries, but this falls far short of covering the actual cost.

Our Mission for January encourages you to support these ministries with your gifts and your prayer, and perhaps to consider the opportunity of serving as a volunteer, working in this ministry of listening and loving support.

Some of us have benefited from the ministry of Chaplains at Anglicare Retirement Villages, as well as at hospitals. For further information about Anglicare Chaplaincy, please refer to the display on the narthex board or visit website https://www.anglicare.org.au/community/chaplaincy/

There are a few ways you can financially support the Anglicare Chaplaincy ministry. Either use the 'Beyond the Parish' side of your weekly offertory (please write 'Anglicare Chaplaincy' next to the stamped date) or use a plain envelope marked 'Anglicare Chaplaincy.' Alternatively, transfer funds electronically to the St Alban's account - please use the tag 'Anglicare Chaplaincy', or donate funds directly at https://www.anglicare.org.au/donate - use the pull-down menu under *Area of Support* and click on either *Chaplaincy – Hospital and Emergency* or *Chaplaincy – Prison and Community.*

Zoom details for Services

Where possible the festival services will be available by zoom. See the weekly bulletin for details.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82516182389?pwd=VGpWNXRMcFlLYXVWeVB3N0pzQnpsUT09

Passcode 389867 *if required.* Dialling in: 8015 6011. Meeting ID: 825 1618 2389 followed by # (and another # - there isn't a participants number).

Please keep your computer or phone on "mute" during the service. To mute/unmute your phone, press *6. Please stay on line for a time of fellowship.

Please consider paying your offertory directly into the church account.
The details are:-

St Alban's Account
BSB No: 032 081 / A/c: 000024

Please indicate which service you attend.

Offerings for EPIC Indonesian congregation, please specify EPIC in the reference.

Offerings for the Chinese congregation, please specify 'Chinese' in the reference.

If you wish give to the Mission of the Month or any other specific cause (eg Assistant Minister/Student Minister Fund), please indicate it on your direct transfer.

During the blessing of the gifts of the people, we are including the offertory made to the Parish by direct transfer; handed in to the office, and the offertory made using the EFTPOS Terminal at the back of the church.

PARISH STAFF

Rector: The Reverend Philip Lui 0413 396 435 - phil@eppinganglicans.org.au
On leave from 14/12/26 to 31/1/27

Assistant Minister (part-time): Bill Walton – bill@eppinganglicans.org.au

Locum (part-time): The Reverend Canon David Wong

Parish Administrator: Denise Pigot 98763362 - office@eppinganglicans.org.au

Music Director: Chris Czerwinski 0452 557 695
krzysztof_czerwinski@yahoo.com

Student Ministers: Doris Awad - doris.awad@student.moore.edu.au
and Gloria Walton

Indonesian Congregation (EPIC) Pastor: Kian Holik
kian@eppinganglicans.org.au

Chinese Congregation Pastor: Simon Pei - simon@eppinganglicans.org.au

Caretaker: Kari Hewitt 0402 119 004 – karihewitt94@gmail.com

Parish Office - 3 Pembroke Street Epping 2121 (PO Box 79 Epping 1710)
9876 3362 - www.eppinganglicans.org.au