

The Parish Church of St Matthew  
Northampton

# The Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Year A



*Everyone serves the good wine first  
but you have kept the good wine until now*

All-age Mass for the Parish Family

Sunday 1 February 2026

10.15 am

# Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church



**Safeguarding** *St Matthew's is committed to providing a safe environment for all who come. If you have any concerns, please speak with one of our welcomers or a churchwarden who may be identified by their lanyard. They will be happy to help you.*

**Live streaming** *Please note that this service is being streamed. You may sit where you wish. If, however, you prefer not to be seen online, please sit in a side aisle. The administration of Holy Communion will not be shown.*

**GDPR** *Some of St Matthew's services (most Sunday mornings and some special services) are live-streamed or recorded for those who cannot attend church in person. Under GDPR, the church must gain the consent of anyone whose image may be captured, as this constitutes collection of "personal data". This includes clergy, readers/intercessors, musicians and congregation. Whilst every attempt is made not to capture the faces of members of the congregation, this may occasionally happen if people turn around or move around the church during the service. The exception is communion, when the congregation is not filmed. The side aisles and back of the nave are so far as possible film-free areas not covered by the camera. Any-one whose personal data is collected must give their consent. Consent forms are available both in church and on the website. The full policy can be read on our parish website or on the noticeboards in church.*

**Toilet and baby changing facilities** *may be found at the base of the church tower. There is also a small servery.*

**For younger children** *In the north aisle (nearest to Collingwood Road), a carpeted area equipped with age-related Christian resources is provided. Please feel free to make use of these facilities.*



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## Collection - 'Building a Generous Church'



### Our response to God's generosity

We believe in a generous God, who longs for us to share his generosity with others. A generous life is therefore a hallmark of our faith and a testament to it, as the more generous we are, the more we reflect the generous God we believe in. Generosity is, therefore, at the heart of our faith, and our own generosity is a sure sign of our faith in action. Generosity is a spiritual gift, and we need to encourage people to seek this gift as they grow in their faith. The ministry and mission of The Church of England is largely funded through the incredible generosity of those who give to it.

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We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew's Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:

**Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes** - using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.

**Contactless giving** - using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.

**Giving on your smart phone** - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

**Giving online** - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



**Welcome to our worship** on this Fourth Sunday of Epiphany. During the season of Epiphany we are invited to notice how God is revealed to us — often in surprising and unexpected ways. Today's Gospel takes us to a wedding in the village of Cana, where Jesus performs his first recorded sign by turning water into wine. It is a story full of joy, generosity, and transformation, set right in the middle of an ordinary family celebration.

As we worship together today, we will explore how God meets us in the everyday moments of life, how Jesus brings abundance where there seems to be lack, and how small acts of trust can open the door to something wonderful. This is a story for all ages — about celebration, care for one another, and the quiet way God's glory is revealed among us. So as we sing, pray, listen, and take part together, may our eyes and hearts be open to what God is doing here today.

### Prayer before we begin

Jesus, you are always ready to help us and if we do what you ask,  
you do wonderful things through us.  
You are generous and give us of your goodness.  
May we give our love to you each day. Amen.

### Setting

The Mass of St Thomas

*David Thorne*

## Order of Service

### ¶ Gathering to Worship God

*S All stand at the sound of the bell*

### Call to Worship

*Priest*    The voice of the Lord is strong and mighty  
              and calls you to worship.  
              The voice of the Lord is gentle and soothing  
              and affirms your worship.  
              The voice of the Lord is loving and eternal  
              and receives your worship with joy.

### Hymn

*The procession enters. The flags are presented*

*All sing*        **AS man and woman we were made  
                    That love be found and life begun:  
The likeness of the living God,  
                    Unique, yet called to live as one.  
Through joy or sadness, calm or strife,  
Come, praise the love that gives us life.**

**Now Jesus lived and gave his love  
          To make our life and loving new,  
So celebrate with him today  
          And drink the joy he offers you  
That makes the simple moment shine  
And changes water into wine.**

And Jesus died to live again  
So praise the love that, come what may,  
Can bring the dawn and clear the skies,  
And waits to wipe all tears away;  
And let us hope for what shall be  
Believing where we cannot see.

