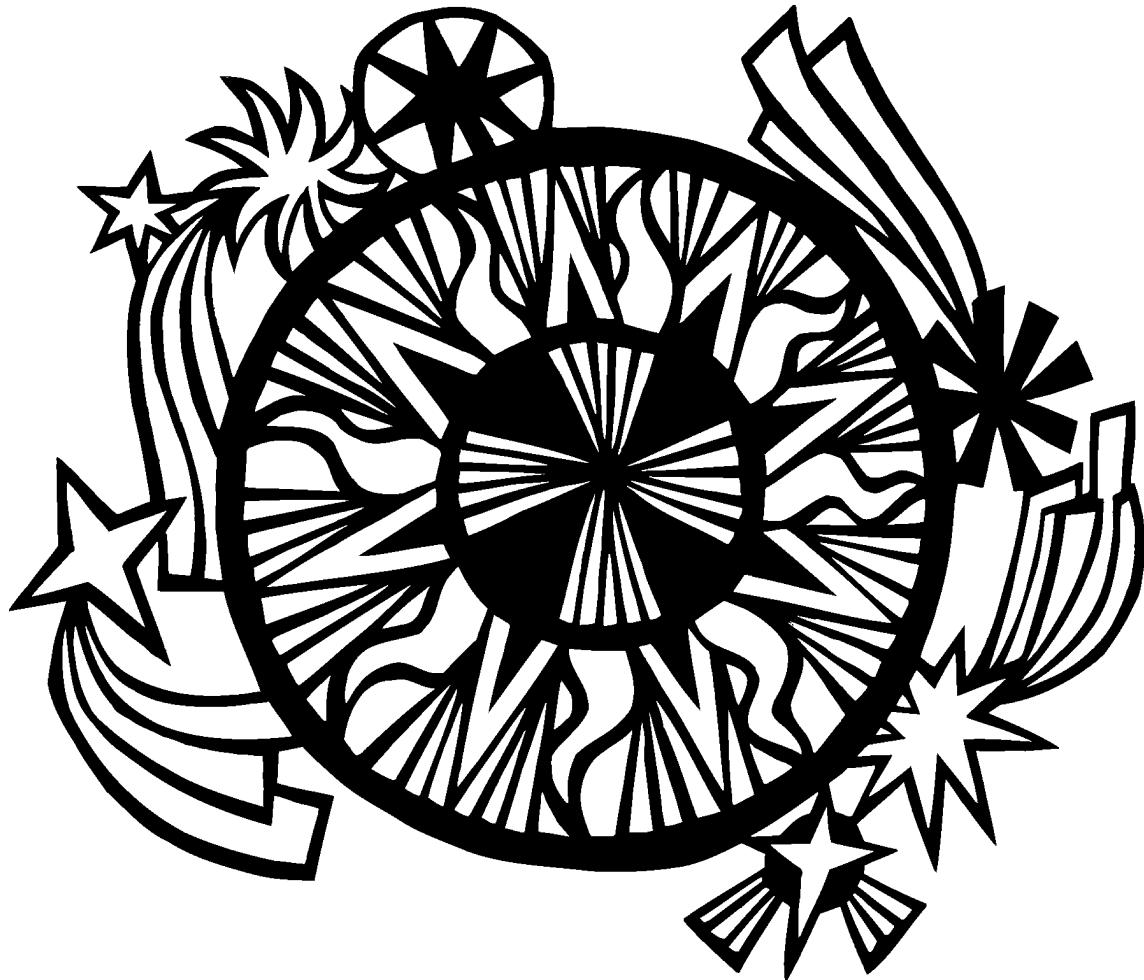


The Second Sunday of Christmas



Holy Eucharist, Rite II

January 4, 2026
10:30 a.m.

Saint Alban's Episcopal Church Welcomes You
130 39th Ave. Pl. NW, Hickory, NC 28601
(828) 324-1351

*Welcome to St. Alban's. We are grateful for your presence.
Cloth pew bags are available for our younger worshipers.
Please return to the basket as you depart.*

Prelude

The Liturgy of the Word

Processional Hymn

We three kings of Orient are

Hymnal 128

Opening Acclamation

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

BCP p. 355

Collect for Purity

(Celebrant says)

BCP p. 355

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: 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.***

Gloria *(The following is sung, all standing)*

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*Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers;
you are worthy of praise; glory to you.*

*Glory to you for the radiance of your holy Name;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.*

*Glory to you in the splendor of your temple;
on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.*

*Glory to you, seated between the Cherubim;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.*

*Glory to you, beholding the depths;
in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.*

*Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.*

The Collect of the Day

BCP p. 357

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

The First Lesson: Jeremiah 31:7-14

(The people sit.)

⁷Thus says the LORD:

“Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
‘Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.’

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,

and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.’

¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,”
says the LORD.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God.***

The Gradual: Psalm 84

(Sung in unison.)

Jerome Webster Meachen (b. 1930)

© 1956. Jerome Webster Meachen

*How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! **
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

*2 The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts,*

my King and my God.
³*Happy are they who dwell in your house! **
they will always be praising you.

⁴*Happy are the people whose strength is in you! **
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

⁵*Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, **
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

⁶*They will climb from height to height, **
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

⁷*LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; **
hearken, O God of Jacob.

