CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

COLUMBIA, MD

THE HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 19, 2021 | 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

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

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THE WORD OF GOD

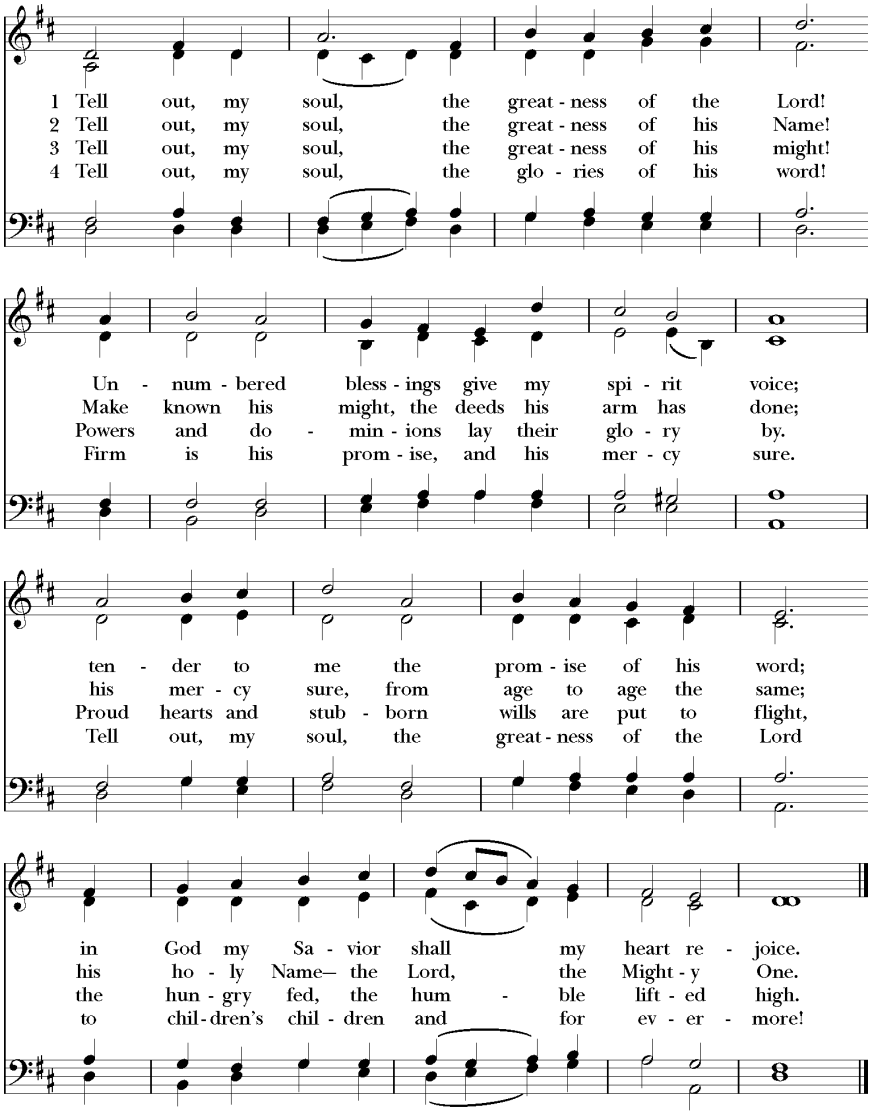
PRELUDE – Mary, Did You Know? — Lowry/Greene

Musicians: Phil Bray, JB Hanson, and Shannon Pruitt

INTROIT – Prepare the Way of the Lord — Taizé/Jacques Berthier

Prepare the way of the Lord, Prepare the way of the Lord, And all people will see the salvation of our God.

OPENING HYMN 437 – Tell Out My Soul — Birmingham



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Celebrant: Last Sunday we lit the Candle of Joy. We light it and the Candles of Hope and Peace as we remember that Jesus, born in Bethlehem, our hope, our peace and our joy.

A person lights the Candles of Hope, Peace and Joy

Today we light the Fourth Candle of Advent, the Candle of Love. In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elisabeth a son called John. John spoke to the people bravely in the desert denying his own comforts and prepared to die for what he believed. John taught that we should share what we have with others, treat each other kindly and show Gods love. He did this because he cared for people and wanted them to repent and find God's forgiveness.

A person lights the Fourth Candle, the Candle of Love.
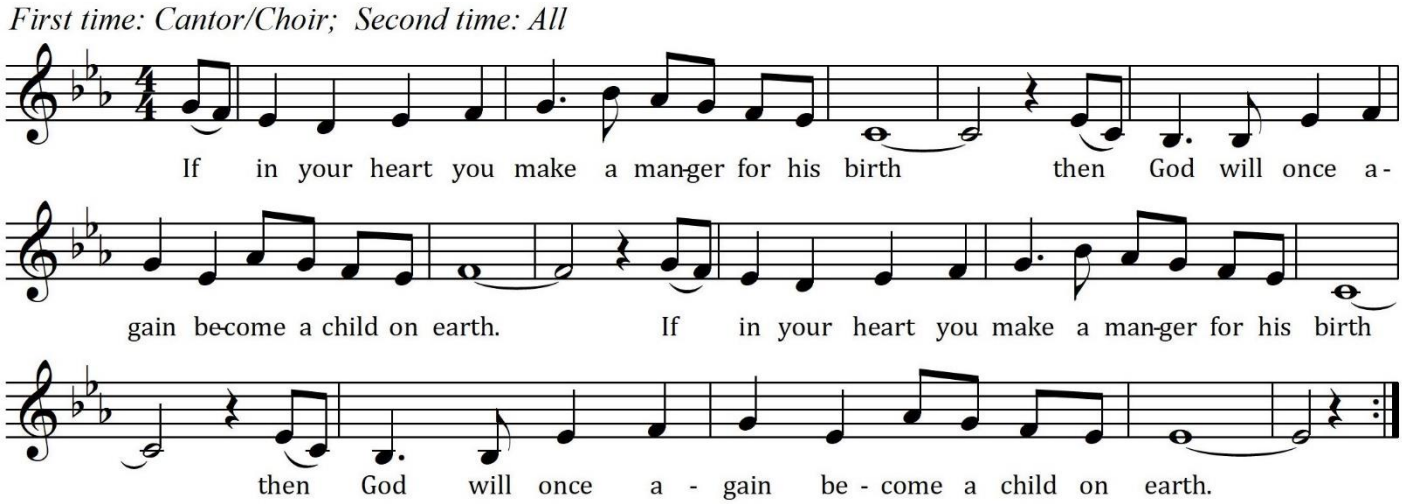
Celebrant: Love is like a candle shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle we celebrate the love we have in Christ.

