

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALTONA/LAVERTON

Eucharist for Christmas Day



St Clement's Church, Altona Meadows
9:30am

Welcome to our worship today as we celebrate Christmas together.

Please join in saying together the words printed in bold type, and in singing the hymns.

Our parish lies on the country of the Kulin nation. We recognise and honour the Indigenous custodians of this land over countless generations, and we pay our respects to their elders, past and present. We commit ourselves to the path of reconciliation, justice and healing (including to Pay The Rent to local First Nations people).

During the service, a collection will be taken up
for the **Christmas Bowl Appeal**.

For over 70 years, the Christmas Bowl Appeal has brought together churches across Australia, to share God's love through practical action in the world.

This year is already shaping up to be one of the toughest in recent memory. With the cost of living rapidly increasing for many of us, both here at home and abroad, there is much uncertainty about the future. The impacts of the climate crisis, rising inflation and the ongoing war in Ukraine are all contributing to growing food scarcity for many communities already uprooted by conflict and disaster around the world. This global food crisis is now pushing millions to the brink of famine with families in urgent need of food, care and lifesaving support.

Your gift to the Christmas Bowl today will help to support these communities affected by conflict and disaster, around the world.

You can also donate online via our parish's Christmas Bowl page, using the QR code or by visiting <https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au/46652>
(A tax receipt will be sent directly to you.)

Alternatively, Christmas Bowl giving envelopes are available at the back of the church.



Gathering in God's name

We meet in God's name, as God's people – children of God in all our rich diversity, with all that we carry from the complexity of our lives.

We turn to God in praise and prayer; this includes recalling all that has separated us from God, and claiming the love and forgiveness that is always held out to us.

The Collect then 'collects' these prayers and turns our attention towards the Bible readings which will follow.

HYMN

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.*

True God of true God,
Light of Light eternal,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
Son of the Father,
begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him...

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above,
'Glory to God,
glory in the highest':
O come, let us adore him...

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore him...

Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786)

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you.
And also with you.

‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ says the Lord.
Now the Word is made flesh and laid in a narrow manger.
From eternity to eternity you are God,
and now we see you as a newborn child.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts.
Let us turn to the light and confess our sins.

Lord of grace and truth, we confess our unworthiness
to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The Virgin Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.
Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

Your Son our Saviour was born in poverty in a manger.
Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The shepherds left their flocks to go to Bethlehem.
Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

The wise men followed the star to find Jesus the King.
Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:
forgive and heal us.

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself,
that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh,
and be cleansed from all your sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Christ Candle is lit.

We light this candle for the newborn Christ, reawakening hope and faith—the Word embodied for our time.

God, as we receive your promise, you are light, you are hope.

People of God: shout and sing!
Tell the good news of peace on earth.
Lord, bring us today into Christ's peace.
All God's people say:
Amen!

Angels dance and the bright star shines.
All creation bows to the Lord of all.
Lord, bring us today into Christ's light.
All God's people say:
Amen!

One with us, yet born to save,
he will show us the way to God.
Lord, bring us today into Christ's love.
All God's people say:
Amen!

People of God: shout and sing:
Alleluia! Alleluia!



GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

**Glory to God in the highest
and peace to God's 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

All glory to you, gracious God,
for the gift of your Son,
whom you sent to save us.
With the angels, let us praise your name,
and tell the earth his story,
that all may believe, rejoice, and proclaim your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Opening the Scriptures

The readings come from different parts of the Bible: different perspectives on the great story of God's presence and purpose among us. In the psalm we respond with the ancient words of prayer of God's people.

The sermon adds to our own reflections on the readings, and then we respond by affirming the faith as handed to us from previous generations.

We bring our prayers for the world and the Church, trusting that all things and all people are in God's hands.

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

You have made the nation great;
you have increased its joy.

They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,
as those who divide plunder rejoice.

As on the day of Midian, you've shattered the yoke that burdened them,
the staff on their shoulders,
and the rod of their oppressor.

Because every boot of the thundering warriors,
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned, fuel for the fire.

A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.

He will be named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be vast authority and endless peace
for David's throne and for his kingdom,
establishing and sustaining it
with justice and righteousness
now and forever.

The zeal of the LORD of heavenly forces will do this.

(9.2-7; CEB)

For the word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

O sing to the Lord a new song: sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord and bless his holy name: proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations: and his wonders among all peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: he is more to be feared than all gods.

As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols: it is the Lord who made the heavens.

Majesty and glory are before him: beauty and power are in his sanctuary.

Render to the Lord, you families of the nations: render to the Lord glory and might.

Render to the Lord the honour due to his name: bring offerings and come into his courts.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness: let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

Say among the nations that the Lord is king: he has made the world so firm that it can never be moved; and he shall judge the peoples with equity.

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar, and all that fills it:

Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them: then shall all the trees of the wood shout with joy before the Lord;

For he comes, he comes to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

(96)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

In the past, God spoke through the prophets to our ancestors in many times and many ways. In these final days, though, he spoke to us through a Son. God made his Son the heir of everything and created the world through him. The Son is the light of God's glory and the imprint of God's being. He maintains everything with his powerful message. After he carried out the cleansing of people from their sins, he sat down at the right side of the highest majesty. And the Son became so much greater than the other messengers, such as angels, that he received a more important title than theirs .