Then spread the table, clear the hall  
And celebrate till day is done;  
Let peace go deep between us all  
And joy be shared by everyone:  
Laugh and make merry with your friends  
And praise the love that never ends!

*Words* Brian Wren b.1936

*Music* Sussex Carol  
English traditional melody  
arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-1958

† In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
*All*        **Amen.**

## The Greeting

*All*        The Lord of glory be with you  
              **and also with you.**

*The service is introduced*

## Saying Sorry to God

At a wedding in Cana Jesus changed water into wine.  
There are many things in our spiritual lives  
that should be changed.  
Jesus' power is available to us to.  
Let us reflect on our need of his power  
in order to change the things in our lives that  
need to be changed.

## Confession

*All* We confess to you our pride and stubbornness,  
asking you to soften our hearts.

Lord, have mercy;

*All* **save us and help us.**

We confess to you our waywardness and self-will,  
asking you to set us on the right path.

Lord, have mercy;

*All* **save us and help us.**

We confess to you our blindness and narrow mindedness,  
asking you to open our eyes and restore our vision.

Lord, have mercy;

*All* **save us and help us.**

We confess to you our fear and lack of trust,  
asking you to strengthen our faith.

Lord, have mercy;

*All* **save us and help us.**

## God's Forgiveness

God, whose will is for all people to be whole,  
have † mercy on you,  
and forgive all your sins,  
that you may have peace in your hearts and minds  
and strength to live for him day by day,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## Glory to God

*All*      **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

*Priest*    **Let us pray.**

**God of heaven,  
you send the gospel to the ends of the earth  
and your messengers to every nation:  
send your Holy Spirit to transform us  
by the good news of everlasting life  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*All*      **Amen.**

***All sit***



# ¶ Hearing and Responding to the Word of God

## First Reading

*Reader* A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

1 Corinthians 1.26-31

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

***All stand***

## Gospel Reading

### Acclamation

1. Choir  
2. Choir and Congregation

Fintan O'Carroll



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

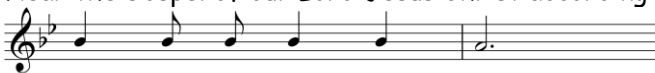
*Choir* Jesus revealed his glory in Cana of Galilee:  
and his disciples believed in him.

*All* **Alleluia ...**

*S* We turn to face the Book of the Gospels

*All*      The Lord of glory be with you  
**and also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

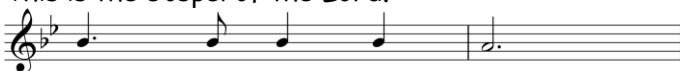


*All*      Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' and Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 2.1-11

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



*All*      Praise to you, O Christ.

## Hymn

*S The choir come and sit in the Nave*

*All*

**CHRIST is our light! The bright and morning star  
Covering with radiance all from near and far.**

**Christ be our light, shine on, shine on we pray  
Into our hearts, into our world today.**

**Christ is our love! Baptized that we may know  
The love of God among us, swooping low.**

**Christ be our love, bring us to turn our face  
And see you in the light of heaven's embrace.**

**Christ is our joy! Transforming wedding guest!  
Through water turned to wine the feast was blessed.**

**Christ be our joy; your glory let us see,  
As your disciples did in Galilee.**

*Words Leith Fisher 1941-2009*

*Music Scampston  
Richard Shepherd b.1949*

**Talk / Presentation**

***All sit***

*The themes of the day are briefly explored*

*All stand*

## We believe

As God's family, let us declare the faith of the Church.

*All*      **We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## Our Prayers to God

*Priest*    **Blessed are you, Lord our God.  
You give us life and you continually renew and refresh us  
with your presence and your love.  
You are the strength of the weak  
and the light to all who walk in darkness.  
Blessed are you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

*Please kneel*

*Intercessor*    **Lord God, may we reveal your joy and power in our daily lives.  
We ask your blessing upon the Church,  
that she may be obedient to your word  
and seek to bring others to know your glory.**

We ask you to bless all preachers and teachers of the faith,  
that they may have the power to reveal you  
and your love to others.