Let us pray:

All: **Lord God, Your witness John the Baptist grew up strong in spirit and prepared people for the coming of the Lord. He loved your people and baptized them in the River Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us to have the same love that we would be witnesses to him and spread the good news of your love. As Christmas draws closer day by day, help us to be ready to welcome him. Amen.**

RESPONSE

Ana Hernandez



OPENING ACCLAMATION

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

People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

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.**

TRISAGION *(Said 3 times)*

Celebrant: Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
People: **Have mercy upon us.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen***.

The people may be seated.

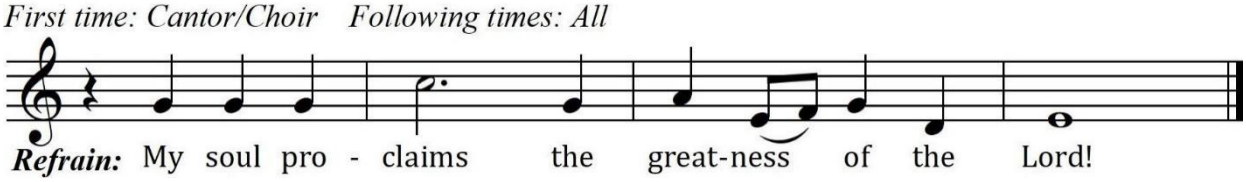
THE FIRST LESSON — Micah 5:2-5a

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

Reader: The word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

CANTICLE 15 – Luke 1:46-55 — *Magnificat*

First time: Cantor/Choir Following times: All



The following Canticle is read responsively by half-verse.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. ***Refrain***

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly. ***Refrain***

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. ***Refrain***

THE EPISTLE — Hebrews 10:5-10

When Christ came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;

in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God'
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

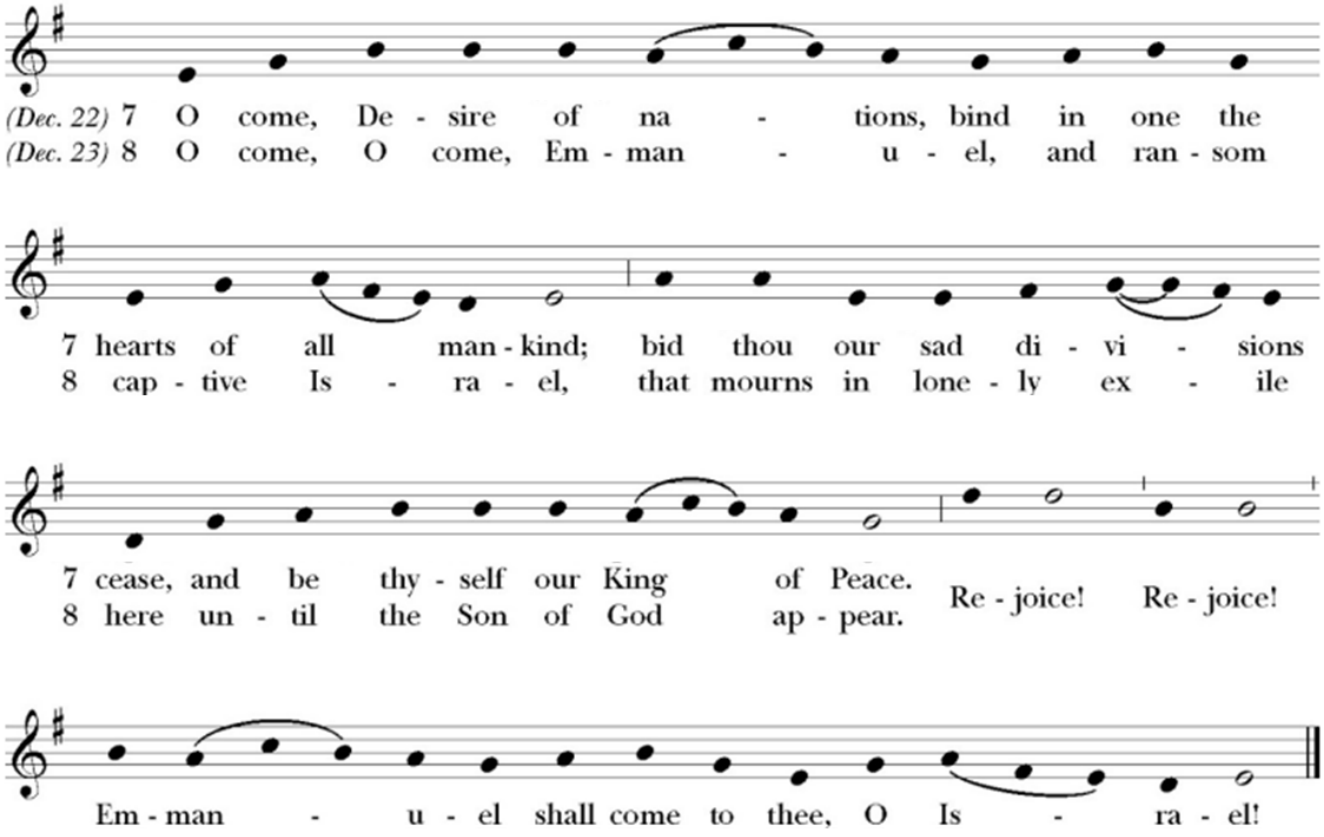
When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Reader: The word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

