

## EPIPHANY 4, Year A

Sunday, February 1, 2026



St. Alban's Episcopal Church  
Simsbury, CT  
*Celebrate. Inspire. Serve.*



Welcome to St. Alban's!

We're glad that you've chosen to be with us this morning! Your prayers and presence for today's worship are a gift to this community; and we invite you to journey with us at whatever point you find yourself on the path. We pray that you sense the love of Christ, the holy stirring of the Spirit, and God's presence here this morning.

### **Worshipping with children**

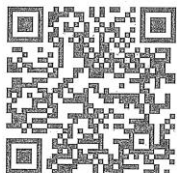
We invite you to visit our Playground in the rear balcony. Please feel free to bring books or an activity bag to your seats; or, sit in the balcony and allow your children to explore the space during worship. And please don't worry about wiggles, conversation, crying, laughing – all of it is welcome in this space and to the glory of God! If you need help finding the bathrooms, a changing table, or the water fountain, please ask an Usher.

### **Learning more about St. Alban's**

We invite you to fill out one of the "Welcome" cards you can find on the table in the rear of the Sanctuary. This allows you to receive mailed materials from St. Alban's and our weekly e-news. You can also visit our website ([stalbanssimsbury.org](http://stalbanssimsbury.org)) or find us on Facebook.

### **Donating to St. Alban's**

During our service today, Ushers will pass Offering plates. You are welcome to place cash or check donations directly into the plate. We also invite your donations through our website ([stalbanssimsbury.org](http://stalbanssimsbury.org), click "Donate").



[stalbanssimsbury.org/donate](http://stalbanssimsbury.org/donate)

You can find your way to that link with the QR code here and on the donation card in the Narthex.

**If you need a gluten-free wafer at communion** please let the priest know when you approach the altar for communion. You can also receive a blessing instead of bread by crossing your arms over your chest.

As you settle in to worship today, take the time and the moments of quiet you need to make the transition from getting here, to being here.

*Our service comes from Enriching Our Worship and The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and we make use of all hymnal resources approved by The Episcopal Church. Everything you need to worship fully today can be found in the bulletin.*

### **\*A note about standing, kneeling, sitting rubrics**

*One of the spaces that has received more attention during the pandemic is around ableism. Our society, in large part, functions as though everyone has nearly full use of their bodies. Where a "standing" rubric might have been added alone, we're adding "seated", as well, as an invitation for you to listen and respond to the needs of your own body. You are invited to remember that our bodies are created by God and intended for worship, just like our voices. However you feel comfortable doing that, God sees that it is good!*

# WELCOME

## PRELUDE

*Andrew King, Pianist*

HYMN *standing or seated.*

*Before thy throne, O God, we kneel*

H82 574

1 Be - fore thy throne, O God, we kneel: give us a con - science  
2 Search out our hearts and make us true; help us to give to  
3 For sins of heed - less word and deed, for pride am - bi - tious  
4 Let the fierce fires which burn and try, our in - most spi - rits

quick to feel, a rea - dy mind to un - der - stand the  
all their due. From love of plea - sure, lust of gold, from  
to suc - ceed, for craft - y trade and sub - tle snare to  
pu - ri - fy: con - sume the ill; purge out the shame; O

mean - ing of thy chas - tening hand; what - e'er the pain and  
sins which make the heart grow cold, wean us and train us  
catch the sim - ple un - a - ware, for lives be - reft of  
God, be with us in the flame; a new - born peo - ple

shame may be, bring us, O Fa - ther, near - er thee.  
with thy rod; teach us to know our faults, O God.  
pur - pose high, for - give, for - give, O Lord, we cry.  
may we rise, more pure, more true, more no - bly wise.

## THE OPENING ACCLAMATION

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

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

## THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

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.**

## THE GLORIA

*S280*

1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and  
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly  
King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we  
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus  
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you  
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy  
on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -  
ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,  
you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most



## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

READING: *Micah 6:1-8*

Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,  
and you enduring foundations of the earth;  
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

“O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,  
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,  
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

“With what shall I come before the LORD,  
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,  
with calves a year old?

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 15

*Domine, quis habitabit?*

- 1 LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle? \*  
who may abide upon your holy hill?
- 2 Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right, \*  
who speaks the truth from his heart.
- 3 There is no guile upon his tongue;  
he does no evil to his friend; \*  
he does not heap contempt upon his neighbor.
- 4 In his sight the wicked is rejected, \*  
but he honors those who fear the LORD.
- 5 He has sworn to do no wrong \*  
and does not take back his word.
- 6 He does not give his money in hope of gain, \*  
nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
- 7 Whoever does these things \*  
shall never be overthrown.

## READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

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."

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

HYMN *standing or seated.*

*'Tis a gift to be simple*

*H82 554*

'Tis the gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free,  
'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,  
and when we find our - selves in the place just right,  
'twill be in the val - ley of love and de - light.  
When true sim - pli - ci - ty is gained to  
bow and to bend we shan't be a-shamed, to turn, turn, will  
be our de-light till by turn - ing, turn - ing we come round right.

