

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

COLUMBIA, MD

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24, 2021 | 4:00 PM

You may stream this service from Christ Church's website, YouTube, or Facebook pages



THE WORD OF GOD

PRELUDE – O Come, All Ye Faithful

arr. Bernard

Dewagtere

Angels We Have Heard on High

Zachary Johnson, Trombone

OPENING HYMN 83 – O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste fideles

Verses



1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. † Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, †
3. † Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing, †



1. come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
2. Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove!
3. Je - sus, to thee — be all glo - ry giv'n;



1. Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
2. Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
3. Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, O



come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

CANDLE-LIGHTING

Celebrant: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.
***People:* Thanks be to God.**
Celebrant: The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.
***People:* And dwelt among us, alleluia, alleluia.**
Celebrant: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
***People:* The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.**
Celebrant: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, alleluia.
***People:* God is the Lord; He has shined upon us, alleluia.**
Celebrant: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word; Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

RESPONSE – If in Your Heart
Hernandez

Ana

Remain seated. All sing.

If in your heart you make a manger for his birth then God will once a -
gain become a child on earth. If in your heart you make a manger for his birth
then God will once a - gain be - come a child on earth.

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant: Behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will come to all the people.
For to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
***People:* Glory to God for ever and ever! And peace to God's people on earth.**

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

Celebrant: 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 COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Good and gracious God, on this holy night you have given us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes; the Savior of all, lying in a manger. On this holy night, draw us into the mystery of your love. Join our voices with heaven's angels, that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds, that we may find the one for whom we have waited: Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

The congregation is seated during the readings and carols.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2, 6–7

The Prophet foretells the birth of Christ

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of the shadow of death. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and he will be our ruler. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His power will never end, and his peace will last forever. He will rule David's kingdom and make it grow strong. He will rule with honesty and justice forever. The power of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

HYMN 79 – O Little Town of Bethlehem

St. Louis

Remain seated. All sing.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all the earth.

SECOND READING

Luke 1:26–33, 38

The appearance of the Angel

God sent the angel Gabriel to the village of Nazareth in Galilee. Gabriel spoke to a young woman engaged to be married to a man descended from the ruler, David. His name was Joseph, and the girl's name was Mary. Gabriel said to her, "Greetings, favored one! God be with you!" But Mary was frightened, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus. He will be great and be called 'Son of the Highest'. The Lord God will give him the throne of David and he will rule Jacob's house forever and there will be no end to his kingdom." Mary listened to everything the angel told her and she said, "Yes, I see it all now. I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you say." And the angel left her.

Remain seated. All sing.

HYMN 265 – The Angel Gabriel

Irby

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
“All hail,” sad he, “thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favored lady,” Gloria!

“For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favored lady,” Gloria!

THIRD READING

Luke: 2:1-7

The decree of Augustus

In those days Emperor Augustus gave orders for the names of all the people to be listed in record books. These first records were made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to go to their own hometown to be listed. So Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Long ago Bethlehem had been King David’s hometown, and Joseph went there because he was from David’s family. Mary was engaged to Joseph and traveled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon going to have a baby, and while they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him on a bed of hay, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Remain seated. All sing.

HYMN 101 – Away in a Manger

Cradle Song

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

FOURTH READING

Luke 2:8–14

The Angels announce Jesus’ birth

That night in the fields near Bethlehem some shepherds were guarding their sheep. All at once an angel came down to them from the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord’s glory flashed around them. The shepherds were terrified. But the angel said, “Don’t be afraid! for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God. They said, “Glory to God in the highest! And peace on earth to those God has favored!”

Remain seated. All sing.

HYMN 96 – Angels we Have Heard on High

Gloria

Angles we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.
Glo - - - ria in excelsis deo. Glo - - - ria in excelsis deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing:
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Glo - - - ria in excelsis deo. Glo - - - ria in excelsis deo.

FIFTH READING

Luke 2:15-18

The shepherds greet Jesus' birth

After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay. When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised.

HYMN 99 – Go Tell it on the Mountain

Spiritual

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!
While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!
Done in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

HOMILY

The Rev'd Denise Schiavone, *Deacon*

All standing.

CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

Celebrant: Let us pray for the world Jesus Christ was born to save.
Jesus was born homeless with only a manger for his bed,
so let us pray for those who have no homes.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus was held close by his mother and father,
so let us pray for children everywhere
who need to be held and loved and celebrated.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus depended on others to give him food and clothes,
so let us pray for those who need both,
and we ask you to help us to care for others when we can.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus was born to bring healing to the world,
so let us pray for those who are sick or in need.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus and his family fled Bethlehem to escape
Herod's violence and rage. Let us pray for lives lost to violence,
and for the safety of all in the coming year.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus promised eternal life to those who believed he was the Word,
so let us pray for those who have died.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: Jesus shared God's love with all,
so let us pray for all the people of the world.

People: **Hear our prayer, O God of love.**

Celebrant: O God of love, you have caused this holy night to shine
with the brightness of your Love:
Let the Light of Christ shine on us and through us,
that we and the whole world may be made radiant with your glory.

People: **Amen.**

THE NICENE CREED

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:
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

“Word of God, Speak.” With the first breath of infant life, You, Lord Jesus, come to us, pure and newborn in our hearts with every new Christmas morning. We will forever fall to our knees and pray in awe and thanksgiving for that holiest of nights in Bethlehem that changed the world forever. The Light of Christmas is love; hold us closely, Lord, in Your perfect love. May we faithfully follow the road from your cradle to the world in need. **We praise Christ’s name forever.**

Beyond uncertainty and sadness, through the turmoil of loss of employment and working from home, and enduring a year of remote worship, we know You, Lord Jesus, are at our side. We are safe in your promise. **Your name is “Love.”**

We pray for all the people of this world: bless and heal the Holy Land. We pray for all who govern; may they care for the well-being of all people. We pray for all our sisters and brothers around the world that, in the words of Micah, we may each and all “Do justice; love mercy and walk humbly with our God.” **We pray for peace.**

We pray for our Church: our Presiding Bishop, Michael; our Diocesan Bishops, Eugene and Robert; our Rector, Emmanuel; our Associate Priest, Marcia; our Deacon, Denise, and all who’ve so selflessly served this past year. We especially give thanks to our tireless Director of Communications, Chris, who has been the faithful bridge keeping us united, informed, and included as “One Body in Christ.” **Thanks be to God.**

We pray for those who have passed this year from this life into their eternal life with God. Comfort those who grieve. Heal all those ill, suffering, and in pain especially Erin Cassidy, Chuck, Shahra, Sherry, Bunmi, Frantz, Sam, Chad, Alta, Alfred, Kathleen, Ashley & Jeanette. **Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We lift in prayer all churches in the Anglican Communion and our diocese. We give thanks for all those celebrating special occasions in our parish, especially birthdays of Tanis and anniversary of Jo Emily & Nathaniel Knox. May their year be filled with faith, joy, and love, and may they be especially blessed. We warmly welcome all visitors and newcomers worshipping with us on this most Holy Day. Your presence enriches us. **Thanks be to God.**

May the peace and joy of Christmas Day fill our hearts. May God’s priceless gift to each of us carry us with love throughout the coming year. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

The people may greet one another in the name of the Lord and then be seated.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Rev'd Marcia Davenport, *Associate Priest*

THE HOLY COMMUNION

MUSIC AT THE OFFERING – Ding, Dong, Merrily on High

arr. Bernard Dewagtere
Zachary Johnson, Trombone

The people stand as able.

PRESENTATION HYMN 128

Three Kings of Orient

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 night, 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 for ever, ceasing never over us all to reign.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER B

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

***People:* We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***People:* It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, 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, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People: **We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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 forever. *AMEN.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
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 BREAKING OF THE BREAD

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

SOLO – What Child is This

arr. Bernard Dewagtere
Zachary Johnson, Trombone

HYMN 89 – It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Carol

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

THE STATION AT THE CHRISTMAS CRECHE

Celebrant: The glory of the Lord has been revealed.
People: And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.
Celebrant: Let us pray:

Almighty and everliving God, you have given us a new revelation of your loving providence in the Coming of your Son Jesus Christ to be born of the Virgin Mary. Grant that as he shared our mortality, so we may share his eternity in the glory of your kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child.
 at the sight, glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face,

Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in hea - ven - ly
 heaven - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sa - vior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy

peace. born! Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace. born!
 birth. Christ, the Sa - vior, is born!
 Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All: 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.

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

*The Celebrant offers a blessing and the People respond **Amen.***

CLOSING HYMN 87 – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!
Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!

THE DISMISSAL

The service continues outside with the singing of carols around the live nativity.

