

St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church
Moore Street, Adelaide



**An open, welcoming and inclusive community
in the heart of the City of Adelaide**

**Keeping Community
Spiritual Resources & Reflections**

Thursday 5 January 2023

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions will make it possible to again open the church for private prayer and public worship.

Sunday Mass is offered weekly at 10 am, and the church will also be open on Thursday between 11.30 am and 1 pm, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

The decision to return to worship in community, whether for private prayer, or the public celebration of the Word and Sacraments, is not a straightforward matter.

These newsletters are intended to keep our entire community informed on events in the life of the Parish, so we will continue to produce these news bulletins for now.



1. From Fr Steven - 2023?

There is something contagious about the excitement of the arrival of the New Year. In practical terms, it is just another day. In symbolic terms, however, a new chapter has begun. From a Christian perspective, moreover, we place great faith in the God of the new.

Certainly, we do not expect a trouble-free life. On the contrary, we are sensitive to the human predicament. But we have faith in a loving and compassionate God, who is in the world. More precisely, the world is in God such that all people, all creatures, all things reside in divine life.

Anglican theologian Carter Heyward takes this a step further. For her, God is the universal relational network. Like a rhizome (e.g., an iris), the divine connections are cosmic, multiple, multi-layered, and interconnected. We are bound together in love. Of course, we can choose to live out of sync with the divine network. We can live for ourselves. But we choose in faith to live with others. This changes the way we see ourselves, other species, and the earth itself.

Historically, the Church, at its best, has honoured the sense of the depth and breadth of the divine. This has been manifested in loving Christian communities. Of course, the world is changing. And we will have to think creatively about new ways of living in community. But we have confidence in the God of the new. And we know kindness and compassion are universal.

This sense of our interconnectedness in and with the divine emerges in the Gospel of Matthew, which is the focus of the Gospel readings for much of this year. In Matthew, Jesus refers to this sphere of interconnectedness as the reign (kingdom) of heaven. In fact, it is his personal sense of this interconnectedness that enables him to live with courage.

This sphere of interconnectedness is about relationships. Jesus describes both the wonder and the challenges of divine interrelatedness in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7). These quality relationships surface as integrity (“righteousness” Matt 5:20). This includes personal and social integrity. That is, it is about being right with our selves, right with others, and right with our world.

Who knows what this year will bring? There is likely to be a mix of good and bad, of joy and sorrow, of success and failure. All the same, we trust the divine is doing something new. We look for this in gestures of kindness and compassion, which we understand, and yes, we trust in the God of the new. And we know the hope of the world resides in a rekindled passion for interconnectedness.

Happy new year!

Fr Steven

2. COVID-19 Update

With the significant increase in COVID-19 infections being reported, the Parish Council has again considered the precautions we have put in place within our worshipping community. Parish Council, noting that we (like many church communities) have a number of older folk and others who might be regarded as vulnerable among our number, has agreed that we will continue to take a conservative approach for the time being, and to encourage precautions including Distancing, Ventilation and Facemasks: **DVM** for short. Distancing means maintaining a sensible distance of 1.5 metres between individuals or family groups; Ventilation means leaving some doors and/or windows open to allow a flow of air—and we have air conditioning, so we will neither freeze nor boil!—and Facemasks are obvious.

3. Daily Prayer

Most Christian denominations have forms for prayer in the morning and the evening, and at other times of the day. Morning and Evening Prayer in *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pp 3-33) or a form for each day of the week (pp 383-424).

Online Resources

There is an online version of Daily Prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia* for each day available at Australian Daily Prayer <https://dailyprayer.ampers.x10.mx/>. There is also a free app for mobile devices from the App Store or Google Play.

The Church of England provides an online version of its orders for Daily Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. This is also available as a free app. The Divine Office of the Catholic Church is available online at www.ibreviary.com and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

Times of Prayer

Many people find it helpful to make a particular time daily for prayer and reflection. One option might be to join your prayer with those of the wider world at some special times during the day, especially in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

4. Reflections and Meditations

In addition to Fr Steven's regular reflection in this newsletter, which is uploaded to the web page for wider accessibility, Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelade.org/>.