THE GOSPEL: *Matthew 5:1-12*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

SERMON

*The Rev. Dr. Nancy Wright*

THE NICENE CREED

*Standing or seated*

**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

### *Intercessor*

*For the church and for all your creation, we pray to you, Lord God, saying: Lord, hear our prayer.*

Blessed are the poor in spirit; theirs is the dominion of heaven. And so we pray: Unite the church, guide all its leaders; let us show the world the love of Jesus. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God. And so we pray: Give your people the will and the courage to value your service above all lesser goods. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the peacemakers, God's own children. And so we pray: Bring peace to the world, security to the nations, and safety to the cities. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. And so we pray: Remove from us prejudice and injustice, and raise up among us those who will labor for the good of all whom you have made. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. And so we pray: Be present with those who are sick, imprisoned, or in distress; especially for Tim, Kathy, Amanda, Margi, Monica, Jeff, Jason, Kassandra, Maryann, Mary Lou, Mike, Val, Meredith H., and anyone we name now silently or aloud (*we invite you now to remember them either silently or aloud*); make us quick to love and serve our neighbors. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Rejoice and be glad, their reward is great in heaven. And so we pray: We remember all who have witnessed to your love with their lives; give us strength to testify to Christ before the rulers of our own day. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Celebrant continues*

*Almighty God, you have taught us to do justice, love kindness, and practice humility before you; make our faith active in love, that your name may be praised and your people served throughout the earth, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## THE CONFESSION OF SIN

### *Standing, seated or kneeling*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**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.**

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

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

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The mission and ministry of St. Alban's depends on the financial and prayerful generosity and gifts of members of our congregation and community. We welcome your one-time or ongoing donation today. Please place cash or checks in the Offering Plate; or use the QR code on the inside cover of this bulletin, on the cards found in the rear of the Sanctuary, and in the Narthex to make an online donation. We are grateful that you've chosen to share your gifts with us today.*

#### OFFERTORY ANTHEM *instrumental*

#### THE HOLY COMMUNION

#### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: EUCHARISTIC PRAYER A

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 our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For you are the source of light and life; you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.\_\_\_\_\_

*The Celebrant continues*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ 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."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

*Celebrant continues*

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**  
And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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,  
and the power,  
and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

#### FRACTION ANTHEM

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

#### THE INVITATION

#### THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

*Anyone of any age and tradition is invited to receive Holy Communion, and no one who comes to the altar with outstretched hands will be turned away. To receive a blessing instead of the sacrament, approach the altar and cross your arms over your chest.*

*To receive Holy Communion, you may stand or kneel at the altar rail; or stand in the space between the altar rails, in front of the altar. If you need the sacrament brought to you, please let someone know and we will be honored to bring it to you. If you need a gluten-free wafer, please let the priest know at the altar.*

*Remember, that communion "in one kind" (bread only) is a sufficient manifestation of the sacrament. If you'd like, you can simply hold the cup while the chalice bearer offers the words of reception, without drinking from the chalice.*

#### COMMUNION HYMN

*The old rugged cross*

LEVAS 38

1. On a hill far a - way stood an old rug-ged cross,  
2. Oh, that old rug - ged cross so de - spised by the world,  
3. In the old rug - ged cross, stained with blood so di - vine,  
4. To the old rug - ged cross I will ev - er be true,

1. The — em - blem of suf - f'ring and shame; —  
 2. Has a won - drous at - trac - tion for me; —  
 3. A — won - drous beau - ty I see; —  
 4. Its — shame and re - proach glad - ly bear; —

1. And I love that old cross where the dear - est and best  
 2. For the dear Lamb of God left His glo - ry a - bove,  
 3. For 'twas on that old cross Je - sus suf - fered and died,  
 4. Then He'll call me some day to my home far a - way,

1. For a world of lost sin - ners was slain. —  
 2. To — bear it to dark Cal - va - ry. —  
 3. To — par - don and sanc - ti - fy me. —  
 4. Where His glo - ry for - ev - er I'll share. —

Till my tro - phies at last I lay down; —

old rug - ged cross, —  
 I will cling to the cross, — the old rug - ged cross,

And ex - change it some day for a crown. —

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and people*

**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

*Celebrant*

*May the Lord Jesus Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you to the end of the road. May the Lord Jesus Christ who loves with a wounded heart help you to love your neighbor and one another. May the Lord Jesus Christ who serves with wounded hands help you to serve each other and your neighbors. May you see the face of God on everyone you meet, and may the blessing of God Almighty, The Creator, The Redeemer and the Sustainer be with you this day and remain with you always. Amen.*

HYMN *standing or seated*

*In the cross of Christ I glory*

H82 441

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and includes a piano accompaniment. The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal parts. The lyrics are arranged in five lines, with the first line being the most prominent. The score is in G major and 4/4 time.

1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tower - ing  
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -  
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and  
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the  
\*5 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tower - ing

1 o'er the wrecks of time; all the light of  
2 ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the  
3 love up - on my way, from the cross the  
4 cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that  
5 o'er the wrecks of time; all the light of

1 sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.  
 2 cross for - sake me: lo, it glows with peace and joy.  
 3 ra - diance stream - ing adds new lus - ter to the day.  
 4 knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.  
 5 sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.

## THE DISMISSAL

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

*Andrew King, Pianist*