CAROLS SUNG AT THE LIVE NATIVITY

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns; let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, repeat the sounding joy.
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

WHAT CHILD IS THIS

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as 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 looked 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.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

SELECTION BY MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH CHOIR REUNION

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

We wish you a merry Christmas, we wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

We wish you a merry Christmas, we wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Send announcements to communications@christchurchcolumbia.org

A Quick Note About Services this Weekend | As Maryland experiences a new increase in COVID cases (more on that below), Christ Church requests that all parishioners attending services over Christmas complete our brief attendance registration form prior to worship. One form is all you need for every service this weekend; just check the box(es) of those services you expect to attend so that we can keep tabs on the number of attendees and maintain a safe environment for all. Thank you.

Christmas Eve – Friday | Mother Marcia and Deacon Denise will lead us in worship this Christmas week, and on this day we have three services. Our youth are an integral part of the 4:00 Christmas Eve gathering, a family service that's followed by a live Nativity. That evening, our excellent choir and instrumentalists will lead the extraordinary musical presentation prior to both uplifting Festal Eucharist services, so arrive at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. to celebrate in joyous song! Register in advance, and wear your mask at all times while on campus. We will also broadcast all three services on our website, YouTube, and Facebook pages for those of you worshipping remotely.

Christmas Day – Saturday | Christmas Day Eucharist is a truly wonderful service, and in 2021 it takes place in the Sanctuary of New Brick. And so, as the hymnist suggested... *"Come and worship... worship Christ, the new-born King!"*

Christmas I – Sunday | Mother Marcia and Deacon Denise lead us in worship this Sunday morning at 8 and 10:30 a.m. We will also broadcast the 10:30 service online.

Christ Church Christmas Flowers | Each year as we gather to celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, our worship is enhanced by poinsettias, wreaths, and greens. It is your generosity that makes this possible, so please join in the time-honored tradition of festooning our sanctuary by making a donation to the Christmas Flower Fund. Your gift may be made in memory of loved ones, or in thanksgiving for God's blessings. To donate online, please go here and select the *Christmas Flowers &/or Music* fund from the dropdown menu. In the memo line, please print the names of those you would like honored or remembered with your donation. If donating by check, please write *Christmas Flowers* in the memo line and send it to the Church Office, or you can place your envelope in the Offering Plate.

Youth Formation: Sunday School | Please note that there are no Sunday School sessions over the next two weekends. We'll resume on January 9th. If you need to reach us, please email ministry@christchurchcolumbia.org

Adult Forum: Sunday Circle | Sunday Circle takes a break for Christmas, so we will not gather on December 26th.

Adult and Children's Choir - Tuesdays and Thursdays | After Adult Choir rehearsal this evening, we will take the rest of 2020 off. Adult Choir resumes on January 6th and Children's Chorus starts back up on January 11th. Please email Len Langrick, our Director of Music, at music@christchurchcolumbia.org to learn more.

Bible Study – Wednesdays | Bible Study gathers in person next Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and will be a discussion on the readings for that coming Sunday. Next week's gathering focuses on these readings. You do not have to know much about the Bible; just join in and let's all study together.

We STILL Need More Ushers and Lectors! | YOUR church needs you! We need ushers and lectors for both services, especially during the 8 a.m. service. You will serve at specified scheduled services and select events, will know your schedule well ahead of time, and all ushers and lectors will receive training before scheduling. Please contact Yetti Lipede at ministry@christchurchcolumbia.org for more information.

Garden Tribute for Seiko Shields | As a tribute to Seiko Shields, we are collecting spring and summer bulbs for flowering plants to be planted around the church grounds. This will become a living memorial called *Seiko's Garden*. You are invited to drop bulbs off at the Church Office or in the basket located on a Narthex table.

Diocese of Maryland's COVID Update for Christmas Week | With the uptick in cases around our area, we are currently back in the Orange Phase, with most of Maryland in the Red Phase. This week's Diocesan update can be read in full [here](#). The Bishops of our Diocese have also released a COVID-19 Vaccination Directive that you can view [on this page](#). Please note that masks are still required at all times while indoors at Christ Church, and we'll continue our dialogue with the appropriate organizations and ease restrictions with care and consideration.

Be Aware of Email Phishing Scams, Especially During this Holiday Season | We want to make you aware of email and text message scams that are targeting individuals and leaders of religious institutions around the country. There are also recent reports of Maryland and Howard County churches having been affected by this issue, including Christ Church. You can learn about these phishing scams, and what you can do to help stop them, on our website's blog.

Christ Church Supports CCD-USA to Help Disabled Children in Thailand | Christ Church has received warm Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year from CCD-USA, the nonprofit organization in this county that supports care for disabled children in Thailand. It does so through Christian Care Foundation for Children with Disabilities (CCD), which was recently recognized for high standards as a charity by the Minister of Social Development and Human Resources.