To access these meditations, simply go to the blog and select the "Spirit matters" tab on the top. If you would like to receive an email update when there is a new posting on the blog, whether for a Sunday or weekday service, or for meditations and other supports for prayer, please subscribe to the blog using the box on the right-hand side of the page.

Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

5. This Week in the Calendar

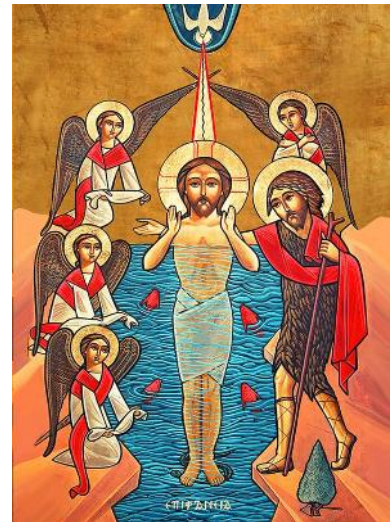
This week in the church's calendar we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord, and the Reformation martyr William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1645).

For many years in the English speaking world **the feast of Epiphany** has been overshadowed by that of Christmas.

But unless we realise the significance of this great day, we see only one side of the mystery of the Incarnation.

At Christmas, we have celebrated the staggering fact that God has become a human child. At Epiphany, we turn to look at this mystery from the opposite angle and realise that this seemingly helpless child is, in fact, the all-powerful God, the King and Ruler of the universe.

The feast of Christ's divinity completes the feast of his humanity. It fulfils all our Advent longing for the King "who is coming with great power and majesty."



Epiphany is a complex feast. Originating in the Eastern Church and formed by the mentality of a people whose thought processes differ sharply from our own, the Epiphany is like a rich Oriental tapestry in which the various themes are woven and interwoven — now to be seen in their historical setting, again to be viewed from a different vantage point in their deep mystical significance.

Divine manifestation: The Epiphany takes its name from the Greek *epiphania*, which denotes the visit of a god to earth. The first idea of the feast is the manifestation of Christ as the Son of God. The feast unites three events in the life of Christ when his divinity, as it were, shines through his humanity: the adoration of the Magi; the baptism of Christ in the Jordan; and the first miracle at the wedding feast of Cana.

Moreover, at Epiphany the Church looks forward to the majestic coming of Christ on the final day when his manifestation as God will be complete. The Gospels of the baptism and the marriage at Cana are read on the Sundays after Epiphany, and later Sunday masses in the Epiphany season continue to show the divine power of our Lord in some of His most striking miracles.

Royal kingship: A second important idea in Epiphany is the extension of Christ's kingship to the whole world. The revelation of Christ to the three kings at Bethlehem is a symbol of his revelation to the whole of the gentile world, not merely a chosen few.

Light: Closely linked to both these themes of divine manifestation and world kingship is a third idea running through the Epiphany feast: that of light. During Advent, we think of darkness, and of praying and waiting. At Christmas the Light shines forth, but dimly, seen only by a few around the crib. But at Epiphany the Light bursts forth to all nations and the prophecy is fulfilled.

The Epiphany is truly one of the great festivals of the church.

William Laud, born in 1573, became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633. He was the most prominent of a new generation of Churchmen who disliked many of the ritual practices which had developed during the reign of Elizabeth I, and who were bitterly opposed by the "Puritans."

Laud believed the Church of England to be in direct continuity with the medieval Church, and he stressed the unity of Church and State, exalting the role of the king as the supreme governor. He emphasized the priesthood and the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, and caused consternation by insisting on the reverencing of the Altar, returning it to its pre-Reformation position against the east wall of the church, and hedging it about with rails.