The people stand as able for the singing of the hymn and remain standing for the reading of the Gospel and the prayers.

SEQUENCE HYMN 56 (V. 7, 8) – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel — Veni Emmanuel

The first verse is sung as the Gospel is processed into the midst of the community; the second verse is sung as it is processed back to the altar.



THE GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-45(46-55)

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The people may be seated at the invitation of the preacher.

SERMON The Rev'd Emmanuel Ato Mercer, *Rector*

The people stand as able.

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

Today we rejoice as we await the Lord's coming. We remember that His Spirit calls us to action to spread His Love through deeds of caring and giving. Our lives must reflect the values of God's kingdom. May we strive to maintain a close relationship with the Lord. Let us take heart and live the promise made and given to us. ***May His Spirit burn within us!***

Lord, we may find it difficult to love and embrace all the people of the world as Your children when conflict and strife are ever-present. Let us pray for those who are forsaking the way of peace. Let us not insulate ourselves from those of different cultures who live among us. Help us understand that you created us in Your love, and all of humanity holds a God-given potential. We value the incredible freedom, intellect, and resources available to us. May we each make the right choices in life to follow Your paths. We warmly welcome all visitors and newcomers who worship with us today in person or online. ***Lord, make me an instrument of Your Peace.***

Lord, may our leaders be full of Your Spirit with gifts of grace and wisdom, empowering them to spread the Good News and the knowledge of Your Truth. May we continue to grow as a community of love and compassion. We pray for our Presiding Bishop, Michael, our Diocesan Bishops, Eugene and Robert, for Emmanuel, our Rector, for Marcia, our Associate Priest, for Denise, our Deacon, for Richard, our Rector Emeritus, and for our Vestry. In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we remember The Church of the Province of Central Africa. In the Diocese of Maryland, we pray for the parishes of St. Mark's, Highland, St. Mary's, Woodlawn, and St. Paul's, Mount Airy. We also pray for our leaders -national and international- that good judgment and the desire for peace prevail. ***Lord, let Your Word burn on our tongues, and may Your Love bring all into one fellowship!***

Lord, we know you understand our pain when we are hurt, alone, wrongly accused, imprisoned, or abused. Send your Loving Spirit to uplift those most in need of Your Comfort. We remember those ill, especially Shahra, Sherry, Bunmi, Frantz, Sam, Chad, Alta, Alfred, Kathleen, Ashley & Jeanette, and ask that Your Healing Spirit restore them to the fullness of health that they may continue in Your service. We remember those who have died, especially Robert White, Stuart Cracraft, Carolyn Schlanger & Alma Carter. We pray for those who grieve and that they may feel your presence. We pray, ***Lord, help, strengthen, restore, and grant us salvation. Let always and everywhere praise the Lord!***

We give heartfelt thanks and joy as we remember the birthdays of Tanis, Mollie Rose, April, Kathleen, Roger & Walter, and anniversaries of Jo Emily & Nathaniel Knox, and Marjorie & Paul Peart, who touch our lives and reveal the image of Christ in their kind words and acts of service. We pray, ***May the Spirit be around you, within you and bring you peace all your days."***

Let us with joyful hearts always and everywhere remember our words and prayers as we say again, ***Rejoice, for the Lord is near! May His Spirit burn within us! AMEN.***

CONFESSION OF SIN

Deacon: 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.

Celebrant: 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.

