



Welcome to St Alban's

Feast of the Epiphany

Before the children leave for Children's Church we pray together:

Dear God, this church is a family.

**Help us to learn together, to worship together,
to share together and to pray together. In Jesus name. Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *John Henry Hopkins (1822-1900)*

**1 We three Kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.**

***O Star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.***

**2 Born a King on Bethlehem plain; gold I bring, to crown him again,
King for ever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.**

**3 Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh.
Prayer and praising, all are raising, worship him, God most high.**

**4 Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume breaths a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.**

**5 Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and sacrifice.
'Alleluia, alleluia!' earth to heaven replies.**

We are gathered together as one body

† 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.**

The wise men are brought to the crib.

The grace of God has dawned upon the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own. Let us therefore confess our sins.

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

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.**

GLORIA *Copyright 2012 David Thorne Music*

Glory to God, glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

**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.
*Glory to God, glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.***

**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.
*Glory to God, glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.***

**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.**

Glory to God, glory to God, Glory to God in the highest.

THE COLLECT (The special prayer of the day)

Grateful for the glory revealed today through God made flesh,
let us pray:

O God, who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
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.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 60.1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
² For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
³ Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
⁴ Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
⁶ A multitude of camels shall cover you,

the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Ephesians 3.1-12

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

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

GOSPEL: Matthew 2.1-12

We sing....**Alleluia, alleluia; alleluia, alleluia.**

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

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ “And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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

THE SERMON

THE APOSTLES 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

Lord, in your mercy...**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.**

THE PEACE *Please stand if you are able*

God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us and is a pledge of what is to come, has given us the Spirit to dwell in our hearts.

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

OFFERTORY HYMN: *Traditional Old English*

**1 The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

***Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.***

**2 They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.**

**3 And by the light of that same star,
three wise men came from country far.
To seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow that star wherever it went.**

**4 The star drew nigh to the north-west,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay.**

**5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence,
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.**

**6 Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
who hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood mankind hath bought.**

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Lord, accept your people's gifts, not gold, frankincense or myrrh,
but hearts and voices raised in praise of Jesus Christ, our light and
our salvation. **Amen.**

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.

All honour and praise be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God,
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord:
for at this time we celebrate your glory made present in our midst.
In the coming of the magi the King of all the world
was revealed to the nations.
In the waters of baptism Jesus was revealed as the Christ,
the Saviour sent to redeem us.
In the water made wine the new creation was revealed
at the wedding feast.
Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.
Therefore with all the angels of heaven we lift our voices
to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

**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.**

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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.**

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, 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.
And 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.**

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All baptised Christians who receive communion in their own churches are welcome to receive communion. Any member of the congregation may come to receive a blessing.

COMMUNION HYMN: *William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)*

**1. As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious God, may we
evermore be led by Thee.**

**2. As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee whom heaven and earth adore,
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy-seat.**

**3. As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure, and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.**

**4. Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.**

**5. In the heavenly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun, which goes not down.
There forever may we sing
alleluias to our King.**

Prayers after Communion

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek: may we who, with the wise men, have been drawn by your light discern the glory of your presence in your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise,
that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home.
Dying and living, he declared your love,
gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life;
we who drink his cup bring life to others;
we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
so we and all your children shall be free,
and the whole earth live to praise your name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shine in your hearts and fill your lives with his joy and peace. And the blessing....
Amen.

We have seen his glory, the glory revealed to all the nations.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *Graham Kendrick ©1987 Kingsway's Thankyou Music*

**1 Lord, the light of Your love is shining
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us,
shine on me, shine on me.**