As head of the courts of High Commission and Star Chamber, Laud was abhorred for the harsh sentencing of prominent Puritans. His identification with the unpopular policies of King Charles, his support of the war against Scotland in 1640, and his efforts to make the Church independent of Parliament, made him widely disliked. He was impeached for treason by the Long Parliament in 1640, and finally beheaded on January 10, 1645.

Laud's reputation has remained controversial to this day. Honoured as a martyr and condemned as an intolerant bigot, he was compassionate in his defense of the rights of the common people against the landowners. He was honest, devout, loyal to the king and to the rights and privileges of the Church of England. He tried to reform and protect the Church in accordance with his sincere convictions. But in many ways he was out of step with the views of the majority of his countrymen, especially about the "Divine Right of Kings."

He made a noble end, praying on the scaffold: "The Lord receive my soul, and have mercy upon me, and bless this kingdom with peace and charity, that there may not be this effusion of Christian blood amongst them."

6. T.S. Eliot and the Epiphany

As we approach the feast of Epiphany, it is a good time to revisit T.S. Eliot's magnificent poem *Journey of the Magi* (1935). Written as an old-age reminiscence in the voice of one of the kings, Eliot's poem traces a richly symbolic spiritual journey that foreshadows Christ's future Passion, and thus changes the pagan Magi forever. As such, the poem calls us to walk with the wise men on their pilgrimage. But if we do, Eliot warns, it will change us forever: to encounter Christ means both a death and a rebirth that will cost us everything.

With its natural imagery suggesting a spiritual coming-to-life, Eliot's poem moves symbolically from the barrenness of winter into the verdant fertility of Christ's arrival. "A cold coming we had of it," the speaker begins, "Just the worst time of the year." Travelling in "[t]he very dead of winter," the Magi frequently doubt the purpose of their pilgrimage: "With the voices singing in our ears, saying / That this was all folly." But then they enter the region of the Christ Child,

and encounter a different world altogether: “at dawn we came down to a temperate valley, / Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation.”

Just as he did in his 1927 masterwork *The Waste Land*, Eliot uses water as a sign of spiritual fruitfulness and life, opposed to the dead cold of winter or the dry barrenness of the desert. Here the Magi find “a running stream and a water-mill,” suggesting both living water and the fertility of grain, which would be ground in the mill. We should see, in the suggestion of grain, Eliot’s allusion to the Eucharist: the birth of Christ gives the Body of Christ to the world.

But, for Eliot, the life-giving joy of Christ’s coming cannot be separated from the foreshadowing of his terrible Passion and Death. The Magi see the silhouette of Calvary dimly promised by the “three trees on the low sky,” and at the tavern they visit they see men “dicing for pieces of silver”—an image that evokes both the casting of lots for Christ’s garment and the blood money earned by Judas’ betrayal. Even the “vine-leaves over the lintel” of the tavern suggest the Roman god Bacchus, who dies and resurrects with the seasons. All of this leads the poetic speaker, one of the Magi, to wonder: “were we led all this way for / Birth or Death?”

Indeed, the pagan Magi in the poem undergo a painful and irrevocable transformation when they encounter the Incarnate God, a permanent dying of what St. Paul called the “old man”—humanity before redemption. “I had seen birth and death,” the speaker says, “But had thought they were different; this Birth was / Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.” This death comes about through a moment of seeming understatement in the poem: when they find “the place,” the speaker tells us simply, “it was (you may say) satisfactory.” At first glance, Eliot’s choice of the word “satisfactory” might seem like faint praise for God-made-truly-human. But its Latin roots mean full completion, to “do enough.”

For Eliot here it is only the Incarnation that can ever “do enough,” that can ever fully accomplish what man needs. And nothing else will ever satisfy the Magi again: after this death, when they return to their kingdoms, they can no longer find any rest in their “summer palaces” or “silken girls bringing sherbet.” They find themselves “no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation” of the pagan world before Christ. For the three kings, after knowing the child Jesus, return home only find themselves strangers in a strange land, and find their own countrymen to be nothing but “an alien people clutching their gods.”

