

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



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St Paul's Church • Ipswich
04 January 2026

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Introit Hymn

Christ whose glory fills the skies [TIS 212]

The Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

And also with you.

Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

Scripture Sentence

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Isaiah 60.1

Prayer of Approach

**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.**

Kyrie eleison (Lord, have mercy)

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

Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you
in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

These words of assurance from the First Letter of John declare that:

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the offering for our sins, and not for us only, but for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

The Hymn of Praise, *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.**

Collect

Eternal God,
who by a star led Magi to the worship of your Son:
guide the nations of the earth by your light,
that the whole world may see your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 60.1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
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.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
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.
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.
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.
Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72.1-14

Give the king your judgement, O God:
and your righteousness to the son of a king,
² That he may judge your people rightly:
and the poor of the land with equity.
³ Let the mountains be laden with peace
because of his righteousness:
and the hills also with prosperity for his people.
⁴ May he give justice to the poor among the people:
and rescue the children of the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
⁵ May he live while the sun endures:
and while the moon gives light,
throughout all generations.
⁶ May he come down like rain upon the new-mown fields:
and as showers that water the earth.
⁷ In his time shall righteousness flourish:
and abundance of peace, till the moon shall be no more.
¹⁰ The kings of Tarshish and of the isles
shall bring tribute:
the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
¹¹ All kings shall fall down before him:
and all nations do him service.
¹² He will deliver the needy when they cry:
and the poor that have no helper.
¹³ He will pity the helpless and the needy:
and save the lives of the poor.
¹⁴ He will redeem them from oppression and violence:
and their blood shall be precious in his sight

Second Reading

Ephesians 3.1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former

generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

Joy to the world [TIS 268]

The Gospel

Matthew 2.1-12

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,
asking, '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.'
When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;
and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.
They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:
"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." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.

Then 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.'

When 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.

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

On 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.

And 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 Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

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.**

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

The celebrant says.

Let us pray to our gracious and merciful God, who guided the Magi by the light of a star to the worship of Christ the Lord..

A minister continues

Almighty and ever-living God, we pray for your Church throughout the world, that it may be a beacon of light and truth to all people. Particularly, we pray for your servants Jeremy, our Archbishop, and Cameron, our Area Bishop. Grant them wisdom, guidance, and strength as they shepherd your flock. May their leadership inspire your Church to proclaim the Gospel with courage and faith.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Lord of all nations, we commend to you those in positions of authority and influence. Guide them to serve with justice, equity, and compassion. Help them to seek the welfare of all people, especially the poor, the vulnerable, and the oppressed. May their decisions be shaped by your light, leading to peace and prosperity for all.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, we bring before you all who are sick, in want, or any kind of adversity. Comfort them in their trials, heal their afflictions, and surround them with your loving presence. We remember especially those known to us whom we lift before you those named in our pew bulletin, and now in silence ...

Pause for silent prayers

Help us to be agents of your compassion to all in need.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Eternal God, we commend to your loving care all who have departed this life in faith. Grant them rest in your eternal kingdom and let light perpetual shine upon them. Comfort all who grieve, and assure them of the hope of resurrection and eternal life in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Lord, as you revealed your Son to the nations by the guiding of a star, so guide us by your Spirit, that we may always seek and find Christ, live as his faithful disciples, and glorify him in our lives. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Please join me as we pray the Ipswich Anglicans Prayer together:

**God of new beginnings,
bless our Ipswich Anglican community
with a fresh vision for the future,
with generous hearts to love one another,
and with courage for the changes we now embrace.
Draw us more deeply into the mystery of Christ,
so that we draw closer to you and to each other.
Make us a blessing to the city of Ipswich
as we walk together
into the future you have prepared for us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Grant that what we have asked in faith
we may by your grace receive,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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.

Offertory Hymn

Lift up your heads you mighty gates [TIS 182]

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.

COMMUNION

In place of the usual Great Thanksgiving Prayer, the following words are said by the lay Minister.

The Gospel of St Luke tell us that:

At supper with his disciples on the night he was betrayed Jesus took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them saying, "this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

The Ipswich Anglican community of which we are members, has taken this bread and wine, and given thanks over it according to our Lord's command. I bring you these Holy Gifts so that you may share in the communion of our Lord's body and blood. For these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

The Lord's Prayer

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 for ever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Table

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.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Notices

Prayer after Communion

God of the nations,
we thank you for nourishing us with this holy sacrament.
Guide us by your presence,
that we may bring your light to those who dwell in darkness,
and establish your justice in the earth.

Most loving God,

you send us into the world you love.

**Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.**

Blessing

May the God of peace equip you with everything good for doing his will, working in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional Hymn

Hark the herald angels sing [TIS 152]

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