People: **Amen.**

THE PEACE

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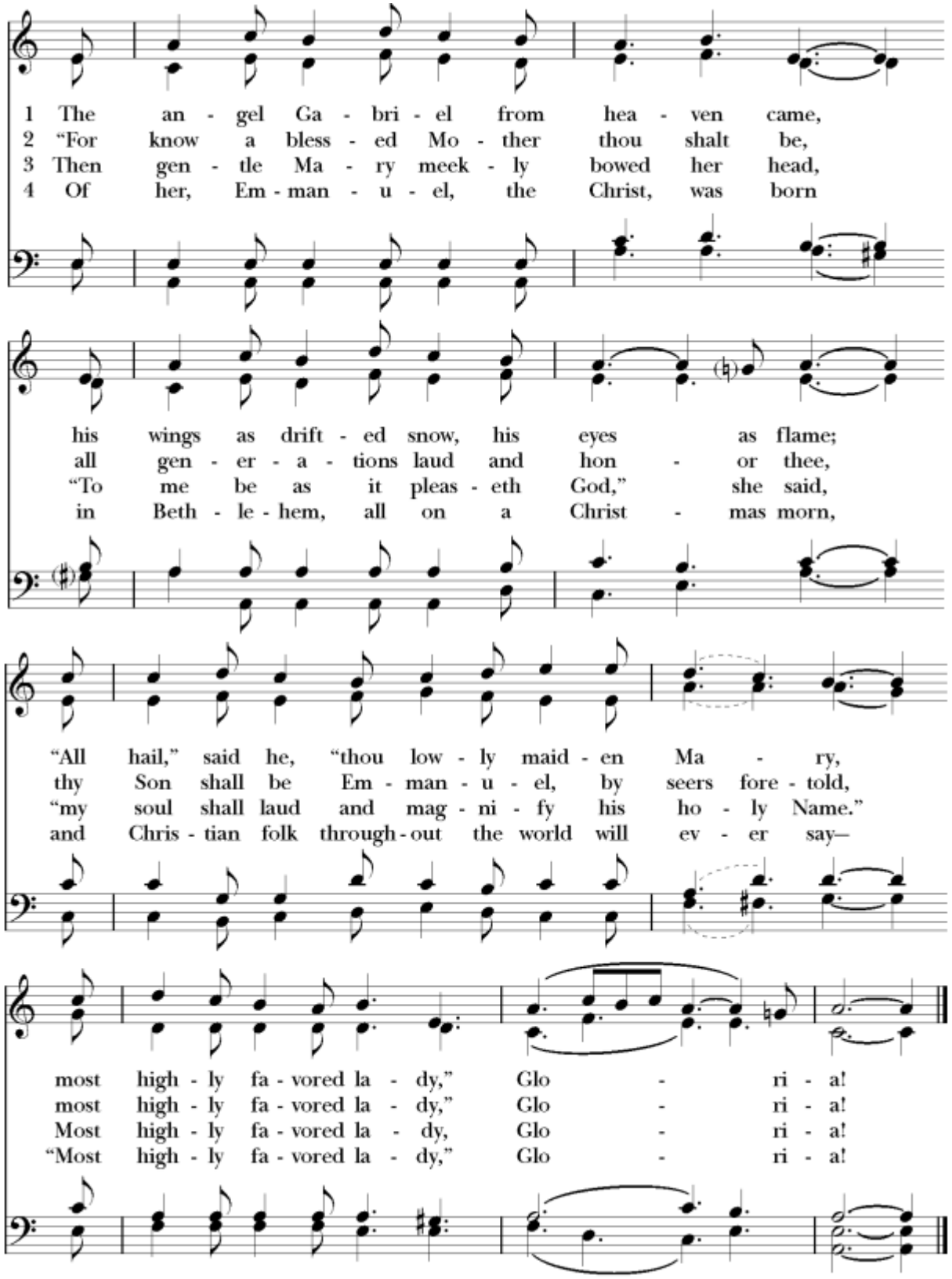
People: **And also with you.**

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERING HYMN 265 – The Angel Gabriel Gabriel's Message



DOXOLOGY 380, V.3 Old 100th

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The people stand as able.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

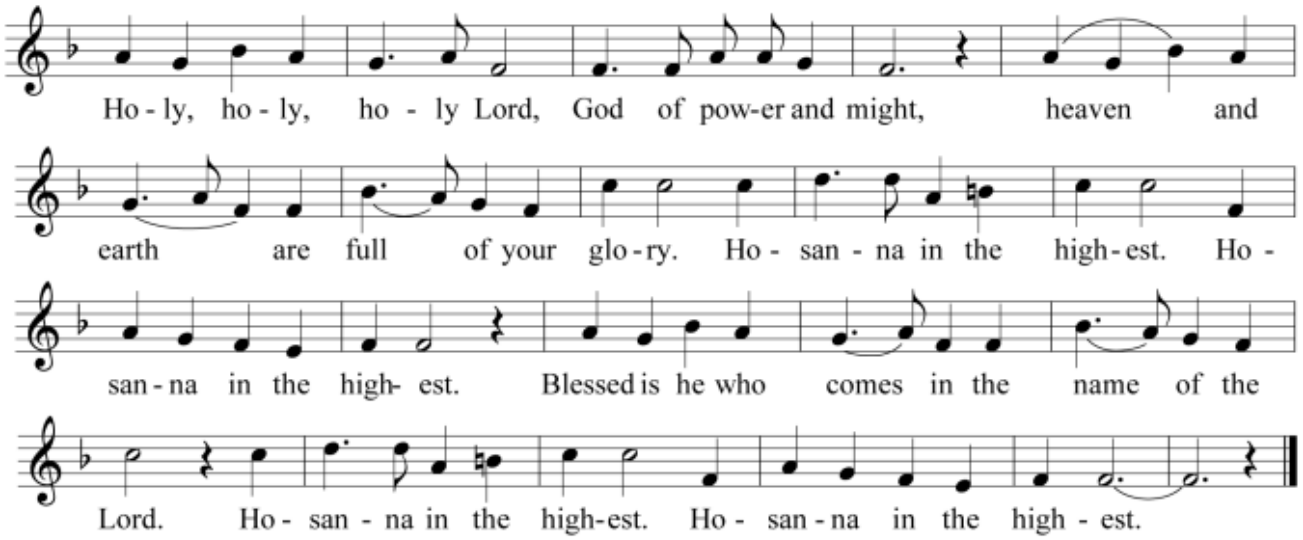
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

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.