At the Outreach Commission meeting on December 13th, members voted to contribute \$500 in Vestry-approved funds to CCD. As you may recall through past fundraisers such as a quilt raffle, Christ Church is a long-time supporter. We are credited for helping fund CCD's physical therapists on a CCD-website. To read CCD's hearty "Thank-You" to Christ Church once you are online, scroll down past the post about the kitchen garden and look for photos of therapists with children.

In a 2021 holiday newsletter that takes note of the pandemic impact, CCD writes: "2021 was a busy time for the staff and children at CCD! Lockdowns slowed a few programs, but exciting progress was still made. More therapists and food/supply donations went to the Community Based Rehabilitation programs in the outer provinces of Thailand."

The newsletter also informed us that older residents of Rainbow House now operate a local coffee shop and that CCD's award for high standards is called the Prime Minister's Shield. Parishioners can take pride that their contributions to Christ Church are helping CCD improve the lives of children and young people who are differently abled.

To speak to someone who has seen firsthand CCD's work in Thailand, please email outreach@christchurchcolumbia.org, and we will put you in touch with Michon Semon.

Refugee Ministry Update: Good News to Share! | Lutheran Social Services has finally matched us with a family of four: a mother, age 46, with three sons, ages 20, 19, and 17. The family is already in Maryland, currently staying in temporary housing. A team of people from Christ Church has been busy preparing their townhome in Ellicott City, and we will be ready to move them in early the week of December 27th.

Many thanks to Jan DeBoissierre, Cherrylynn Williams, Paula Rees, Pat DeLorenzo, Diana Hall, Steve Alpern, Ray Lyon, and Ann Barnes, for their leadership and tireless dedication in getting us organized and prepared for the family's arrival. Grateful thanks also go out to Michon Semon, Dione Mahoney, Nancy Winchester, Phil Bray, and Nathaniel Knox, for their assistance in setting up the home.

Our ministry group is now approximately 40 people, including several volunteers from partner faith communities Patapsco Friends and St. John's Episcopal. We're excited to meet and get to know this family and will be sharing more information in the coming weeks. If you're interested in learning more, please contact [Jan DeBoissiere](#) or [Cherrylynn Williams](#). You can also join us for our next Zoom gathering, taking place next Thursday, December 30th at 6:30 p.m. Those details will be in next week's communications.

Columbia Community Care Plans a Holiday Break, Will Move All Sites Indoors | Please spread the word that the all-volunteer organization, Columbia Community Care (CCC) is taking a holiday break and changing some details of its operations as winter arrives. All sites are closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day: Saturday, December 25th, and Saturday, January 1st.

For one last time in 2021, CCC will be open on Wednesday, December 29th at three site locations: Oakland Mills Middle School (OMMS), 9540 Kilimanjaro Road, at Long Reach Village Center, Suite 9, 8775 Cloudleap Ct., and at Wilde Lake Interfaith Center, 10431 Twin Rivers Rd., all in Columbia. Evening hours are 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Volunteers and donation drop-off begin at 4:30 p.m.

Starting on Saturday, January 8th, the Wilde Lake site will move indoors at the Interfaith Center. The OMMS site will relocate to the Barn/Teen Center indoor space in the Oakland Mills Village Center, 5851 Robert Oliver Place in Columbia. There are no changes for Long Reach.

Saturday hours are the same as before: 10 a.m. to noon for recipients, and volunteers and donation drop-off beginning at 9 a.m. There will be no Wednesday distributions.

At Christ Church, members of R.A.G.E and the Outreach Commission ask parishioners to continue supporting CCC by collecting diapers, baby wipes, sanitary and personal care items, and adult diapers. Please put any of these items in the yellow bin, marked "CCC," inside the Parish Hall. You can drop off items on weekdays when the church office is open or on Sunday.

Lake Elkhorn Middle School Update | We have been in contact with Principal Melissa Shindel and she is so grateful for all that Christ Church has done over the last year (i.e., money for field trips and staff shirts, food for families in need, school supplies) and she welcomes our support in the future.

That support may be a bit different this year as food for families is being handled through the county. Furthermore, because of the inability to go on trips due to the pandemic, there is money left in the field trip budget for this year.

