



Welcome to St Alban's Church

2nd Sunday before Advent

OPENING HYMN *Henry Smith © 1978 Integrity's Hosanna!*

**Give thanks with a grateful heart.
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. *Repeat***

**And now let the weak say, "I am strong",
let the poor say, "I am rich",
because of what the Lord has done for us.
And now let the weak say, "I am strong",
let the poor say, "I am rich",
because of what the Lord has done for us.**

Give thanks with a grateful heart...

And now ... Give thanks!

† In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

My brothers and sisters, as we prepare to celebrate the presence of Christ in word and sacrament, let us call to mind and confess our sins.

God, be gracious to us and bless us,
and make your face shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May your ways be known on the earth,
your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you, † pardon and deliver you
from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE GLORIA

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT (The special prayer of the day)

Heavenly Lord,
you long for the world's salvation:
stir us from apathy,
restrain us from excess and revive in us new hope
that all creation will one day be healed
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night.

⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

THE GOSPEL
Matthew 25.14-30

Alleluia, Alleluia; Alleluia, Alleluia

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.” ²¹His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” ²³His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.”

²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” ²⁶But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

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

THE SERMON

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

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.**

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In the power of the Spirit, and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

At the end of the prayers we say together:

Merciful Father:

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

THE PEACE

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Blessed be God, by whose grace creation is renewed, by whose love heaven is opened, by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

THE EUCHARIST

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 thanks and praise.**

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and death
Therefore, with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and singing

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you. He broke the bread, gave it to them and said: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
Do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine. Again he praised you, gave it to them and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people, gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Alban, and all the saints

to feast at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours,
O loving Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us so we 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.
Lead us not into temptation;
but 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

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

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, have mercy on us.

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

God's holy gifts, for God's holy people.

**Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members. In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'

An Act of Spiritual Communion

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and for ever. Amen.**

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious Lord,
in this holy sacrament
you give substance to our hope:
bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

**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.**

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you,
the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace,
and the blessing ...

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen

CLOSING HYMN: *Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

**1. And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who him to death pursued?
 Amazing love! How can it be
 that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
 Amazing love! How can it be
 that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?**

**2. 'Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies:
who can explore his strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine!
 'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
 let angel minds inquire no more.
 'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
 let angel minds inquire no more.**

**3. He left his Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite his grace;
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race.
 'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
 for, O my God, it found out me.
 'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
 for, O my God, it found out me.**

**4. Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
my chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.
my chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.**

**5. No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine.
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ my own.**

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