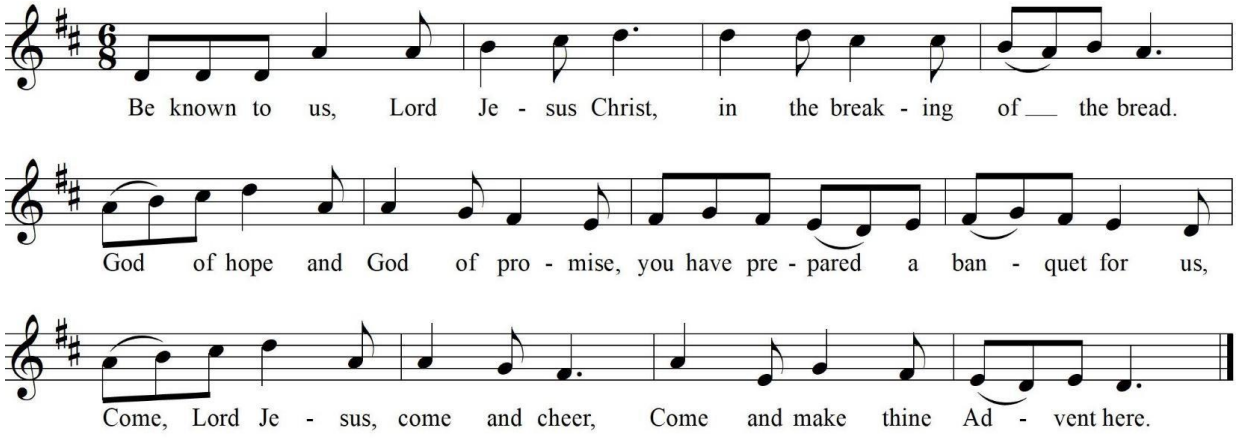
THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

All: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

FRACTION ANTHEM – Be Known To Us

St. James Advent Service, arr. Richard Shephard

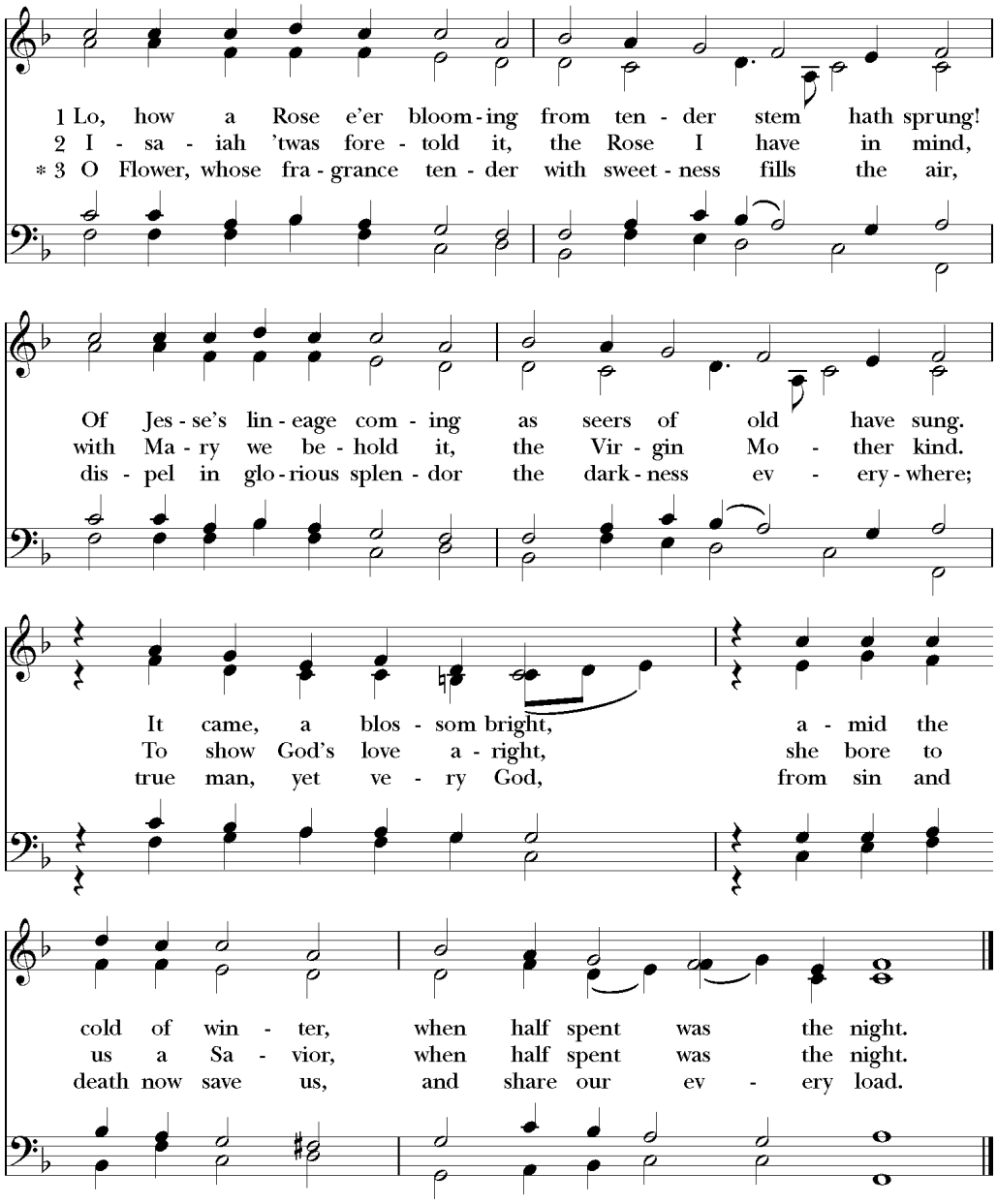


ANTHEM AT THE COMMUNION – While We Are Waiting, Come

Cloninger/Cason

COMMUNION HYMN 81 – Lo, How a Rose

Es ist ein Ros



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.