God of love and joy,  
**hear us and refresh us.**

*All*

Lord, our Creator, we pray that we may use the world aright.  
Let us not squander or waste the resources you have given us  
but use them to your glory and the benefit of all.  
We pray for all who monitor our planet and its resources.  
We ask your blessing upon scientists and politicians  
and all who work to care for and improve our world.  
We remember today all who suffer from deprivation,  
from poverty, from hunger or from homelessness.

God of love and joy,  
**hear us and refresh us.**

*All*

We give thanks for our own home and all you have given us.  
We pray for those who provide us with our food  
and our daily needs.  
We ask your blessing upon all who work to provide  
good homes and shelter to the poor of our world.

God of love and joy,  
**hear us and refresh us.**

*All*

We remember today all who are running out of resources.  
We pray for the fearful and the anxious, the sad and the lonely.  
We ask your blessing upon all who are ill  
and cannot cope on their own.  
We remember all who, through ageing or illness,  
need regular care and attention.  
(*The acutely ill ...* )  
We pray for all carers and all who work in health service.

God of love and joy,  
**hear us and refresh us.**

*All*

We rejoice in life and that you give us life eternal.  
Renewing and restoring God,  
we remember in your presence our loved ones departed  
(*the recently departed ...; anniversaries of death ...*),  
and ask that they may rejoice in your presence  
and in the fullness of life eternal.  
We commend them, the world, and ourselves  
to your unfailing love.

*God of love and joy,*  
**All        hear us and refresh us.**

*Priest    Merciful Father,*  
**All        accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,**  
**our Saviour Jesus Christ.**  
**Amen.**

**Stand**

## **¶    Preparing to meet Jesus in Bread and Wine**

### **Hymn**

*§    A monetary collection is taken. Please give as you are able  
     using any of the ways indicated at the front of this booklet.  
     Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.*

*§    The children are invited to stand either side of the altar*

**All                SONGS of thankfulness and praise,  
                      Jesu, Lord, to thee we raise;  
                      Manifested by the star  
                      To the sages from afar;  
                      Branch of royal David's stem  
                      In thy birth at Bethlehem;  
                      Anthems be to thee addressed,  
                      God in man made manifest.**

Manifest at Jordan's stream,  
Prophet, Priest, and King supreme;  
And at Cana, wedding-guest  
In thy Godhead manifest;  
Manifest in power divine,  
Changing water into wine;  
Anthems be to thee addressed,  
God in man made manifest.

Manifest in making whole  
Palsied limbs and fainting soul;  
Manifest in valiant fight,  
Quelling all the devil's might;  
Manifest in gracious will,  
Ever bringing good from ill;  
Anthems be to thee addressed,  
God in man made manifest.

Sun and moon shall darkened be,  
Stars shall fall, the heavens shall flee;  
Christ will then like lightning shine,  
All will see his glorious sign;  
All will then the trumpet hear,  
All will see the judge appear;  
Thou by all wilt be confessed,  
God in man made manifest.

Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,  
Mirrored in thy holy word;  
May we imitate thee now  
And be pure, as pure art thou;  
That we like to thee may be  
At thy great Epiphany;  
And may praise thee, ever blest,  
God in man made manifest.

## Offering the Gifts of Bread and Wine

Father, we celebrate with great joy  
the day when Jesus transformed water into wine  
at the wedding feast.  
Accept these gifts of bread and wine  
that we may become one with Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*All* **Amen.**

## Prayer over the Bread and Wine

*All* The Lord of glory be with you  
**and also with you.**

*All* Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

*All* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*Children* Why is it right to give thanks and praise?  
*Adults* **Listen, and we will hear.**

Lord of all life,  
you created the universe,  
where all living things reflect your glory.  
You give us this great and beautiful earth,  
to discover and to cherish.  
You give us sun and moon and star-lit sky,  
everything that gives us light,  
light for our eyes, our hearts, our minds.  
You changed water into wine and at Cana  
and gave us a sign of how we might be changed  
to become more like you.



You made us all, each wonderfully different,  
to join with the angels and sing your praise:

*All sing*

**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.**

We thank you, loving Father,  
because, when we turned away,  
you sent Jesus, your Son.  
He gave his life for us on the cross  
and shows us the way to live.

Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine  
may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

*Children  
All*

Why do we share this bread and wine?  
**Listen, and we will hear.**

On the night before he died,  
when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread.  
He gave thanks, broke it,  
and shared it with his disciples, saying:  
'This is my body, given for you.  
Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine,  
gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying:  
'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many,  
for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup  
we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life.  
As you feed us with these gifts,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

*Children* How do we follow Jesus Christ?

*Adults* **Listen, and we will hear.**

Help us, Father, to love one another,  
as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended,  
and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.  
And now with Mary and Joseph and all your saints  
we give you glory,  
through Jesus Christ,  
in the strength of the Spirit,  
today and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

*If you are able, please remain standing*

## The Lord's Prayer

We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us,  
and so we pray with confidence:

*All* **Our Father, who art in heaven  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation.  
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

## Sign of Christ's Peace

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

*All* The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*§ The children and their leaders return to their seats*

***Sit***

## Breaking of the Bread

*All* We break the bread of life,  
and that life is the light of the world.  
**God here among us, light in the midst of us,  
bring us to light and life.**

## Invitation to Communion

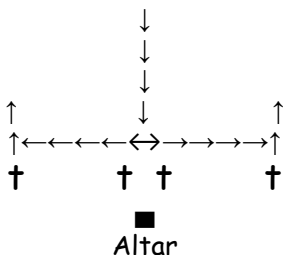
*All* Christ is the bread which has come down from heaven.  
**Lord, give us this bread for ever.**

*The clergy and other ministers receive Holy Communion*

## Giving of Communion

You spread a table before me, and my cup shall be full.

*Holy Communion, alternatively God's blessing, is administered standing at a 'station', as indicated below. Please approach the clergy via the centre aisle and return to your seat via the side aisles. If you wish to receive God's blessing, please bring this booklet with you. Thank you.*



## Spiritual Communion - for those watching at home

### Act of Reception

*All* In union, blessed Jesus,  
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church  
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

*(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)*

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,  
for creation and all the blessings of this life,  
for the redemption won for us by your life, death,  
and resurrection,  
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

*(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)*

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,  
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,  
I pray you to come into my heart.  
I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,  
my soul, and my mind.  
Let nothing separate me from you;  
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,  
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.  
Amen.

*The choir sing Agnus Dei*

## Motet

*Choir*      From the rising of the sun      *Frederick Ouseley 1825-1889*

*S*      *All sit for a time of personal reflection and thanksgiving*

## Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

*All stand*

*All*      **Loving God,  
you shine on us and meet our every need.  
Teach us to walk in the strength of this food  
as children of your light,  
so that we may truly be your beloved sons and daughters.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## Hymn

*The flags are returned to their bearers*

*All*

**IMMORTAL, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might:  
Thy justice, like mountains high soaring above  
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all life though givest - to both great and small;  
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;  
We blossom and flourish, as leaves on the tree,  
And wither and perish - but naught changeth thee.**

**Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we would render; O help us to see  
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.**

*Words Walter Chalmers Smith 1824-1908*

*Music St Denio  
John Roberts 1807-1876*

Notices for the Community

*All sit*

## ¶ Going out to Serve God

The Lord of glory be with you  
*All*      **and also with you.**

## God's Blessing

May God who turned water into wine  
at the wedding feast at Cana,  
transform your lives and make glad your hearts  
with the good news of his kingdom.

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

*All*      **Amen.**

## Sending Out

Go in the light and peace of Christ.  
*All*      **Thanks be to God.**

## Organ Voluntary

Epilogue on "Dix"

*Harris*

§ *Please remain standing until the procession has departed*

§ *Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those  
who wish to listen to the organ voluntary*

§ *Do please join us for refreshments in the parish centre.*

This evening at 5.30 pm  
**Solemn Choral Evensong**

**Our next all age mass**

Sunday 15 March at 10.15 am  
Mothering Sunday

Our thanks are due to John Folwell  
who has generously financed  
the production of this week's service booklet.

**Please take this booklet home  
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,  
and then re-cycle it.**

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