



Welcome to St Alban's Church

Midnight Mass

OPENING HYMN *Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)*

1. Once in Royal David's City
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed;
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.
2. He came down to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all;
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.
3. And through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love, and watch the lowly maiden
in whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be,
mild, obedient, good as he.
4. For he is our childhood's pattern,
day by day like us he grew;
he was little, weak and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.
5. And our eyes at last shall see him
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above,
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone

**6. Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around**

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

Let us ask God's blessing on this Christmas crib, and on ourselves, that we who reflect on the birth of Jesus may share the salvation he accomplished.

Our help is in the name of the Lord.
Who has made heaven and earth.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of every nation and people, from the beginning of time you have shown your love: When our need for a saviour was great, you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. Bless this crib † and all who look on it. May it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus and raise our thoughts to him who is Emmanuel, God-with-us, and who lives and reigns for ever. **Amen.**

My sisters and brothers as we kneel with the shepherds before the newborn Christ child, we open our hearts in penitence and faith.

Christ came in humility to share our lives: forgive our pride.
Lord have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

Christ came with good news for all people: forgive our silence.
Christ have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

Christ came in love to a world of suffering: forgive our self-centredness. 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.**

Let us pray...

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
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 **Isaiah 52. 7-10**

After the reading... This is the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL **John 1.1-14**

Alleluia, Alleluia; Alleluia

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
Glory to you O God

At the end of the reading: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

*Please sit for ...*THE SERMON

THE CREED *Please stand if you are able*

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

Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. Let us bring before God the needs of the world in our prayers.

(The response to 'Lord, have mercy' is 'Hear our prayer')

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 ...*Please stand*

This holy night the angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace in all whom He delights.'

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

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

Word made flesh, life of the world, in your incarnation you embraced our poverty: by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

Blessed be God forever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God.
We give you thanks and praise for your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,
and on this night was born of the Virgin Mary
by the power of your Spirit,
and lived as one of us.
In this mystery of the Word made flesh
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of your glory
in the face of Jesus Christ.
In him we see our God made visible
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.

Therefore, with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim
the glory of your name
and say our joyful hymn of praise...

**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.**

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.**

COMMUNION HYMN *J S Dwight, Adolphe Adam c. Novello*

**1. O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till He appeared, and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!**

**Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night when Christ was born!
O night divine, O night, O night divine!**

**2. Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
with glowing hearts by His cradle, we stand;
So, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
here came the wise men from the Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
in all our trials born to be our friend;
He knows our need, He guardeth us from danger;
Behold your King! Before the Lowly bend!
Behold your King! Before the Lowly bend!**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen

*The Christmas Candle on the Advent wreath is lit
and we pray together:*

**Lord Jesus, light of light, you have come among us.
Help us who live by your light to shine as lights in your world.
Glory to God in the highest. Amen**

THE BLESSING

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of the Joseph and Mary, and the peace of
the Christ child be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing ...

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

CLOSING HYMN *Frederick Oakley (1820-1880)*

**1. O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels:**

*O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord*

2. God of God, light of light,
lo he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created:

3. Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizen's of heaven above;
glory to God in the highest;

4. Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing.

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TO YOU ALL

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