(1.1-4; CEB)

For the word of the Lord,

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

1. Child in the manger,
infant of Mary;
outcast and stranger,
Lord of all!
Child who inherits
all our transgressions,
all our demerits
on him fall.

2. Once the most holy
child of salvation
gentle and lowly
lived below;
now, as our glorious
mighty Redeemer,
see him victorious
over each foe.

3. Prophets foretold him,
infant of wonder;
angels behold him
on his throne;
worthy our Saviour
of all their praises;
happy for ever
are his own.

*Words: Mary Macdonald (1798-1872)
tr. Lachlan Macbean (1853-1931) alt*

THE GOSPEL

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.
Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

A reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrolment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your saviour is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord.

This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, “Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours.”

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.” They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

(2.1-20; CEB)

For the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us declare our faith in God:

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for all people and for the Church throughout the world.

The response to the prayers is

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude with our Parish Prayer

**God of this ancient land,
holy beyond time and place,
you search us out
and name us your beloved children.
Work in us to fulfil your longing
and compassion for every person.
Send your Spirit to renew our life,
and give us courage
to rise and follow where Jesus calls. Amen.**

Celebrating at the Lord's table

At the greeting of peace, we recognise that God's gift of peace constantly renews our human relationships and forms us as the Body of Christ.

Our offerings of money and groceries remind us that we are called to participate with our lives and livelihoods in the coming of God's kingdom of justice, healing and peace.

In the Great Thanksgiving, the priest voices the prayer of the whole assembly, recalling the mighty acts of God, Jesus' saving death and resurrection, and his last meal with his friends. The prayer calls on the Holy Spirit to make Christ present in our sharing of bread and wine, and to remake us as Christ's body in the world. We respond with the Lord's Prayer, as the crucified and risen Jesus prays anew through us.

Our sharing is a gift of grace, a communion with Jesus and with each other. There is a place here for each and every person.

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

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

Everyone is invited to turn to those around, and offer a greeting of peace from where you stand.

HYMN

*(During the hymn an offering is taken up for the **Christmas Bowl Appeal**; alternatively, please consider making an online donation—see inside front cover for details.)*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down
and glory shone around.

‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind),
‘glad tidings of great joy I bring
you and all humankind.

‘To you in David’s town this day
is born of David’s line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

‘the heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling clothes
and in a manger laid.’

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels, praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:

‘All glory be to God on high,
and to the world be peace;
goodwill henceforth from heaven to earth
begin and never cease.’

Words: Nahum Tate (1652-1715) alt

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

God of all goodness and grace,
receive the gifts we offer;
and grant that our whole life
may give you glory and praise;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

The priest prays on behalf of all, praising God for God's mighty acts. All respond:

**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.

The Last Supper is recalled, including Jesus' command to continue sharing bread and wine: in memory of him, and proclaiming his death and resurrection. All respond:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The prayer calls on God's blessing and looks to the fulfilling of all things within the goodness of God. All join in affirming:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

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.

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.

This is the Lord's table. All who seek God's mercy are welcome.

Everyone is invited to share communion or to receive a blessing. Children who have been baptised are welcome to share communion. All the communion bread will have wine added to it, but if you also wish to drink from the common cup then please remain and it will be brought to you. If you require a gluten free wafer, or if you would prefer not to share communion but to receive a blessing, please indicate when the priest comes to you.

While communion is being shared, we sing:

He became poor that we may be rich,
loving the world and leaving his throne;
King of all kings and Lord of all lords,
flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone.

*Words: © 1995 Wild Goose Resource Group
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Going into the world

The Eucharist is food for the journey of faith, whatever awaits us as we go out to the rest of our lives. We have been renewed, transformed, and blessed: now we take that blessing to share with others, in our words and actions, our hearts and lives.

'The Eucharist never ends – it must be lived.'

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

God of heaven, dwelling among us, we thank you for feeding us with this holy food. By your grace keep us ever faithful to your Word made flesh that as his body in the world we may bring your presence to all people.

**Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**
**Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

HYMN

Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
heralds of creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
*come and worship Christ, the newborn King,
come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.*

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant Light:
come and worship Christ...

Wise men, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations,
you have seen his natal star:
come and worship Christ...

Though an infant now we view him,
he shall fill his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him:
every knee shall then bow down:
come and worship Christ...

Words: James Montgomery (1771-1854) alt

BLESSING AND SENDING OUT

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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

*We wish you a happy and joyful Christmas,
and a deep trust in God's blessings in 2023.*

Everyone is welcome to join us for our summer services in January:

Sundays in January

1st	9:30am	St Eanswythe's
8th	9:30am	St Clement's
	5pm	St Clement's
15th	9:30am	St Eanswythe's
	5pm	St Clement's
22nd	9:30am	St Clement's
	1pm	St Eanswythe's
	5pm	St Clement's
29th	9:30am	St Eanswythe's
	5pm	St Clement's

Sunday 5th February Normal service times resume

For further details visit
www.anglicanaltlav.org.au
www.facebook.com/anglicanaltlav