

**CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
COLUMBIA, MD  
**MORNING PRAYER, RITE II**  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

The LORD gives  
strength to this people;

The LORD blesses  
his people with peace.

Psalm 29:11



**OPENING HYMN** | Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult

*Restoration*

*Unison or harmony*

1 Je - sus calls us; o'er the tu - mult  
2 as, of old, Saint An - drew heard it  
3 Je - sus calls us from the wor - ship  
4 In our joys and in our sor - rows,  
5 Je - sus calls us! By thy mer - cies,

1 of our life's wild, rest - less sea, day by day his  
2 by the Gal - i - le - an lake, turned from home and  
3 of the vain world's gold - en store; from each i - dol  
4 days of toil and hours of ease, still he calls, in  
5 Sa - vior, make us hear thy call, give our hearts to

1 clear voice sound - eth, say - ing, "Chris - tian, fol - low me;"  
2 toil and kin - dred, leav - ing all for his dear sake.  
3 that would keep us, say - ing, "Chris - tian, love me more."  
4 cares and plea - sures, "Chris - tian, love me more than these."  
5 thine o - be - dience, serve and love thee best of all.

**OPENING SENTENCE**

*Isaiah 60:3, Malachi 1:11*

*Officiant:* Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness  
of your rising.

From the rising of the sun to its setting my Name shall be great  
among the nations, and in every place incense shall be offered  
to my Name, and a pure offering: for my Name shall be great  
among the nations, says the Lord of hosts.

*The people kneel as able.*

## CONFESSION OF SIN

*Officiant:* Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*All:* 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.

*Officiant:* 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 people stand as able.*

## THE INVITATORY

*Officiant:* Lord, open our lips.

*People:* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*All:* Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

*The following canticles and psalm are read responsively by half-verse.*

## VENITE | Psalm 95:1-7

Come, let us sing to the LORD;  
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth,  
and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,  
and kneel before the LORD our Maker.

For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.  
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

**The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?**

One thing have I asked of the Lord; one thing I seek:

**that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,**

To behold the fair beauty of the Lord,

**and to seek him in his temple.**

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle;

**indeed, in the secret place of his dwelling he shall hide me;  
and set me high upon a rock of stone.**

And now he shall lift up my head

**above my enemies round about me.**

Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation with great gladness;

**I will sing and speak praises unto the Lord**

Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto you;

**have mercy upon me and hear me.**

You speak to my heart and say, "Seek my face."

**Your face, O Lord, will I seek.**

O hide not your face from me,

**nor cast your servant away in displeasure.**

You have been my helper;

**leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:**

**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

## THE FIRST LESSON | Isaiah 9:1-4

*Reader:* A reading from Isaiah.

There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness--  
on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

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

## SONG OF CREATION |

*Benedicite, omnia opera Domini*

### *II The Earth and its Creatures*

Let the earth glorify the Lord,  
**praise him and highly exalt him for ever.**

Glorify the Lord, O mountains and hills,  
and all that grows upon the earth,  
**praise him and highly exalt him for ever.**

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,  
O whales and all that move in the waters.  
**All birds of the air, glorify the Lord,  
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.**

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild,  
**and all you flocks and herds.**

O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord,  
**praise him and highly exalt him for ever.**

### *Doxology*

**Let us glorify the Lord: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;  
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.  
In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord,  
praise him and highly exalt him for ever**

## THE SECOND LESSON | 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

*Reader:* A reading from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians.

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

For 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.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

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

## HYMN - The People Who in Darkness Walked

*Dundee*

1 The peo - ple who in dark - ness walked have seen a glo - rious light;  
2 To hail thy ris - ing, Sun of life, the ga - thering na - tions come,  
3 To us the prom-ised Child is born, to us the Son is given;  
4 His name shall be the Prince of Peace for ev - er - more a - dored,  
5 His power in - creas - ing still shall spread, his reign no end shall know;

1 on them broke forth the heaven - ly dawn who dwelt in death and night.  
2 joy - ous as when the reap - ers bear their har - vest trea - sures home.  
3 him shall the tribes of earth o - bey, and all the hosts of heaven.  
4 the Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - lor, the might - y God and Lord.  
5 jus - tice shall guard his throne a - bove, and peace a - bound be - low.