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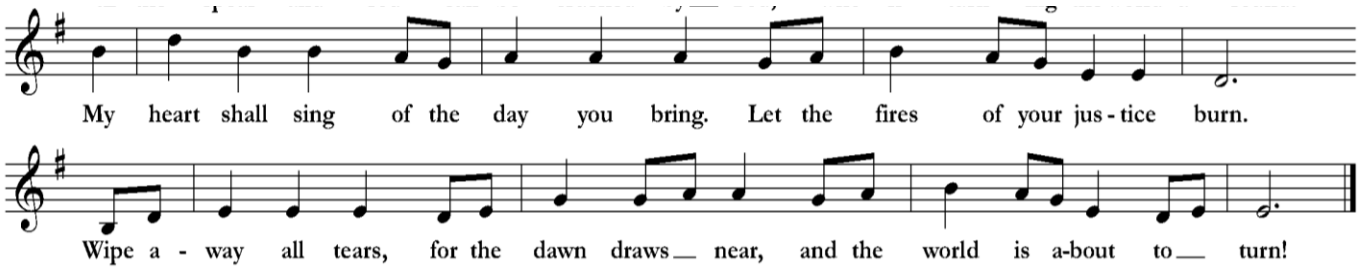
The Celebrant offers a blessing and the People respond ***Amen.***

CLOSING HYMN – My Soul Proclaims/Canticle of the Turning arr. Anne Krentz Organ

Choir:

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great
   And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait
   You fixed your sight on your servant's plight and my weakness you did not spurn
   So from east to west shall my name be blest could the world be about to turn? ***Refrain (All)***

Refrain - All



Choir:

2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me
   And your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be
   Your very name puts the proud to shame and to those who would for you yearn
   You will show your might put the strong to flight for the world is about to turn. ***Refrain (All)***

3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower not a stone will be left on stone
   Let the king beware for your Justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne
   The hungry poor shall weep no more for the food they can never ears
   There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed for the world is about to turn. ***Refrain (All)***

4. Though the nations rage from age to age we remember who holds us fast
   God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp
   This saving word that out forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound
   'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God who is turning the world around. ***Refrain (All)***

DISMISSAL

The Deacon dismisses the people, who respond:

Thanks be to God! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

POSTLUDE – Verset III, Dans La Gloire des Invalides (In the Glory of the Invalides) Marcel Dupre

Ola Oladipupo, organist

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Send announcements to communications@christchurchcolumbia.org

Youth Formation: Sunday School | Join us for Sunday School this weekend, as it's our final class for 2021. The registration form can be found by clicking here, and you can send them to ministry@christchurchcolumbia.org to enroll your child(ren). Elementary school sessions begin at 9:15 a.m. and you can receive the Zoom link by emailing Jennifer Atkins at dandjatkins@verizon.net. The older youth session begins at 9:30 a.m. and is run by our Youth Minister, Todd Domer. You can reach Todd at youthministry@christchurchcolumbia.org for Zoom details. We'll resume Sunday School on January 9th.

Adult Forum: Sunday Circle | Sunday Circle is an in-person, community-circle gathering that meets between worship services from 9:30-10:15 a.m. each Sunday and is located in Old Brick during the winter months. Each month, there is a new theme of lessons with opportunities for discussion, sharing, fellowship, and prayers. Throughout December, we focus on the History of Advent Season Hymns and this Sunday we'll dive into the cherished Hymn *Silent Night*. We hope that you'll join us for these gatherings. For more information, please contact Jenn Todd Lavanish at jltlavanish@gmail.com. Also, please note that there will be no Sunday Circle on December 26th.

The Greening of the Church - Sunday Afternoon | Helpers are needed! Christmas decorating for our beautiful New Brick will be this Sunday, December 19th after the 10:30 a.m. service. Everyone is welcome to assist us, and we could use many hands! We'll gather in New Brick where the decorations will be located. Please contact the church office if you have any questions, or stick around after the 10:30 a.m. worship.

Community Caroling & Cookie Exchange - Sunday Evening | Christ Church will host our annual "Caroling and Cookies" amidst New Brick's beauty and candlelight. We'll sing - fully masked, of course - of God's glorious presence captured in some of the most beautiful and beloved carols from around the world. We'll have our Cookie Exchange, now a cherished (and delicious!) tradition at Christ Church, following the singing and so we encourage you to bring along some ***pre-packaged*** seasonal goodies to share with others. Join us in New Brick at 7:00 p.m.

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.

Adult and Children's Choir - Tuesdays and Thursdays | Our choir is sounding triumphant and beautiful these days, and that's because many of you are leading us in that joyful sound! If you've ever been interested in joining our choir, now's the time… and this invitation is open to every parishioner. No experience is necessary! Children's Choir meets Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00 p.m. and Adult Choir meets Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Handbells and chimes are also included in our rehearsals. Please email Len Langrick, our Director of Music, at music@christchurchcolumbia.org to learn more, or to RSVP for rehearsals. Also, please note that there will be no choir rehearsals the week after Christmas.

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. If you're interested, simply gather with us on Wednesday morning in the Great Hall.

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.

COVID-19: An Announcement | It has come to our attention that last Sunday we had an attendee at the 10:30 a.m. service that has since tested positive for COVID-19. This person was fully vaccinated prior to this diagnosis. In our effort to provide full transparency to our parish family, we will provide updates if/when we receive them. We will also continue to adhere to the latest directives as given to us by the Diocese of Maryland. If you have any questions, please contact the Church Office by phone or email. The clergy have all been tested at this time and will publish the results when they become available. We encourage each parishioner to do the same, especially if they feel any symptoms. We also require every parishioner to wear a mask throughout worship and while indoors.

Diocese of Maryland's COVID Info | With the uptick in cases around our area, we are currently back in the Orange Phase. The latest 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.

