

**ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN PARISH
CHELTENHAM**

ADVENT SUNDAY I

SUNDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2025



**CELEBRANT & PREACHER:
FR. GERALD LOOS**

DEACON OF THE MASS: REV'D JILL RENISON

ORGANIST: MR KEITH FULLARD

*This church stands on the land of the Boon Wurrung people.
We respectfully acknowledge their elders, past and present, and we pray
for the ongoing work of reconciliation.*

OPENING HYMN: O come, O come, Emmanuel
TIS 379

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O come, great Lord of might
who to the tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice! rejoice!

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice! rejoice!

O come, O branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Rejoice! rejoice!

O come, O dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! rejoice!

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

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

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

♪ Cantor – Come let us go to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob: that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.

Brothers and sisters, today we gather to celebrate the sacred mysteries. As we begin, we bless and light the candles of our Advent wreath, a sign of our longing and joyful expectation for the coming of Christ, the Light of the World.

(Pause briefly as the advent candle is now blessed.)

Lord our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ:
He is Emmanuel, the Hope of all peoples.

As we light this first candle, strengthen within us the desire to prepare our hearts for His coming in glory.

Dispel the darkness of sin and renew in us Your Spirit of hope. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The first purple candle is lit followed by the acclamation.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Introduction to confession

Lord Jesus, you come to call us to repentance.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you come to heal the broken-hearted and
forgive our sins.

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you come to bring us peace and joy, to prepare
us for your coming again.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn
to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your
sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal
life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE COLLECT

Let us pray,

Faithful God, whose promises stand unshaken through all
generations: renew us in hope, that we may be awake and
alert watching for the glorious return of Jesus Christ,
our Judge and Saviour, who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

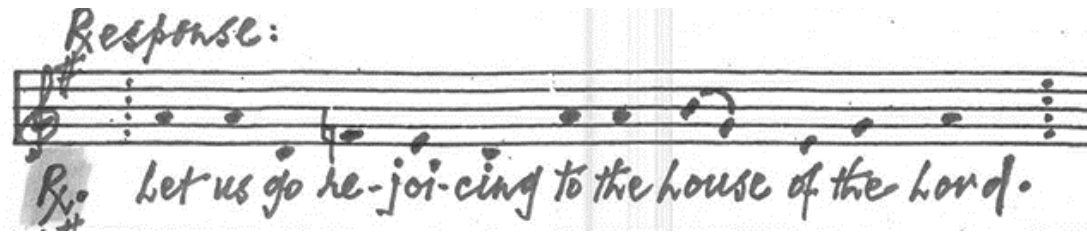
A reading from book of Isaiah

(Isaiah 2:1-5 - Found on page 550 in the pew bible)

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 122



R. Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

I was glad when they said to me:
'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' **R.**

And now our feet are standing:
within your gates, O Jerusalem;
Jerusalem which is built as a city:
where the pilgrims gather in unity.
There the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord:
as he commanded Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord. **R.**

For the sake of my kindred and companions:
I will pray that peace be with you.
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God:
I will seek for your good. **R.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Romans
(Romans 13:9-14 - Found on page 923 in the pew bible)

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

GOSPEL *Please stand*

♪ Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

♪ Cantor – Lord show us your mercy and love: and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

(Matthew 24:36-44 - found on page 806 in the pew bible)

For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

Silence may be kept.

The Apostolic Creed

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church

**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 again 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 THE PEOPLE

Deacon of the Mass: As we begin this holy season of Advent, let us lift our hearts and minds in prayer, trusting in God's mercy and eagerly awaiting the coming of Christ.

For the Church, that during this Advent season, we may prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ, renewing our commitment to live as His disciples in a world in need of His love and light.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all leaders of the world, that they may work toward justice and peace, and that the light of Christ's truth may guide them as they seek to bring hope to those who suffer.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who are suffering and in need, especially the poor, the sick, and the oppressed, that they may feel the loving presence of God and experience His comfort and peace.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our community of faith at St Matthew's, that we may stay vigilant in prayer and action as we prepare for Christ's

coming, sharing His love with those around us and striving to build His Kingdom on earth.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who are far from God, that they may be touched by the Holy Spirit this Advent and experience the joy of knowing Christ, the hope of salvation.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who have died, that they may rest in peace and come to enjoy the fullness of life in Christ's eternal Kingdom.

We pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon of the Mass: Almighty God, as we begin this season of Advent, hear the prayers we have offered and prepare our hearts to receive the light of Christ. We ask this through Him who comes to us as our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

We are the body of Christ.

His spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.



*Seek, O seek the Lord, while he is near;
trust him, speak to him in prayer,
and he will hear.*

God be with us in our lives,
direct us in our calling;
break the snares the world contrives,
keep us from falling.

Seek, O seek the Lord ...

God, increase in us the life
that Christ by dying gave us:
though we faint in mortal strife
his blood will save us.

Seek, O seek the Lord ...

Strengthen in our hearts the love
we owe to one another;
how can we love God above
and not each other?

Seek, O seek the Lord ...

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

Pray, my sisters and brothers, that our sacrifice may be
acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.

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.

It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

For when he humbled himself
to come among us in human flesh,
he fulfilled the plan you formed
before the foundation of the world
to open for us the way of salvation.

Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,
we now watch for the day
when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.

And so we join our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven
to proclaim your glory
for ever praising you and singing:

**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.

Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation,
this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
 "Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
 "Drink from this, all of you.
 This is my blood of the new covenant
 shed for you and for many
 for the forgiveness of sins.
 Do this, as often as you drink it,
 in remembrance of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
proclaiming his offering of himself

made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,
unite us in the body of your Son,
and bring us with all your people
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you, Father,
in songs of never-ending praise:

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

♪ As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to
pray,

Our Fa-ther in hea-ven hal-lowed be your name your king-dom come
your will be done, on earth as in hea-ven
Give us to-day our dai-ly bread For-give us our sins as we for-give those
who sin a-gainst us. Save us from the time of tri
al and de-li-ver us from e-vil. For the king -
dom, the power, and the glo-ry are yours now and for e-ver. A men.

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.

♪ Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have
mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
Grant us peace.

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the
world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word,
and I shall be healed.

The sacrament is given with the following words

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

♪ Cantor – Righteousness shall go before the Lord: and
tread the path before his feet.

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait,
we thank you that you have fed us
with the bread of life
and the cup of salvation.

As we joyfully await your Son,
keep us ever watchful
that we may be ready to stand before him
on the day of his coming.
**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. Amen**

Please remain seated for some announcements.

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

If you are able, please stand for God's blessing

May the Almighty and merciful God by whose grace we await
in blessed hope the coming of our Savior in glory, strengthen
your hearts in every good work.

Amen.

May He grant you the steadfast hope that shines in the
darkness and keep you watchful in prayer as you prepare the
way of the Lord.

Amen.

May He make you firm in faith, joyful in hope, and active in
charity, until Christ comes again.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and
the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

HYMN: Hark, a herald voice is calling 264 TIS

Hark, a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is near,' it seems to say,
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
waken, children of the day!'

Wakened by the solemn warning
let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her sun, all sloth dispelling
shines upon the morning skies.

Lo, the Lamb, so long expected
comes with pardon down from heav'n;
let us meet him with repentance,
pray that we may be forgiv'n.

So when love comes forth in judgment,
debts and doubts and wrongs to clear,
faithful may he find his servants
watching till the dawn appear.

Church
News

PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Today 30th November @ 10:45am

Service Roster 7 December 2025 - ADVENT II

Volunteer roster:	Readings:
Welcomer: Barbara	Isaiah 11:1-10
Chalice: Lesley	Psalm 72
Reader: Sue	Romans 15:4-13
Intercessor: Deb H	Matthew 3:1-12

Prayer Diary:

Monday	1 st	Deborah Howard Janet Jeffery Fr Russell & Elizabeth Joyce
Tuesday	2 nd	Doug Kennedy & Nicole Tanner Chloe Lampard Anne Leegel
Wednesday	3 rd	Joan & Don Leslie Fr Gerald, Shani & Gabe Loos Sanjeeve, Rapti & Skyler Markalanda / Wijendra Family
Thursday	4 th	Shirley & Ken Marriot Rory McGrath Frances McKay
Friday	5 th	Fr Rob & Jenny McUtchen Marie Murray-Arthur Romain Ohlmus
Saturday	6 th	CHN St. Matthew's Cheltenham



Advent begins with a single light—a small flame flickering against the darkness. It is the candle of Hope, and its gentle glow reminds us of a truth we often forget. God's light always begins small, but it is never insignificant.

Hope is not optimism or wishful thinking. It is the deep confidence that God is faithful, that His promises endure, and that His grace is already at work even when we cannot see it.

The people of Israel waited generations for a Messiah, clinging to God's promise even through exile, oppression, and silence. Yet the promise was never withdrawn. In the quiet stillness of Bethlehem, at a moment when few were watching, hope became flesh.