## THE GOSPEL | Matthew 4:12-23

*Officiant:* A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—  
the people who sat in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death  
light has dawned.”

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” Immediately, they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

*Officiant:* The Word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God**

## THE SERMON |

Jonathan Smith

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

*All:* I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth;

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

*The people remain standing, or kneel, as able.*

## THE PRAYERS

*Officiant:* The Lord be with you.  
*All:* And also with you.  
*Officiant:* Let us pray.

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



## THE SUFFRAGES

*Officiant:* Show us your mercy, O Lord;  
*People:* **And grant us your salvation.**

*Officiant:* Clothe your ministers with righteousness;  
*People:* **Let your people sing with joy.**

*Officiant:* Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;  
*People:* **For only in you can we live in safety.**

*Officiant:* Lord, keep this nation under your care;  
*People:* **And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

*Officiant:* Let your way be known upon earth;  
*People:* **Your saving health among all nations.**

*Officiant:* Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;  
*People:* **Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

*Officiant:* Create in us clean hearts, O God;  
*People:* **And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

## THE COLLECTS

*Officiant:* Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*People:* **Amen.**

*Officiant:* Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People:* **Amen.**

*Officiant:* Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People:* **Amen.**

## GREETING AND WELCOME

The Rev. Emmanuel Ato Mercer, Rector

*Please scan the QR code to give.*



## THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

*All:* Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for  
the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that  
with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not  
only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

## A PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM

*All:* Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our  
common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son  
that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of  
them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting  
us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life  
everlasting. Amen.

## DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

*Officiant:* Let us bless the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

*Officiant:* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy  
Ghost, be with us all evermore.

*People:* Amen.

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.  
 2 I want to see the bright - ness of God.  
 3 I'm look - ing for the com - ing of Christ.

I want to fol - low Je - sus.  
 I want to look at Je - sus.  
 I want to be with Je - sus.

God set the stars to give light to the world. The  
 Clear sun of right - eous - ness, shine on my path, and  
 When we have run with pa - tience the race, we

star of my life is Je - sus.  
 show me the way to the Fa - ther.  
 shall know the joy of Je - sus.

*(continued)*

*Refrain*

In him there is no dark - ness at all. The

night and the day are both a - like. The

Lamb is the light of the ci - ty of God. *rit.*

*a tempo*

Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

*Please scan the QR code to give.*



# PARISH CALENDAR

## JANUARY 25 – 31, 2026

### **Monday, January 26**

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
6:00 – 8:30 pm	Food Addicts Anonymous – New Brick, LL
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Centering Prayer – Old Brick & Zoom
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Refugee Ministry Meeting –Zoom

### **Tuesday, January 27**

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
11:00 am– 12:00 pm	Weekly Staff Meeting
5:30 – 6:30 pm	Yoga Camp – Online
6:30 – 8:30 pm	Vestry Meeting – New Brick, LL
7:30 – 9:00 pm	CEC Book Club – Zoom

### **Wednesday, January 28**

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
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### **Thursday, January 29**

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
5:30 – 6:30 pm	Yoga Camp – Online
6:30 – 9:030 pm	Choir Rehearsal
6:30 – 9:00 pm	Education for Ministry (EfM): Fast Track – Zoom
7:30 – 9:00 pm	Boy Scouts – New Brick, LL

### **Friday, January 30**

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
7:00 pm	Evening Prayer Livestream