Now's the Time for Your Annual Christmas Videos! | It's that time of year again, a time for you to turn in fun videos with families and friends. These videos will celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas and are shared on Facebook and our website. You can upload as many videos are you like, so start planning yours and help spread Christmas joy! Submissions are due by this Monday, December 20th and you can upload them here. For more details, please contact Yetti Lipede at ministry@christchurchcolumbia.org.

Be a Part of Our Christmas Pageant | It is Christmas Pageant time! This year's pageant will take place on Christmas Eve at 4 p.m. and we will present a live Nativity. There will be no speaking parts. Children from preschool through 5th grade are invited to have a role. If your child would like to participate, please plan on attending our one rehearsal/costume time on December 19th at 9:15 a.m. (Sunday School time). We are looking forward to a fun event! Please sign up using this link!

Youth Choir Reunion | Did you ever sing in the Christ Church Youth Choir? If so, you are invited to sing one song at the conclusion of the Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve. There will be two opportunities to rehearse: December 19th from 11:45 a.m. – noon AND December 21st at 5 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Atkins at dandjatkins@verizon.net.

The Jesse Tree Project | This Advent season, Christ Church launched a new Advent activity for all ages called *The Jesse Tree Project.* The Jesse Tree is a Scriptural depiction of Jesus Christ's Old Testament genealogy, connecting the salvation history of the Hebrew and Christian testaments. We also invite you to follow the daily video presentations each weekday throughout Advent, as Mother Marcia presents a new Bible story and Scripture passage along with a reflection and short prayer. You can find these on our website every day. You'll also find a paper ornament pattern to cut out, decorate, and hang on your Jesse Tree at home. Ornaments from home can also join our handcrafted Jesse Tree ornaments in the Narthex to make a lasting display for years to come, so bring yours on Sunday! We hope that many of you will take part in what we hope will become a new tradition at Christ Church. Email Mother Marcia if you have any questions.

Be Part of The Long Welcome: Donations Needed for our Refugee Family | Under our Good Neighbor Partnership with Lutheran Social Services, Christ Church's Refugee Ministry will soon be settling an Afghan refugee family into their own residence. Items needed for setting up and maintaining the home can be found in this Signup Genius link, where you can sign up to donate items and gift cards. You may also scan the QR Code that's in the Narthex, and that will take you to the donation form, or visit https://tinyurl.com/CECRMsignup

Once you've purchased items, you can drop them at the church on Sunday mornings (place them in the New Brick nursery, please) or at the church office (we will place a bin in the entryway, marked "RESETTLE") during normal office hours. NOTE: All donated items must be in new or like-new condition. Please also note that we are not currently accepting donations other than those on the sign-up list. Stay tuned for additional needs as they arise. If you prefer to make a financial contribution to help support the family, you may send a check to Christ Church marked "Refugee Ministry," or you can donate online (write "Refugee Ministry" in the *MEMO* line). Please speak with Deacon Denise or Jan DeBoissiere, or email us at info@christchurchcolumbia.org if you have any questions.

Thank you for being part of this important ministry! Tornado Disaster Aid Goes to Episcopal Relief and Development | After tornadoes swept the mid-Mississippi Valley on Dec. 10, Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) announced that it has begun taking steps to relieve suffering and help in recovery. "Please help us work with the local partners and dioceses in need of our assistance to provide relief and support," ERD implored on its latest disaster relief page, saying the tornadoes were "the most powerful we've seen in a decade, shredding community infrastructure, killing at least 90 people and leaving thousands without their homes." On behalf of Christ Church parishioners, members of the Outreach Commission voted on Monday to contribute $1,000 to ERD to assist in relief efforts. These are Vestry-approved funds derived from your pledges and contributions. Heartfelt thanks go out to one and all who make possible such a timely response.

In a time of climate change, the need for funds to address natural disasters in 2021 has far exceeded that in recent years. On your behalf, the Outreach Commission sent $1,000 in September in the wake of Hurricane Ida damaging a wide swath of the United States and $1,000 in August to ERD to help Haitians who suffered through an earthquake followed by Tropical Storm Grace. In February, we donated $675 to ERD to help people who are coping with the aftermath of extreme weather in Texas and the surrounding states. Besides sharing the word of the donations, we ask for your prayers. Once again, please pray for people who have been harmed during all of these storms as well as those who are freshly mourning lives lost during the tornadoes. If you wish to donate personally, go online to ERD's plea, "Please help: Thousands lost everything they had." Or those who prefer writing a check to ERD should put "Tornado Relief" on the memo line. Mail it to ERD, P.O. Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058.

Immense Gratitude for a Memorable 2021 Angel Tree Drive | As you can see from the above photo and others on our Outreach Blog, The 2021 Angel Tree drive will be memorable for each of the 12 children whose Christmas wishes are being fulfilled, for their families, and for all the helpers who have made it happen. We focused our support on a group of 11- and 12-year-olds to meet a need identified by the Howard County (Central Maryland) division of The Salvation Army, the Angel Tree sponsor. Generous parishioners took all 48 slots during the hybrid sign-up process, purchasing gifts that included some big items, such as a desk and a skateboard, some costly ones, such as tablets, and some smaller requests, such as puzzles and socks. The logistics of matching parishioners to their "angels" went smoothly thanks to Matt and Sarah Gately, Michon Semon, and Jane Adams, among others. Once again, Outreach Commission member Melanie Yaksich led the drive and, with the help of husband Nick Yaksich and family friends, delivered the gifts on Dec. 13 to a warehouse space set up by the Salvation Army. There its staff and volunteers were engaged in a massive effort to prepare for a Dec. 15 distribution (see photos). From the Outreach Commission to all who took part, thanks for brightening Christmas for families in need.