They have had an Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word meaning “a manifestation of the divine,” and it has, in a sense, left them dead to the world. Now the Passion of Christ—that redemptive death which brings about the New Man—has also occurred in them. Now they await the coming of the true Kingdom, dissatisfied with anything less, and the speaker can now conclude only that “I should be glad of another death.” This Epiphany, Eliot’s timeless poem calls us to make those words our own. Let us go with the Magi to meet Jesus, fully aware of the cost of it. Let us recognize that the Incarnation demands a death and offers a birth: the death of our old, barren life, and the birth of our new, fruitful life in Christ.

Dr. Kelly Scott Franklin
Assistant Professor of English
Hillsdale College, Michigan

7. Journey of the Magi

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:

The ways deep and the weather sharp,
 The very dead of winter.'
 And the camels galled, sorefooted, refractory,
 Lying down in the melting snow.
 There were times we regretted
 The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
 And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
 Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
 and running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
 And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
 And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
 And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
 A hard time we had of it.
 At the end we preferred to travel all night,
 Sleeping in snatches,
 With the voices singing in our ears, saying
 That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
 Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
 With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
 And three trees on the low sky,
 And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
 Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
 Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
 And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
 But there was no information, and so we continued
 And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon
 Finding the place; it was (you might say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
 And I would do it again, but set down
 This set down
 This: were we led all that way for
 Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly
 We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
 But had thought they were different; this Birth was
 Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
 We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
 But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
 With an alien people clutching their gods.
 I should be glad of another death.

8. William Laud's Prayer on the Scaffold.

O Eternal God, and most merciful Father, look down upon me in mercy, in the riches and fullness of all thy mercies, look down upon me, but not till thou hast nailed my sins to the Cross of Christ: look upon me, but not till thou hast bathed me in the blood of Christ: look upon me, but not till I have hid myself in the wounds of Christ, that so the punishment that is due to my sins may pass away and go over me:

And since thou art pleased to try me to the uttermost, I humbly beseech thee give me now in this great instant, full patience, and proportionate comfort a heart ready to die for thine honour, and the Kings happiness, and the Churches preservation, and my zeal to these, (far from arrogance be it spoken, and all the inhumane frailty excepted, and all incidents thereunto) which is yet unknown of me in this particular, for which I now come to suffer, I say in this particular of Treason, but otherwise my sins are many and great, Lord pardon them all, and these especially, whatsoever they be, which have drawn down this present judgement upon me, and when thou hast given me strength to bear it, then doe with me as seems best in thine own eyes:

And carry me through death, that I may look upon it in what visage soever it shall appear to me, and that there may be a stop of this issue of blood in this more than miserable Kingdom. I shall desire that I may pray for the people too, as well as for myself:

O Lord, I beseech thee give grace of repentance unto all people, that have a thirst for blood, but if they will not repent, then scatter their devices so, and such as are, or shall be contrary to the glory of thy great Name, the Truth and Sincerity of Religion, the establishment of the King, and his posterity after him, in their just Rights, and Privileges, the honour and conservation of Parliaments in their ancient and just power, the preservation of this poor Church in her truth, peace and patrimony, and the settlement of this distracted and distressed people under their ancient laws, and in their native Liberties, and when thou hast done all this, in mere mercy for them, O Lord, fill their hearts with thankfulness, and with religious dutiful obedience to thee and thy Commandments all their days:

So Amen, Lord Jesus, And I beseech thee, receive my Soul to mercy.

Our Father which art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: But deliver us from evil. Amen.

8. **Spiritual Testament of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI**

The custom of writing a “spiritual testament”, a letter in which a person shares knowledge, values, and important parts of their life journey with those close to them, has fallen from vogue in the 20th century, though it was common in times past, especially for religious and other spiritual leaders.