However, Melissa is hoping that we will be able to assist with parent workshops that will be held over the school year in the evenings. The school is partnering with the Council of Elders whose mission is to support the Black community. They are hoping to present workshops on specific topics relevant to families that struggle. Melissa would love it if we could provide Grab and Go dinners (due to COVID restrictions) for those meetings, and projects that there will be about 30 people attending.

We will be in touch with you once we have definite dates for these workshops after the winter break. Melissa may discover that there are other ways that we can help as the school year progresses. There is no doubt that this is a severely under-resourced school and our help is crucial to provide these children with an equitable school experience.

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions, by emailing us at lemspc@christchurchcolumbia.org. We look forward to working with you over this school year. ~Mary Vail and Cathy Whittaker, Co-chairs of the Lake Elkhorn Middle School Committee

Donate Snacks, Crackers, and Cookies to FISH in Bin on our Breezeway | During the holidays, organizers for FISH of Howard County are making a more festive request than the previous one. Cookies, crackers, and snacks are what's needed at the pantry to fulfill shopping lists. They also say thanks to Christ Church for its response to their earlier needs, which produced an adequate inventory of household cleaning supplies and personal items. The bin is between Old Brick and the Parish Hall.

In general, if you have suggestions about ways to help the community, if you want to get involved, or if you need assistance, please email Christ Church Outreach at outreach@christchurchcolumbia.org. Your help is greatly welcomed and appreciated. Thank you.

THE BLESSING OF CHRISTMAS

The blessing of Christmas is the joy of giving and receiving gifts from loved ones and friends. Saint John reminds us of God's love for us with these words: ***For God so loved the world that he GAVE his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, so that all who believe in Him may have eternal life.*** The operating word, according to John, is ***gave***. And this represents the fullest manifestation of God's love for you and me. Love compels us to give - in just the same way that God gave us his Son, Jesus Christ.

On my part, I cannot thank you enough for all the many ways in which you live out the operating word - ***gave***, every single day of your life and, especially, within the life of our Christ Church family.

Because of your genuine and overwhelming acts of selflessness, kindness, grace, compassion, and love, you continue to give immensely to support and build our common life at Christ Church. You inject life into Christ Church so that we may be able to serve the world.

This is the highlight for me - in spite of the individual and communal challenges that we have faced over the past several months, you continue to give, you feel compelled by love to give. It is your giving that has made it possible for us to accomplish some of the work that God has given us. The truth is that we have been able to minister and serve countless people because of your faithfulness, and for that, I thank God for each one of you and I thank God for what God is doing in your lives.

I also want to thank ***YOU***. Your faithfulness is what makes life happen at Christ Church. Your faithfulness makes Christ Church stronger. Your faithfulness enables Christ Church to embrace, with courage, the task that God has for us.

We need to remember that Christ Church is completely dependent on this faithfulness. Your beloved Christ Church counts on you and your faithful giving, and so as we celebrate the season of giving, I want to highly encourage all who have not fully completed their pledge for 2021 to remember their faithfulness. I also want to appeal to all who have not as yet returned their pledge for 2022 to remember their faithfulness. Lastly, to all of you who have given so much and yet still sense God's call to give some more, may you please remember your faithfulness.

With God's blessings of peace and joy, I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas.
Fr. Manny

Text Giving

You can now give securely and conveniently by using your mobile phone! Simply text CECGIVING to 73256, and you'll receive a secure link to our page where you can set up a one-time or recurring gift.

Online Giving

You can also continue to pledge and give to Christ Church online. It's a safe and secure method of contributing towards your annual pledge or another offering. Whether it's a one-time donation or a recurring gift, you can go to our [overview page](#) for instructions and links. Signing up is fast and easy; if you need assistance doing so, or if you have any Stewardship-related questions, please contact us at info@christchurchcolumbia.org



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The Rev'd Emmanuel Ato Mercer, *Rector*

The Rev'd Marcia Davenport, *Associate Priest*

The Rev'd Denise Schiavone, *Deacon*

Aisha White, *Parish Administrator*

Christopher Pouch, *Communications Administrator*

Yetti Lipede, *Ministry Coordinator*

Todd Domer, *Youth Minister*

Len Langrick, *Interim Music Director*

Vestry

Sara Kirkpatrick (*Senior Warden*) • Isaac Olajide (*Junior Warden*) • Andrew Eaton (*Treasurer*) Ron Couch (*Registrar*)

Tim Beaty • Jan DeBoissiere • Alfred Titus-Glover • Lynn Foor • Greta Pike-Barnes •

Jason Whong • Jane Adams • Diane Phillips-Laguerre • Beth Johnson • Andrea Leeman