Columbia Community Care Holds Successful Toy Drive, Plans Holiday Break | From gloves and books to dolls and marshmallow treats, the 2021 toy drive was a success. The Christ Church volunteer contact, Violet Smith, took our donated items on Dec. 11 for distribution by Columbia Community Care (CCC) to families of children ages 2 to 12. We were joined by many other supporters in Howard County. CCC organizer Sue Sharff Castonguay posted, "We were able to give out over 1,500 toys and gifts today! Wow. So much JOY!"

The all-volunteer organization is taking a holiday break and changing some details of its regular operations as winter arrives. For one last time in 2021, it will be open on Saturday, Dec. 18 at three sites: 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. Saturday hours are 10 am to noon for recipients. Volunteers and donation drop-off begin at 9 a.m.

On two Wednesdays, Dec. 22 and Dec. 29, CCC will hold evening hours, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the three regular site locations. Volunteers and donation drop-off begin at 4:30 p.m. All sites are closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day: Saturday, Dec. 25, and Saturday, Jan. 1.

Starting on Saturday, Jan. 8, 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 remain the same, and there are no Wednesday hours.

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.

Be Part of The Long Welcome: Donations Needed for Our Refugee Family

Under our Good Neighbor Partnership with Lutheran Social Services, Christ Church's Refugee Ministry will soon be settling an Afghan refugee family into their own residence. Items needed for setting up and maintaining the home can be found in this Signup Genius link, where you can sign up to donate items and gift cards. You may also scan this QR code, or scan the one that's in the Narthex, or visit https://tinyurl.com/CECRMsignup

Once you've purchased items, you can drop them at the church on Sunday mornings (in the New Brick nursery) or at the church office (we will place a bin in the entryway, marked "RESETTLE") during normal office hours. **NOTE**: All donated items must be in ***new or like-new*** condition. Additionally, we are not currently accepting donations other than those on the sign-up list. Please stay tuned for additional needs as they arise.

If you prefer to make a financial contribution to help support the family, you may send a check to Christ Church marked "Refugee Ministry," or donate online. Thank you for being part of this important ministry!

THANK YOU
for Supporting Our Common Life.

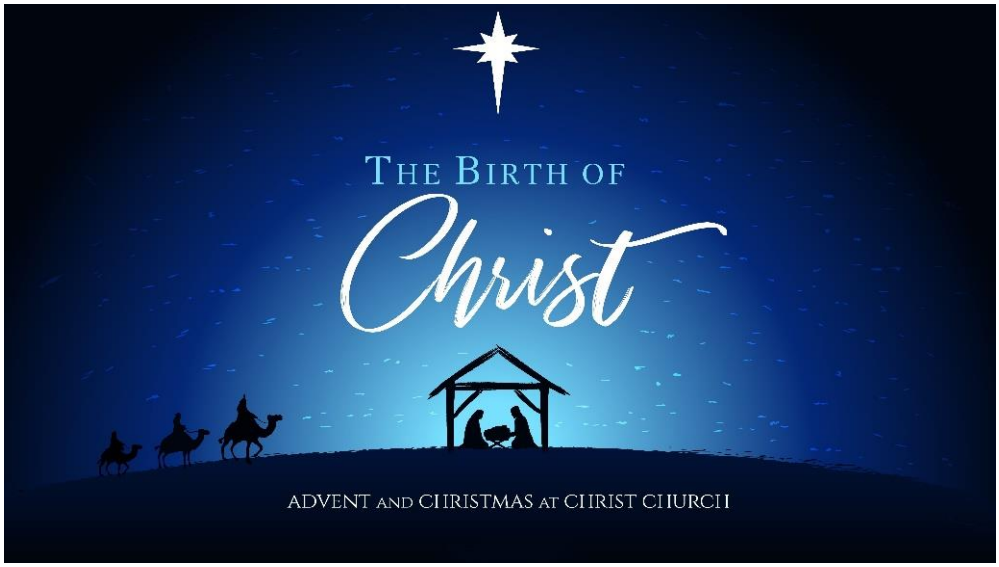
As we all know, the past couple of years have been terribly difficult for everyone, but through it all, each one of you has been very generous to your beloved Christ Church. You can pledge online at **www.christchurchcolumbia.org**, and we also have pledge cards in the narthex. It is our hope that you will prayerfully consider your support to Christ Church throughout the coming year.

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**



Christ Church on Christmas Eve
Friday, December 24th at 4:00, 8:00, and 11:00 p.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and via the CEC website**,** Facebook**, and** YouTube
Music begins 30 minutes prior to the 8 and 11 p.m. services
Our youth are an integral part of the 4:00 Christmas Eve gathering at Christ Church, a family service that's followed by a live Nativity. Kids from pre-school - 5th grade are invited to have a role (they are all non-speaking parts), so email us at info@christchurchcolumbia.org or call the Church Office to participate. This Christmas Eve service concludes with a Youth Choir reunion, so if you ever sang in the Christ Church Youth Choir, you're invited to join us! Email info@christchurchcolumbia.org for details. 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 grab great seats and join us as we celebrate in joyous song!

Christmas Day Worship
Saturday, December 25th at 10:00 a.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and livestreamed on the CEC website**,** Facebook**, and** YouTube
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!"*

First Sunday After Christmas
Sunday, December 26th at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube
On this final Sunday of the calendar year, we'll worship with Holy Eucharist at our usual time.

New Year's Day Eucharist
Saturday, January 1st at 10:00 a.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and via website, Facebook, and YouTube
We will gather online for this first morning of 2022, and collectively begin this New Year with a Holy Eucharist and prayers for a healthier and more peaceful year-to-come.



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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