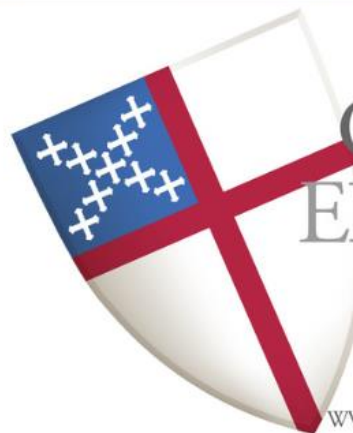
### **Saturday, January 31**

10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Winter Exercise Group – New Brick, LL
2:00 pm	AA Meeting – Parish Hall, LL
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Altar Guild prep

# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH

# LOVE

CHRIST CHURCH'S  
SPIRITUAL LIFE THEME FOR  
2026



CHRIST  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH  
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND

[WWW.CHRISTCHURCHCOLUMBIA.ORG](http://WWW.CHRISTCHURCHCOLUMBIA.ORG)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you have an announcement to share with the church,  
Please send to [communications@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:communications@christchurchcolumbia.org) by Tuesday evening.



**SCAN THE QR CODE FOR ALL OF THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & LINKS**

## ONE WEEK LEFT! Have You Sent In Yours?

The LMB is a powerful book for so many, created with love by members of Christ Church. It is designed to assist us all in times of quiet contemplation, preparing ourselves for rebirth and renewal at Easter. Poems, quotes, stories of reflection, images, prayers, and inspirational pieces by writers or theologians - they all come together to make up this special booklet - one that you can take home with you and use each day throughout the season. The 2026 Spiritual Life Theme is *Building Relationships through Love*, and you can learn more on our website's SLC page - [www.christchurchcolumbia.org/spiritual-life-commission](http://www.christchurchcolumbia.org/spiritual-life-commission).

To accomplish the LMB in time, we must have all submissions in by Sunday, February 1, so we can edit and publish this work in physical and digital form, the latter of which is viewed by many thousands of individuals worldwide throughout Lent. That gives us less than one month for submissions, so please don't delay. You can submit these by name or anonymously - your choice. If you need help getting started, visit [christchurchcolumbia.org/lenten-meditations](http://christchurchcolumbia.org/lenten-meditations) and check out past reflections. Submit yours by email to [SL@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:SL@christchurchcolumbia.org) or place it in the Spiritual Life mailbox in the Church Office. Questions? Speak with Ellen Hoke at church or email the address above.

## Taizé Vespers - Sunday, February 1

Each month, Christ Church offers a service of contemplative prayer and music in the tradition of the Taizé community of France. We do so to offer different opportunities for worship, and on February 1 at 6 p.m., we will focus on LOVE.

The founder of the Taizé community, Brother Roger, explains: "What we usually call 'worship' the Taizé community simply calls 'Prayer.' Taizé Prayer consists of 'short chants, repeated again and again, giving them a meditative character. Using just a few words, they express a basic reality of faith, quickly grasped by the mind. As the words are sung over many times, this reality gradually penetrates the whole being. Meditative singing thus becomes a way of listening to God."

This community promotes peace and justice through prayer and meditation. Our Taizé Vespers service mirrors Taizé-style attention to silence, holy words, prayer, and singing and offers a chance to meditate and reflect on God's love and presence in one's life, to offer prayer for oneself and others, and to share in a supportive community of fellow pilgrims on the way.

## Centering Prayer - Mondays

Centering Prayer is a special evening prayer gathering that can help lead to a more intimate union with God, a gathering that takes place every Monday. This active presence heals, transforms, and offers freedom and peace. Be with us in Old Brick or online via Zoom at 7 p.m. on Monday evenings. The Zoom link is here, the Meeting ID is 817 6254 3177, and the Passcode is CP. You can also ask for more information by speaking with Kathy Lyon at church or by emailing [centering@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:centering@christchurchcolumbia.org).

## Christ Church Book Club - Tuesdays

The Christ Church Book Club is an informal online conversation that decides on a book and discusses it as a group, offering different perspectives and experiences. The first book of the 2026 season will be *How We Learn to Be Brave* by Mariann Edgar Budde, Episcopal Bishop of Washington since 2011. It's a brief read; we'll tackle and discuss a chapter or two each week.

