

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



**THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY
10am 04 January 2025**

The Sunday service is livestreamed and can be viewed later our Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/live_videos
or see: <https://www.youtube.com/@sthildachurch8263>

Welcome to St Hilda's. We are delighted that you are able to share in our morning worship today,

If you are new to the church please do take time to introduce yourself to the people at the back of the church and to the ministry team at the end of the service. We would be delighted to meet you.

If you are able please join us for tea or coffee after the service so we can get to know one another.

Should you need any help during the service please do not hesitate to ask those around you and we are sure they will be able to support you.

There is a toddler's corner in the north aisle which young children are very welcome to use, and there activity sheets are available to occupy them.

Please indicate to the priest if you want a gluten free wafer during communion

We encourage parishioners to donate via PARISH GIVING:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/ashford-st-hilda-ashford/>



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THE GATHERING

Introit Hymn

We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of light,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
Over us all to reign.

Refrain

Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, voices raising,
Worshipping God on high.

Refrain

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone cold tomb.

Refrain

Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

[John H. Hopkins]

The Greeting

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All and also with you.

Words of welcome are said. (Junior Church are in the hall for Messy Church)

Prayer of Preparation

All 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.

Prayers of Penitence

The grace of God has dawned upon the world
through our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own.
Let us confess our sins.

or other appropriate sentences

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments
and to live in love and peace with all

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory to God in the highest,
All 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 Collect -

The Collect for the Week is said after a moment of silence

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

THE LITURGY 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.

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

New Testament 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.

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

**Bethlehem, of noblest cities
None can once with thee compare;
Thou alone the Lord from heaven
Didst for us incarnate bear.**

**Fairer than the sun at morning
Was the star that told his birth;
To the lands their God announcing,
Seen in fleshly form on earth.**

**By its lambent beauty guided,
See the eastern kings appear;
See them bend, their gifts to offer,
Gifts of incense, gold, and myrrh.**

**Solemn things of mystic meaning:
Incense doth the God disclose,
Gold a royal child proclaimeth,
Myrrh a future tomb foreshows.**

**Holy Jesu, in thy brightness
To the Gentile world displayed,
With the Father and the Spirit
Endless praise to thee be paid.**

[Prudentius, tr. Edward Caswall]

Gospel Reading - Matthew 2:1-12

Alleluia, alleluia.

Christ was revealed in flesh, proclaimed among the nations and believed in throughout the world.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

After the reading:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

**Chant: Laudate Dominum, laudate Dominum, omnes gentes,
Alleluia**

The Sermon – All sit

The Creed

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All 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 from the Holy Spirit and 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,
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 Intercession

The prayers end with the following:

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

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The Peace – All stand

Christ is our peace.

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.

The old has passed away: behold, everything has become new.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

During this hymn a collection will be taken. You can use the QR code on page 3, and on the back of the chairs, for online donations.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,

Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;

Star of the East, the horizon adorning,

Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;

Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;

Angels adore him in slumber reclining,

Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all!

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,

Odours of Edom and offerings divine?

Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,

Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,

Vainly with gifts would his favour secure;

Richer by far is the heart's adoration,

Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

**Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.**

[Reginald Heber]

The table is prepared, and bread and wine are placed upon it.

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

**All All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you.**

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

All and also with you

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

All honour and praise be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God,
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord:
for at this time we celebrate your glory
made present in our midst.

In the coming of the magi
the King of all the world was revealed to the nations.

In the waters of baptism
Jesus was revealed as the Christ
the Saviour sent to redeem us.
In the water made wine
the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.

Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.
Therefore with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
All 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.

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
*Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.*

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
*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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

Let us proclaim the miracle of faith:
All Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of Hilda and all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Believing the promises of God, as our Saviour taught us,
in the language of our hearts we pray:

We say the Lord's Prayer in our preferred language

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
 because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

**Lamb of God,
All you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

**All We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.
Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

All confirmed Anglicans, as well as all baptized Christians who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are in a state of grace, are welcome to receive communion, provided they would normally do so in their own church. If you are not receiving communion today, you are warmly invited to come forward for a blessing; please indicate this by bringing your order of service with you.

Communion Hymns

How brightly shines the Morning Star!
The nations see and hail afar the light in Judah shining.
Thou David's son of Jacob's race,
The Bridegroom, and the King of grace,
For thee our hearts are pining!
Lowly, holy,
Great and glorious, thou victorious Prince of graces,
Filling all the heavenly places!

Though circled by the hosts on high,
He deigns to cast a pitying eye upon his helpless creature;
The whole creation's Head and Lord,
By highest seraphim adored,
Assumes our very nature.
Jesu, grant us,
Through thy merit, to inherit thy salvation;
Hear, O hear our supplication.

Rejoice, ye heav'ns; thou earth, reply;
With praise, ye sinners, fill the sky, for this his incarnation.
Incarnate God, put forth thy power,
Ride on, ride on, great Conqueror,
Till all know thy salvation.
Amen, Amen!
Alleluya, alleluya! Praise be given
Evermore by earth and heaven.