⁸*Behold our defender, O God; **
and look upon the face of your Anointed.

⁹*For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room, **
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹⁰*For the LORD God is both sun and shield; **
he will give grace and glory;

¹¹*No good thing will the LORD withhold **
from those who walk with integrity.

¹²*O LORD of hosts, **
happy are they who put their trust in you!

The Epistle: Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a

(The people sit.)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ^{19a}and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn

How bright appears the Morning Star

Hymnal 496

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

(All stand.)

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

¹³After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” ²¹Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being

warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. ²³There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev. Jonathan Stepp

The Nicene Creed *(All stand.)*

BCP p. 358

*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:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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 *(People stand or kneel)*

Form III

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for The Church of the Province of Central Africa, and in the Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for Church of the Epiphany, Newton. Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Sarah, Archbishop-elect of Canterbury, Sean, our Presiding Bishop, Jose, our Bishop, Father Jonathan, the staff of St. Alban's, and all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for the leaders of our country, our state, and our city, and we pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

That our works may find favor in your sight.

We pray for those who are sick, especially those on our parish prayer list, and we pray that you will have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

And now let us pray for our own needs and those of others,

Silence is kept.

The People may add their own petitions, either silently or aloud.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

Confession of Sin

BCP p. 359

Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Absolution

BCP. 360

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

The Peace

(All stand)

BCP p. 360

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

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Holy Communion

Anthem

Saw you Never

Don Michael Dicie

Doxology

(People stand as the offering is presented)

Hymn 380, verse 3

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer D *(Stand or kneel)*

BCP p. 372

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 him thanks and praise.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we say,

Celebrant and People

S-128

***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 Celebrant continues

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ’s death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

Celebrant and People

***We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, Lord our God.***

The Celebrant continues

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with Blessed Alban and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.



The Lord’s Prayer

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

People and Celebrant

***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

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem

BCP p. 364

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.

Gluten free waters are available upon request at the altar rail.

Two chalices are offered at the altar rail. The first one is offered to those who prefer to drink from the cup.

The second chalice follows for those who prefer to intinct (dip) the wafer in the wine before consuming.

Please hold the wafer in your open palm to indicate your preference to the server.



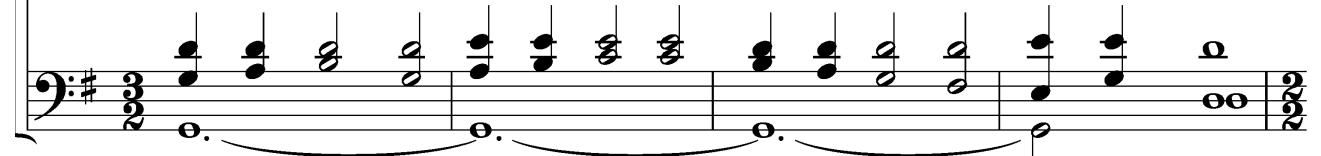
1. Where is this stu - pen-dous stran - ger? Gen - tle shep - herd now, ad - vise.
2. O the mag - ni - tude of meek-ness! Worth from worth im - mor - tal sprung;



Lead me to my Mas-ter's man - ger, show me where my Sav-ior lies.
O the strength of in - fant weak-ness, if e - ter - nal is so young!



O Most Migh - ty! O Most Ho - ly! Far be-yond the ser - aph's thought,
God all bount-eous, all - cre - a - tive, whom no ills from good dis - suade,



art thou then so weak and low - ly as un-heed-ed pro - phets taught?
is in - car - nate, and a na - tive of the ve - ry world he made.



Post-Communion Prayer

BCP p. 365

Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Recessional Hymn

What star is this, with beams so bright

Hymnal 124

Dismissal

Alleluia, Alleluia, let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People ***Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.***

BCP p. 366

Postlude

***Join us in the Commons Room immediately following the service for refreshments!
All are welcome to participate and check out the kiosk for more ways to Walk in Love!***

Ministers of the Service

Celebrant: The Rev. Jonathan Stepp

John Leach - Chalicist

Adriane Brooks – Chalicist

Bud Caywood - Lector

Ethan, Genevieve, and Ali Melon – Acolytes

Noah and Sadie VanBeurden – Acolytes

Jay Tate and Jan Houck – Ushers

Annette Hoskins – Sound/Streaming

Vestry Members

Judy Caywood - Senior Warden

Bill Perrin - Junior Warden

Charlie Brantley

Jane Earl

Susan Hook

Claudia Moore

Ingrid Peake

Bucky Robbins

Bruce Smith

Chris Oram - Vestry Clerk

Ellen Robbins – Treasurer

Those Who Serve You

The Most Rev. Sean W. Rowe - Presiding Bishop & Primate of The Episcopal Church

The Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin - Bishop, Diocese of Western NC

The Rev. Jonathan Stepp - Priest-in-Charge

Doug Brady - Organist

Janet Dziesinski - Financial Administrator

Cami Roberts - Director of Family Formation

Tammy Shook - Director of Parish Music and Handbells

Lauren Timmons - Associate Director of Parish Music and CantorKids Director

Kim Wagner – Parish Administrator