We've also moved CECBC to a new night to accommodate more participants' schedules. In 2026, the CECBC will gather via Zoom on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m., beginning this Tuesday, January 20th. The Zoom link is here, the Meeting ID is 853

4359 7339, and the Passcode is CECBC. You don't have to register in advance; just grab the book and join us to discuss. If you have any questions, email us at [bookclub@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:bookclub@christchurchcolumbia.org). We hope to see some new faces along with many familiar ones!

### **Christ Church Choir - Thursdays**

C'mon, all you singers and music lovers! Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings in New Brick, and everyone is welcome to take part. Whether you read music or not, whether you have previous experience or not, and whether you are ready to commit or not, there's a place for you in our Vocal or Handbell Choirs! If you're interested, please email [music@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:music@christchurchcolumbia.org)

### **Claggett Center Retreats**

Next February, the Diocese of Maryland will host two retreats at the Claggett Center to gather and connect, and to form new friendships and nurture old ones. First, from January 30 - February 1 is a men's retreat, *What Does It Mean to Be a Man in 2026? How Can Men Find and Make Community Now?* and later that month, from February 20-22, is a women's retreat, *Who Is My Neighbor? Loving All in Divided Times*. Both are filled with workshops and keynote speakers, and aim to leave participants connected, cared for, and inspired.

Registration information, event details, and other information can be found on the Diocese website - visit [here for the men's retreat](#) and [here for the women's weekend](#).

### **WOCC Monthly Meeting - February 2**

The Women of Christ Church gather virtually each month to discuss their upcoming plans, and in February this is on Monday, February 2 at 7:30 p.m. This month, we'll continue to map out our 2026 plans, and you're invited to take part. [The Zoom link is here](#), Meeting ID is 843 0204 4790, and the Passcode is cecWOCC

### **Wear RED for Heart Health – February 8**

Wear your favorite red on Sunday, February 8th, in support of National Heart Health Month. This is an important awareness event, as heart disease remains a leading killer in the country - yet studies show that 80% of cases can be prevented. Five steps to help prevent a heart attack are 1) eat healthily, 2) get active, 3) stop smoking, 4) achieve a healthy weight, and 5) take medications as prescribed.

Come to church that day in your favorite red items, and be sure to email Chris at [communications@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:communications@christchurchcolumbia.org) a photo of you in red so he can include you in the 2026 *Wear Red for Heart Health* photo collage.

### **Nourish Your Spirit with *Divine Love* - February 14**

As we begin the new year, consider taking a break from the chaos and treating yourself to a peaceful morning in a soul-nurturing community. The 2nd Saturday Center for Spiritual Nourishment (CSN) provides opportunities for us to be in a closer relationship with God by offering an array of experiences that engage the mind, body, and spirit. Programs for February center on the theme *Divine Love*, and details will be available very soon on our website [www.christchurchcolumbia.org/spiritual-nourishment](http://www.christchurchcolumbia.org/spiritual-nourishment).

### **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper - February 17**

The incredible youth of Christ Church will once again host our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! On February 17th, join us in the Great Hall of New Brick for this traditional start to the Lenten season. We begin gathering at 6:00 p.m., and seating is available until 7:30 p.m. Grab some delicious pancakes and treats as lively music plays and kids enjoy fun and



games.

It is \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family, and you can pay in cash or via our [Online Giving Form](#) (select “Shrove Tuesday Dinner” in the dropdown menu).

### **Ash Wednesday Services - February 18**

Ash Wednesday reminds us of our mortality and of what we are made of. To get our thoughts and hearts prepared for Lent, Christ Church offers three services with the Imposition of Ashes on Wednesday, February 18th. Gather with us at 7:00 a.m. in Old Brick, or in New Brick at 12:00 noon or 7:30 p.m. We'll also livestream the 12:00 noon and 7:30 p.m. services on our website, YouTube, and Facebook pages.

