

**ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN PARISH
CHELTENHAM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY MASS
25TH DECEMBER 2025**



**VICAR: FR GERALD LOOS
DEACON OF THE MASS: FR ROB McUTCHEN
ORGANIST: MR KEITH FULLARD**

Welcome to St Matthew's

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.

This is a service of Holy Communion.
All are welcome at the Lord's Table.

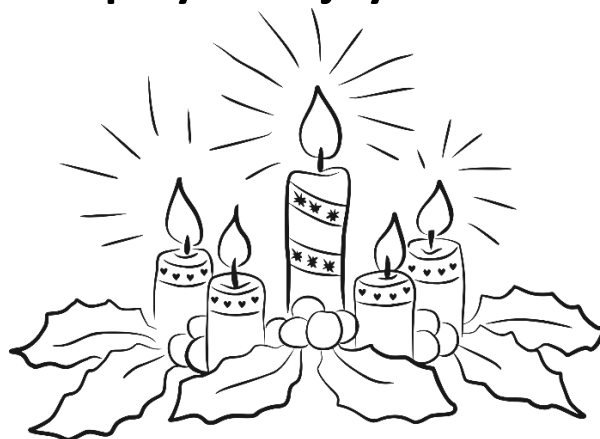
Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.
If you prefer, you are most welcome
to come forward to receive a blessing.

The toilets are at the back of the church.
A welcomer can help you to find them if necessary.

You are invited to join in the text printed in
bold type in this order of service.

Please ensure that your mobile phone
is switched off or is on silent.

It is a joy to have you with us.
We hope you enjoy the service.



ORDER OF SERVICE

Stand for the entry of the procession during the singing of

“Hodie Christus Natus Est” - Traditional plain song

(Translation: Today Christ is born; today the saviour appears.
Today on earth the angels sing; Archangels rejoice; Today the
righteous rejoice saying, Glory to God in the highest, Alleluiah!
Alleluiah! Alleluiah! Alleluiah! Alleluiah! Alleluiah!)

Priest The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
Priest: Let us proceed in peace.
All: + In the name of Christ. Amen

HYMN: O Come All Ye Faithful

304 TIS

O Come All Ye Faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
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,

See how the shepherds
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks,
draw nigh with holy fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:

O come, let us adore Him,

CRIB DEVOTION

To you, O Christ, Word of the Father, we offer our lowly prayers and humble thanks; for love of our human race you most wonderfully chose to be born of Mary, and to take our nature as nevermore to lay it by; so that we might be born again by your Spirit and restored in the image of God; to whom, one blessed Trinity, be given all honour, might, majesty and power, now and for ever. Amen.

We pray you, Lord, to purify our hearts, that they may be worthy to become your dwelling place. Let us never fail to find room for you, but come and abide in us, that we also may abide in you, for as at this time you were born into the world for us, and live and reign, King of kings and Lord of lords, now and for ever. Amen.

The Hymn continues

Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee
with love and awe;

who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?
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,

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 – To us a child is born, to us a son is given: and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor Mighty God.

Let us pray

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PENITENTIAL RITE

My friends, we gather this day to celebrate the love of God for all people manifested in the birth of the long awaited Saviour of the world. In a moment of silence may we be aware of the miracle of God's love for us as we call to mind our sins and ask for God's forgiveness as we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

You came to live among us as a man:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

You were born the Son of a Virgin Mother:
Christ have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

You were a man like us in all things but sin:
Lord have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

The Celebrant says the absolution.

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 to do his will, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

♪ **Kyrie, eleison (x3)**
Christe, eleison (x3)
Kyrie, eleison (x3)

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

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.

THE OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Lord God, we praise you for creating man,
and still more for restoring him in Christ.

Your Son shared our weakness:

may we share his glory,

for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

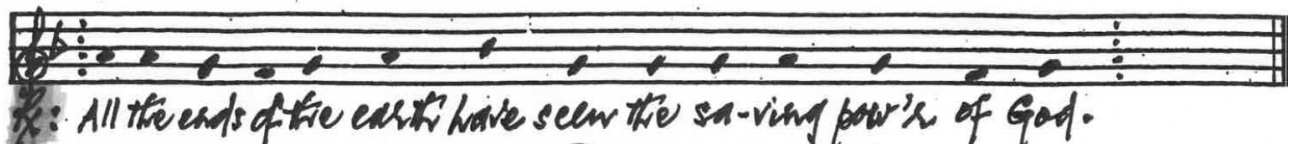
THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Prophet Isaiah.
(Isaiah 52.7-10– page 596 of the pew Bible)

For the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM



R: All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God

O sing to the Lord a new song:
for he has done marvellous things;
His right hand and his holy arm:
they have got him the victory. **R**

The Lord has made known his salvation:
he has revealed his just deliverance
in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his mercy and faithfulness
towards the house of Israel:
and all the ends of the earth
have seen the salvation of our God. **R**

Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth:
break into singing and make melody.
Make melody to the Lord upon the harp:
upon the harp and with the sounds of praise. **R**

SECOND READING

A reading from the First Letter to the Hebrews
(Hebrews 1.1-4 - page 970 of the pew Bible)

For the word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.