Advent invites us into that same posture of waiting—not passive waiting, but expectant waiting. We wait for Christ who has already come, Christ who comes to us daily in word and sacrament, and Christ who will come again in glory. Our hope rests not in our circumstances but in the One who enters our circumstances to redeem them.

In a world weary with division, anxiety, and uncertainty, hope is more necessary than ever. And yet, hope is often born in the smallest acts: a prayer whispered in trust, a kindness offered without recognition, a step taken in faith when the road ahead is unclear.

These small lights matter. They grow. They illuminate. They witness to the truth that God is near.

On this First Sunday of Advent, let the candle of Hope remind you that God has not forgotten His people. He has not forgotten you. Whatever darkness you face, His light is rising. Whatever burdens you carry, His promise endures.

Hope says:
"The story is not over. God is still coming.
And His light will not be overcome."

Blessings

Fr Gerald

We are currently collecting essential goods for **Dixon House**, that supports those in need. Your generosity is a great blessing to those who are struggling in our community.

CHRISTMAS @ ST MATTHEW'S 2025

DECEMBER 14th CAROL SERVICE 6.00pm

DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00pm Family Service 11:30pm Midnight Mass

DECEMBER 25TH CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30am Christmas Day Mass



Vicarage BBQ

The Vicarage family invites all parishioners to a BBQ at the Vicarage on
Sunday 7th December after the 9:30am Service

Please enter your name on the list if you will be attending

Please bring a salad or sweet

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent Wreath is a Christian tradition used to mark the four weeks of Advent, the period leading up to Christmas. It is a circular wreath made of evergreens symbolizing eternal life and the ongoing hope found in Christ. The wreath holds four candles, which are lit progressively over the four Sundays of Advent, with each candle representing one of the themes of the season: hope, peace, joy, and love. Some Advent wreaths also have a fifth candle—the Christ Candle, which is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The Advent wreath typically holds four candles, though some versions have a fifth candle in the center (the Christ Candle). The four main candles are traditionally three purple and one pink (rose-colored), each symbolizing a different aspect of the season. As each week progresses,

one more candle is lit, symbolizing the increasing light of Christ's coming into the world.

The first candle, usually purple, represents hope and is often called the Prophecy Candle, referring to the prophecies of the coming Messiah, particularly those found in the Old Testament.

The second candle, also purple, symbolizes peace and reflects the message of peace that Christ brings. It is often called the Bethlehem Candle, reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third candle is rose-colored (traditionally known as the Gaudete Candle). This candle represents joy, and signifies a break in the solemnity of Advent, a reminder to rejoice in the Lord.

The fourth candle, which is purple, symbolizes love and is often referred to as the Angel's Candle because the angels announced the birth of Christ, bringing the message of God's love for humanity.

The fifth candle, placed in the center of the wreath, is white and represents Christ. This candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, symbolizing the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World. It also signifies that Christ's light is now fully present in the world.

Advent Prayer

O Lord of Light and Promise, as we enter this season of waiting,
quiet our hearts and draw us near to You.

Awaken in us a spirit of hope, that we may see Your presence
in the ordinary and the unexpected.

Strengthen us with peace as we prepare the way for Christ.
Fill us with love that reaches out, and joy that cannot be shaken.

May this Advent be a holy pause— a time to listen, to watch,
and to welcome Your coming into our world and into our lives.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT ST MATTHEW'S

First Sunday of the Month:

8:00am A quiet, said service of Holy Communion

Every Sunday:

9:30am A sung service of Holy Communion
with a Children's Program

Wednesdays (not in January):

9:45am Prayer for Healing, Wholeness and Peace

10:00am A quiet, said service of Holy Communion

Monday, Thursday and Friday mornings:

9:00-9:30 am Morning Prayer via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 796 1738 1243

Passcode: 8hzrij

If you would like to donate to St Matthew's, thank you!

Our bank details are:

St Matthew's Anglican Church

BSB 06 3119 Acc. No. 1044 5437

Contact Details:

Vicar – Fr Gerald Loos SSC

Mobile 0409 149 486

Tuesday – Pastoral Visits

Wednesday – Healing Mass and Home Communion

Thursday - Office Day in Parish Office

Friday – Pastoral Visits

Please note that Fr Gerald will be taking his regular day off on Monday.

Should there be an emergency or if you require urgent pastoral care, he can be contacted on his mobile.

vicar@stmatthewscheltenham.org.au

www.stmatthewscheltenham.org.au