*Ashes to Go* also returns, an opportunity for working commuters, students, and early risers to stop by and receive ashes as they start their day. We will offer a short prayer and administer Ashes to those who cannot be with us in worship that morning, but who desire them. Simply stop by between 6 and 7 a.m. and follow the *Ashes to Go* signs on the lawn.

### **Lenten Healing Eucharist with Father Manny - Thursdays during Lent**

Beginning February 19th and gathering each Thursday during Lent, Christ Church offers a midday Healing Eucharist in Old Brick. The Rev. Emmanuel Ato Mercer leads this service of readings, prayers, a litany for healing, and the Holy Eucharist. Parishioners and community members are all welcome to join in a prayerful time in the presence of God, and to share in the wonderful mystery of God's love whilst we seek healing for ourselves and our loved ones. Please come in to reflect, pray, and participate in a service held in our beautiful, historic chapel.

### **Lenten Reflection Day - February 21**

Christ Church's Spiritual Life Commission presents Lenten Reflection Day on Saturday, February 21, and we hope that you'll join us for this very special start to the season. We are proud to welcome Reverend Kirk Kubicek, who will lead us as we prayerfully reflect on our 2026 theme, *Building Relationships through Love*.

Lenten Reflection Day includes a light breakfast at 8:30 a.m., is followed by the day's program, and then wraps up around noon with an informal Eucharist. We hope that you'll find time to join us for this exceptional and inspirational start to the Lenten season. Questions? Email Ellen Hoke and the Spiritual Life Commission at [SL@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:SL@christchurchcolumbia.org).

### **Christ Church's 2026 Pledge Envelopes are Here**

For those who have requested or need them, 2026 pledge envelopes are now available in New Brick. Please stop by the table in the Tower Room (front entrance) of the Narthex at church on Sunday to collect yours. This will help us save postage from sending them. Thank you.

Of course, you can also set up safe and secure online giving if you haven't already. Email [info@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:info@christchurchcolumbia.org), and we'll send you instructions on how to do so.

### **Find a Ministry that's Right for You**

We can always use some more people to keep Christ Church the vibrant, active, dedicated parish that it is. You can be a Teller, Acolyte, Lay Eucharistic Visitor, or choose to assist the Christ Church Altar Guild, Inreach, or Buildings and Grounds ministries - and many others.

None of these requires weekly assistance - they only require a short amount of time every few weeks or so, but the impact you have on the entire parish is significant. For those interested in the Altar Guild, please email [altarguild@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:altarguild@christchurchcolumbia.org). For Inreach, please email [inreach@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:inreach@christchurchcolumbia.org) (or [visit their website page](#)). If you're interested in assisting elsewhere, please call the Church Office at [office@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:office@christchurchcolumbia.org). Thanks!

## Learn More about Your Church and Diocese

*Maryland Episcopalian* is a service that spotlights and tells the stories around our Diocese. This month, there's a little interview with our own beloved Archdeacon Denise Schiavone, and so much more! Visit [marylandepiscopalian.org](http://marylandepiscopalian.org)

Bookmark the *Diocese of Maryland's* website, which covers on the [diocesan](#), [young adult](#), and [youth](#) activities and gatherings. Visit [episcopalmaryland.org](http://episcopalmaryland.org)

The *Episcopal News Service (ENS)* offers in-depth reporting of local, regional, national, and international news for Episcopalians and others interested in the church's mission and ministry. ENS is the official news source of the Episcopal Church. Visit [episcopalnewsservice.org](http://episcopalnewsservice.org)

And always stay in touch with your beloved *Christ Church!* Next week, we'll publish our Lenten schedule, which details every service, fellowship, and gathering taking place throughout the season. You can also look back at [every Sunday worship](#) this decade (and beyond), learn about our [initial 300th Anniversary plans](#), explore [our history](#), and so much more. Visit [www.christchurchcolumbia.org](http://www.christchurchcolumbia.org)