[Philip Nicolai tr. William Mercer]

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.*

They lookèd up and saw a star,
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night:

Refrain

And by the light of that same star,
Three Wise Men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wheresoever it went:

Refrain

This star drew nigh to the north-west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay:

Refrain

Then entered in those Wise Men three,
Fell reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in his presence,
Both gold and myrrh and frankincense:

Refrain

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
That hath made heaven and earth of naught,
And with his blood mankind hath bought:

Refrain

[Traditional]

Prayers after Communion

Silence is kept after which the post-Communion collect is said.

Lord God,
the bright splendour whom the nations seek:
may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light
discern the glory of your presence in your Son,
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

Notices - see pages 22 - 23

Blessing the chalk for Chalking the door (see p. 22)

THE DISMISSAL

Blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory
and gladden your hearts
with the good news of his kingdom;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional Hymn

As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most glorious God, may we
Evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger bed,
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heaven and earth adore,
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
At that manger rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure, and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesu, every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright,
Need they no created light;
Thou its Light, its Joy, its Crown,
Thou its Sun which goes not down;
There forever may we sing
Alleluias to our King.

[W. Chatterton Dix]

Please join us for tea or coffee after the service

SERVICE TIMES next week

Wednesday 7th January 11am

Sunday 11th January 10am

Please remember in your prayers this week:

THOSE FOR WHOM OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ASKED:

Ben Bishop, Stan Bishop, AnneMarie Bough, Wendy Butt, Brenda Charlton, Tony Charlton Tony Diggins, Sheila Freeman, Wendy Grantham, Gemma Hart, John Hunt, Pat Kyle, Ray Nation, John Parish, Massimo Pellizzari, Dorothy Reid, Annette Scott, Elsie Stone, Claire West, Jeremy Weston, Delia Woodley, Abby, Ben, Darren, Fiona, Peter, Ramin, Scarlett, Stuart

THE RECENTLY DEPARTED:

Derek Thomas Brewer, The Revd. Balwant Singh. June Hands

THOSE IN OUR MEMORIAL BOOK THIS WEEK:

Vera Davies, Frances Mary Blood, Helga Minna Helene Morris, Rhoda Allport, Dennis Charles Gadd, Sidney Cash, Terence Reynolds, Maureen Anne Clark, Elizabeth Lees, Michael Jack Luff, Edna May Street, Albert John Street

**Pray for our ALMA twin Parish, Holy Cross Murrupula,
and for Fr. Domingos and his family**

also for Christians facing persecution in countries such as North Korea,
Somalia, Libya, Eritrea, Yemen, Iran and Nigeria.

for more details see <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

Pray for the areas of the world where there is conflict, including:
the Middle East including Gaza, the West Bank, Israel and Iran;
India and Pakistan; Ukraine and Russia; Sudan; Myanmar.

Chalking the door is a Christian Epiphanytide tradition used to bless one's home. It may be done on any day within the Epiphany season. The chalk used to write the pattern on the door or lintel may be blessed by a Christian priest on Epiphany Day, then taken home to write the pattern of the initials of the traditional names of the wise men (Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar) separated by crosses to signify Christ, bracketed by the first and last pairs of digits of the year (20+C+M+B+26). The letters may also indicate the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat* ('May Christ bless this house'). It can represent the hospitality of the Holy Family to the Magi (and all Gentiles) and so serves as a house blessing to invite the presence of God in one's home.

(with thanks to Wikipedia)

NOTICES

The deadline for items for the Service Sheet is noon on Thursday.

Send to communication@sthilda.org

Bible Study Group - Monday 5th January at 7.30pm

We conclude our Advent/Christmas study in the Hawley Room in the church hall. All are welcome to join us.

Community Lunch in church - Wednesday at 12 noon

AMBLING THROUGH ACTS – Thursday 8th January at 7.30pm

You are welcome to join our journey through the Acts of the Apostles. We read the text closely and, with the aid of notes, try to understand it in its original context as well as discuss anything that resonates today. We meet on the first Thursday of the month (unless otherwise notified) in church at 7:30pm, finishing with Compline (Night Prayer) and sharing coffee/tea and biscuits. We are away by 9pm. Please bring a bible NRSV preferred but any modern translation will be fine. SFB

Parish Breakfast – Saturday 10th January at 9.30am

Do come along and enjoy good food and fellowship.

There will be a list at the back of church: if you intend to come please sign it so we know how many to cater for.

Suggested donation £5, payable on the day.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – Sundays 18th - 25th January

Burns Night – Saturday 24th January 2026 from 7pm

Traditional supper and dancing with Caller Paul Streatfield in St Hilda's Church Hall. Tickets £12, available at the back of church or from

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-hildas-church-ashford/t-dkvpkxq>

PCC Meeting - Wednesday 28th January at 7.30pm

Confirmation Service – Sunday 17th May 2026

Season 1

Classes for the **Youth Group** (in person) will be held on Wednesdays 28th January, 11th February, 4th March, 18th March.

Classes for the **Senior Group** (on-line) will be held on Wednesdays 4th February, 25th February, 11th March, 25th March.

*** **Sign-up forms** for the classes are available at the back of church. If you are interested in being confirmed please fill one in and return it to the Parish Office. ***

The Parish Office : Office hours are

Mon: by appointment only,

Tue: 9am-6pm, Wed: 12 noon-4:00pm, Thur: 9am-6pm

Contact Information

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