

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).



Material in this service is taken from *A Prayer Book for Australia* (Broughton Publishing, 1995) and *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (2000).

# 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.

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels;

all day and all night they shall never be silent.

You who remind the Lord, take no rest,

and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem  
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.

The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies,

and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have laboured;

but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord,

and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts.

Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people;

build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones,

lift up an ensign over the peoples.

The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,

‘See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.’

They shall be called, ‘The Holy People,

The Redeemed of the Lord’;

and you shall be called, ‘Sought Out,

A City Not Forsaken.

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

PSALM (97)

The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coastlands be glad!

**Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.**

Fire goes before him,  
and consumes his adversaries on every side.

**His lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.**

The mountains melt like wax before the Lord,  
before the Lord of all the earth.

**The heavens proclaim his righteousness;  
and all the peoples behold his glory.**

All worshippers of images are put to shame,  
those who make their boast in worthless idols;  
all gods bow down before him.

**Zion hears and is glad,  
and the towns[a] of Judah rejoice,  
because of your judgements, O God.**

For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above all gods.

**The Lord loves those who hate[b] evil;  
he guards the lives of his faithful;  
he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.**

Light dawns for the righteous,  
and joy for the upright in heart.

**Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,  
and give thanks to his holy name!**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of Paul to Titus (3. 4-8a)

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water<sup>[a]</sup> of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure.

I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone

For the word of the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God.**



HYMN: 292

1 Infant holy,  
infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing,  
little knowing  
Christ the babe is Lord of all;  
swift are winging  
angels singing,  
nowells ringing,  
tidings bringing,  
Christ the babe is Lord of all,  
Christ the babe is Lord of all.

2 Flocks were sleeping,  
shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new  
saw the glory,  
heard the story,  
tidings of a gospel true;  
thus rejoicing,  
free from sorrow,  
praises voicing  
greet the morrow,  
Christ the babe was born for you,  
Christ the babe was born for you.

Polish carol (?13th cent.) Translation from "The Kingsway Carol Book"  
© E. G. Reed by permission of HarperCollins Publishers, UK)

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;)

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 312

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, despised and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy

3. And through all his wondrous childhood,  
day by day like us he grew;  
he was little, weak, and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feels for all our sadness,  
and he shares in all our gladness.

4. 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 has gone.

5. 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 his children gather round  
bright like stars, with glory crowned.

Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander 1818-95 alt.  
© The Australian Hymn Book Company

## 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.

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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:308

1 Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful, all you nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem'.  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
glory to the new-born King.*

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail the incarnate Deity,  
pleased in human flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.

*Hark! the herald angels sing, ...*

3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings:  
mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more need die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth.

*Hark! the herald angels sing, .....*

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-88)*

## 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.**

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*We wish you a happy and joyful Christmas,  
and a deep trust in God's blessings in 2024*

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

### **Sunday in December**

<b>31st</b>	9:30am	St Eanswythe's
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### **Sundays in January**

<b>7th</b>	9:30am	St Clement's
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<b>14th</b>	9:30am	St Eanswythe's
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<b>21st</b>	9:30am	St Clement's
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**Sunday 28th January** Normal service times resume

For further details visit  
**[www.anglicanaltlav.org.au](http://www.anglicanaltlav.org.au)**  
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