## Nursery Care Assistant Needed

Christ Church is seeking a Nursery Care Assistant to help with our youngest members of our parish family during Sunday services and other special events. If you know of anyone who may be interested in this position, please have them contact Amanda Kirkpatrick, Christ Church's Nursery Care Coordinator, at [nursery@christchurchcolumbia.org](mailto:nursery@christchurchcolumbia.org). Be sure to place "Nursery Care Assistant" in the subject line of your email. You can also call the church office and let them know. Thank you.

## Do You Love Sharing Stories and Reading?

Did you know that we have volunteers who read a Bible story to our youngest children in the nursery? We can always use more, and we welcome anyone - young, or young at heart - to participate in this ministry. We have books and children's Bibles, or you can bring your favorite story to share. There is no preparation needed; you can do it as often or as little as you wish, and it only takes ten minutes on a Sunday morning. If you are interested, don't hesitate to get in touch with Jenn Atkins at [dandjatkins@verizon.net](mailto:dandjatkins@verizon.net) or speak with any Sunday School volunteer.

## Food Truck Event on Jan. 31 Will Support Hurricane Relief in Jamaica

The charitable arm of Althea's Almost Famous food truck and catering company has partnered with Howard County government to host a drive for hurricane relief during a food truck event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 31. The location is outside the Howard County building at 9755 Patuxent Woods Dr., Columbia, MD 21044.

Participants are asked to bring non-perishable food items, cleaning supplies, and hygiene products. These will be sent to communities impacted by Hurricane Melissa, which struck the Caribbean in late October. A post by Althea Hanson, the caterer's proprietor, was shared by leaders of [Columbia Community Care \(CCC\)](#) on [CCC's Facebook page](#):

"After the recent hurricane, families in Jamaica lost homes, food and basic necessities. Many are still experiencing an incredibly hard time – emotionally, financially, and physically. Recovery is ongoing, and the need is still real," she said.

Christ Church, through the Outreach Commission, donated a total of \$700 for hurricane relief in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean, as described in the [Outreach Blog of Dec. 11, 2025](#).

## Free Bikes 4 Kidz Brightens the Holidays, Gets Ready for Work in 2026

For those who donated used bikes last fall to [Free Bikes 4 Kidz Maryland \(FB4K\)](#), please rest assured that the wheels went to a good home. The Howard County-based nonprofit posted its 2025 results on [its Facebook page](#) on Dec. 21:

*"All done. Over the last two weeks, we gave away 3,063 bicycles to local children and nonprofit organizations, bringing this year's total to 3,278 and our seven-year total to 15,359. That's a lot of children who can now ride into a happier, healthier, more independent life! Massive thanks to*

*over 700 volunteers and our corporate sponsors who made this all possible.”*

FB4K calls on the faith community and others to help its organizers gather, refurbish, and give away bikes to families who cannot afford to buy new ones. Many children saw Christmas wishes come true at FB4K's distribution day on Dec. 13. The remaining 1,600 bikes next went to more than 20 Maryland organizations, including CCC, for their own giveaway days. Starting in the Spring, FB4K recruits volunteers, including students who can earn community service hours. Go [online](#) to learn more or to sign up. If you have a used bike to donate, please label it for FB4K and take it to the reusable bike shed at the Howard County Alpha Ridge Residents' Convenience Center on Marriottsville Road.

In 2024, volunteers put in more than 6,000 hours of service and FB4K gave away 3,345 bikes, according to an article, [“Free Bikes for Kidz Breaks Down Barriers to a Childhood Rite of Passage.”](#) It was published Sept. 17, 2025, in *Business Monthly*, whose publisher is Christ Church parishioner Jason Whong.