The Popes have invariably written spiritual testaments of their own. Some have spoken about the disposition of their possessions, much like a legal will, while others devote their thoughts to things spiritual. With the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on 31 December, his spiritual testament has been published. It makes for moving reading.

My spiritual testament

When, at this late hour of my life, I look back on the decades I have wandered through, I see first of all how much reason I have to give thanks. Above all, I thank God himself, the giver of all good gifts, who has given me life and guided me through all kinds of confusion; who has always picked me up when I began to slip, who has always given me anew the light of his countenance. In retrospect, I see and understand that even the dark and arduous stretches of this path were for my salvation and that He guided me well in those very stretches.

I thank my parents, who gave me life in difficult times and prepared a wonderful home for me with their love, which shines through all my days as a bright light until today. My father's clear-

sighted faith taught us brothers and sisters to believe and stood firm as a guide in the midst of all my scientific knowledge; my mother's heartfelt piety and great kindness remain a legacy for which I cannot thank her enough. My sister has served me selflessly and full of kind concern for decades; my brother has always paved the way for me with the clear-sightedness of his judgements, with his powerful determination, and with the cheerfulness of his heart; without this ever-new going ahead and going along, I would not have been able to find the right path.

I thank God from the bottom of my heart for the many friends, men and women, whom he has always placed at my side; for the co-workers at all stages of my path; for the teachers and students he has given me. I gratefully entrust them all to his goodness. And I would like to thank the Lord for my beautiful home in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps, in which I was able to see the splendour of the Creator himself shining through time and again. I thank the people of my homeland for allowing me to experience the beauty of faith time and again. I pray that our country will remain a country of faith and I ask you, dear compatriots, not to let your faith be distracted. Finally, I thank God for all the beauty I was able to experience during the various stages of my journey, but especially in Rome and in Italy, which has become my second home.

I ask for forgiveness from the bottom of my heart from all those whom I have wronged in some way.

What I said earlier of my compatriots, I now say to all who were entrusted to my service in the Church: Stand firm in the faith! Do not be confused! Often it seems as if science - on the one hand, the natural sciences; on the other, historical research (especially the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures) - has irrefutable insights to offer that are contrary to the Catholic faith. I have witnessed from times long past the changes in natural science and have seen how apparent certainties against the faith vanished, proving themselves not to be science but philosophical interpretations only apparently belonging to science - just as, moreover, it is in dialogue with the natural sciences that faith has learned to understand the limits of the scope of its affirmations and thus its own specificity.

For 60 years now, I have accompanied the path of theology, especially biblical studies, and have seen seemingly unshakeable theses collapse with the changing generations, which turned out to be mere hypotheses: the liberal generation (Harnack, Jülicher, etc.), the existentialist generation (Bultmann, etc.), the Marxist generation. I have seen, and see, how, out of the tangle of hypotheses, the reasonableness of faith has emerged and is emerging anew. Jesus Christ is truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life - and the Church, in all her shortcomings, is truly his Body.

Finally, I humbly ask: pray for me, so that the Lord may admit me to the eternal dwellings, despite all my sins and shortcomings. For all those entrusted to me, my heartfelt prayer goes out day after day.

Benedictus PP XVI.

29 August 2006

9. Intentions for Your Daily Prayers

We pray throughout the week for the world and the church. These intentions may be helpful in your private or family prayers.

For the world. The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

For the church. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Eastern Oregon (USA). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Bathurst; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Area Deanery of the south-eastern suburbs.

For our local community. For the Collective and its ministry in the local community. For the Magdalene Centre, as it deals with the need to change the way it delivers services in order to safeguard the health of customers, staff and volunteers.

For those in need. Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Olivia, Nance, Neil, Elaine and Edward.

For those who have died. Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died as a result of COVID-19 and in other tragic circumstances; those who have died recently, especially Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time. ✠ *Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.*

For the saints. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Mary Magdalene, and holy women and men of every time and place.

This newsletter will normally be distributed weekly on Thursday. Any appropriate items should be emailed to the Parish Office, StMMAdeelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