If you are able, please stand for the Gospel.

♪ Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

♪ Cantor – A holy day has dawned upon us, come you nations and adore the Lord: Today a great light has appeared upon the earth.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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

(John 1:1-14 - page 862 of the pew Bible)

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

THE HOMILY

Silence may be kept.

THE NICENE CREED

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;**

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and
became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he
suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge
the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy
catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the
forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Priest: My brothers and sisters; in purity and love, Jesus was
born of Mary, and all the ends of the earth have seen the

saving power of God. Through Jesus, let us offer our Christmas petitions to God our Father.

God our Father, your only begotten Son Jesus, has made you known : we pray that in the life of your Church his glory may be seen, full of grace and truth. You sent your Son into the world so that we might live through him; may we ever adore the holy name of Jesus who delivers us from all our sins. *(Pause)* Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We see, Father that darkness covers the earth and thick darkness the people. We pray that you will arise upon the nations that your glory will be seen on them. . *(Pause)* Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Through Christ who was born of Mary, we pray for all who do not know your tender mercy; through Christ who was born in a stable, we pray for those with nowhere to lay their heads; through Christ whom Herod sought to kill and whose parents fled with him to Egypt, we pray for all who are persecuted or in exile. *(Pause)* Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Through Jesus who grew up to be a healer of humankind, we pray for the sick, especially those who have asked for our prayers and who we name in our hearts before you. *(A short pause)* Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We rejoice that at the birth of Jesus the heavenly hosts sang your praises and glorified you: we pray that with them you will join the voices of all the living and departed in one proclamation of your praise. We thank you for the love and prayers of Saint Mary the Virgin, Saint Joseph and all Holy

Ones, and we join with them in prayer for our brothers and sisters who have recently died, and for all those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time. *(Pause)* Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Priest: Father when your Son came among us he scattered the darkness of this world and filled it with your glory. May we so live as children of the light that, when our earthly journey is over, we may come to your heavenly kingdom. We make our prayers through Christ our Lord. AMEN

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Please stand if you are able

We are the body of Christ.

His spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

HYMN: While shepherds watched their flocks by night
299 TIS

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.'

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.

Almighty God, the saving work of Christ made our peace
with you. May our offering today renew that peace within us
and give you perfect praise. We ask this in the name of Jesus
the 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.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the wonder of the incarnation your eternal Word
has brought to the eyes of faith a new and radiant vision
of your glory.

In him we see our God made visible and so are caught up
in love of the God we cannot see.

And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven
we proclaim your glory and join in their unending
hymn of praise saying.

**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.

In memory of his death and resurrection,
we offer you, father,
this life giving bread this saving cup.

We thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be
brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit.

Lord, remember your church throughout the world:
Together with Ric our Archbishop, Paul our regional
Bishop and all the clergy, remember those who take part in
this offering, those here present and all your people, and
all who seek you with a sincere heart.

Remember our brothers and sisters

who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again;
 bring them and all the departed
 into the light of your presence.
 Have mercy on us all;
 make us worthy to share eternal life
 with Mary, the virgin Mother of God,
 with St. Matthew, the apostles, and all the saints
 who have done your will throughout the ages.
 May we praise you in union with them, and give you glory
 through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Through him, with him, in him,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit
 All glory and honour is yours,
 almighty Father, for ever and ever.



A – men, A – men, A – men.

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



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 -The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth: we beheld his glory, glory as the only
Son from the Father.

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 you Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.

Please remain seated for some announcements.

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

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

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

The Celebrant gives the blessing.

When he came to us as man, the Son of God scattered the
darkness of this world, and filled this holy day with his glory.
May the God of infinite goodness scatter the darkness of sin
and brighten your hearts with holiness. **Amen.**

God sent his angels to shepherds to herald the great joy of
the Saviour's birth. May he fill you with joy and make you
heralds of his gospel. **Amen.**

When the Word became man, earth was joined to heaven.
May he give you his peace and good will, and fellowship
with all the heavenly host. **Amen.**

May almighty God bless you, + the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
let earth receive its king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns;
let us our songs employ;
while fields and streams, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Contact Details:

Vicar – Fr Gerald Loos SSC

Mobile 0409 149 486

Tuesday – Pastoral Visits

Wednesday – Healing Mass and Home Communions

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



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Fr Gerald Loos - Mobile: 0409149486*