Previously, FB4K honored requests by Christ Church. In 2023, an adult bike went to an Afghan refugee family supported by the Interfaith Refugee Ministry. In 2022, another went to St. Luke's Youth Center (SLYC) for a college-bound youth as described in the [Outreach Blog of Sept. 22, 2022](#).

### **CCC and FISH Need Diapers and Non-Perishables for Their Shared Pantry**

[FISH](#) and Columbia Community Care partnered last year and merged their pantries. CCC continues to hand out food at three sites on Saturday mornings and by home delivery to Howard County residents. For information, go online to [Get Help](#). CCC also offers [activities for young people](#).

FISH continues to pick up donated goods from Christ Church and others. Please put non-perishable food and personal care products in the altar basket or in a bin just inside the Parish Hall. Look for a combo label “FISH/CCC”. Please bring baby wipes and diapers, especially large sizes.

FISH will continue to provide telephone support to Howard County residents, offering guidance and financial assistance, because the personal touch is very important when people are in crisis. You could be the one to lend a helping hand by lending an ear! FISH of Howard County needs phone volunteers. You can help from home by giving just one day a month to assist those who could benefit from FISH's financial assistance. Training is provided. For more information, ask parishioner and FISH treasurer Andy DeLong or email him at [andydelong.fish@gmail.com](mailto:andydelong.fish@gmail.com). Thank you always for your support.

### **Help the MOCC Impact the Foster Care Community, and Meet the Founder of Comfort Cases**

No doubt you've seen the display in the narthex of the MOCC's ongoing R.A.K. (*Random Act of Kindness*) in support of Comfort Cases. In February, you'll be able to meet and speak with Comfort Cases founder Rob Scheer. Rob will share details about Comfort Cases with our congregation during the 10:30 service on Sunday, February 8th.

In the meantime, we invite you to [learn about Rob's powerful story](#) and learn how we can make an impact here in Howard County. In our country today, the number of kids entering the foster care system is steadily rising, and that's where Comfort Cases come in - they're a small duffel bag or backpack filled with items designed to provide a bit of comfort for youth as they enter their local foster care system. Every donation aims to provide comfort to those who are experiencing this firsthand.

### **DreamBuilders Save-the-Dates**

February 8th, 2:00 p.m. at Temple Isaiah - DreamBuilders General Meeting · Come hear about our plans for the year, and how you can get involved. We'll have descriptions of upcoming trips and local projects, too. There will be lots of pictures of projects past and lots of people who can answer any questions.

March 14th, 5 - 8 p.m. at Temple Isaiah - DreamBuilders Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction · Come enjoy a spaghetti dinner and bid on a wide and wonderful variety of items and activities, all in support of DreamBuilders. This is our largest fundraising event of the year. Proceeds help make our building projects possible. We will need lots of help to make this event a success, and we will be looking for donations for the auction, too.



### Christ Episcopal Church

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The Rev. Emmanuel Ato Mercer, *Rector*  
The Rev. Marcia Davenport, *Associate Rector for Children and Family Ministries*

The Rev. Richard Ginnever, *Rector Emeritus*

The Rev. Yehinuel Odidi, *Seminarian Associate*

Larissa Sanders, *Director of Music Ministry*

Ola Oladipupo, *Assistant Organist*

Yetti Lipede, *Parish Administrator & Ministry Coordinator*

Diya Jackson, *Office & Youth Ministry Coordinator*

Christopher Pouch, *Communications Administrator*

Amanda Kirkpatrick, *Nursery Care Coordinator*

John Prempeh Sencherey, *Sexton*

### Vestry

- Denisa Abdallah (*Senior Warden*) • Greg Schuckman (*Junior Warden*) • Andrew Eaton (*Treasurer*) • Ron Couch (*Registrar*)
- Shreya Chrzanowski (*Youth Liaison*) • Diane Phillips-LaGuerre • Ronald Baran • George Toth • Sara Kirkpatrick
- Ed Chrzanowski • Kathy Simms • Jay Abbott • David James • Katie Adams • Jim Berkson