

Christ Episcopal Church

Extending the Love and Embrace of Christ

Third Sunday of Advent

The Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Sunday, December 17, 2023 | 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.



Welcome Home!

Welcome to worship at Christ Episcopal Church. If this is your first time with us, we invite you to complete a visitor's form. Our website provides up to date information about our vibrant church community: christchurchcolumbia.org. This bulletin contains all you need to join us in worship, everyone is welcome to receive communion at God's table, and the clergy are happy to speak with you at any time.

We are delighted you're here - Welcome home!



1 Sa - vior of the na - tions, come! Vir - gin's
 2 Won - drous birth! Oh, won - drous child of the
 3 Thus on earth the Word ap - pears, grac - ing
 4 Come, O Fa - ther's sav - ing Son, who o'er



Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, both
 Vir - gin un - de - filed! Might - y God and
 his cre - a - ted spheres; hence to death and
 sin the vic - tory won. Bound - less shall your



heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
 Ma - ry's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
 hell de - scends, then the heaven - ly throne a - scends.
 king - dom be; grant that we its glo - ries see.

Lighting of the Advent Candle |

Third Candle | The Candle of Joy

Celebrant: Last Sunday we lit the Candle of Peace. We light it and the Candle of Hope as we remember that Jesus, born in Bethlehem, will come again to fulfill all of God's promises and bring us everlasting peace and hope.

A person lights the candle.

Today we light the Third Candle of Advent, the Candle of Joy. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her, she was filled with joy. She sang a song that began with the words: "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Celebrant: Just as the birth of Jesus gave great joy to his mother, so his presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him.

From hope and peace grows joy.

We light the Candle of Joy to remind us that when Jesus is born in us, we have joy and that through him there will be everlasting joy on earth.

A person lights the candle.

Celebrant: Joy is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at this candle, we celebrate the joy we find in Jesus Christ.

Let us pray:

All: Thank you, God, for the joy you give us. We ask that as we wait for all your promises to come true, and for Christ to come again, that you would remain present with us. Help us today, and every day to worship you, to hear your word, and to do your will by sharing your joy with each other. We ask it in the name of the one who was born in Bethlehem. Amen.

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.

People: Amen.

Trisagion S102 | Holy God

Alexander Archangelsky

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,

Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

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

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever.

***People:* Amen.**

The people may be seated.

A Reading from Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 |

Reader: A Reading from Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

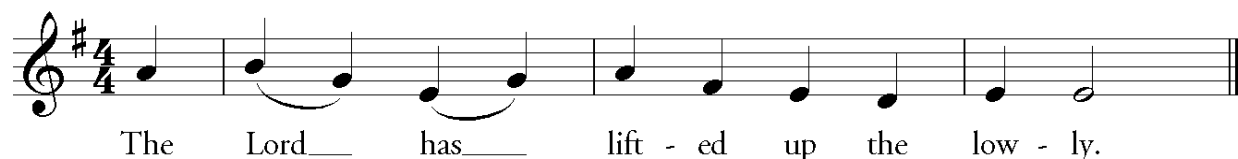
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
 my whole being shall exult in my God;
 for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
 he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
 as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
 and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
 For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
 and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
 so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
 to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

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

The following Psalm is read responsively by half-verse.

Canticle 15 | *Magnificat*



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.
 He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

Antiphon

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.
 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 forever.
 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.

Antiphon

Reader: A Reading from the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

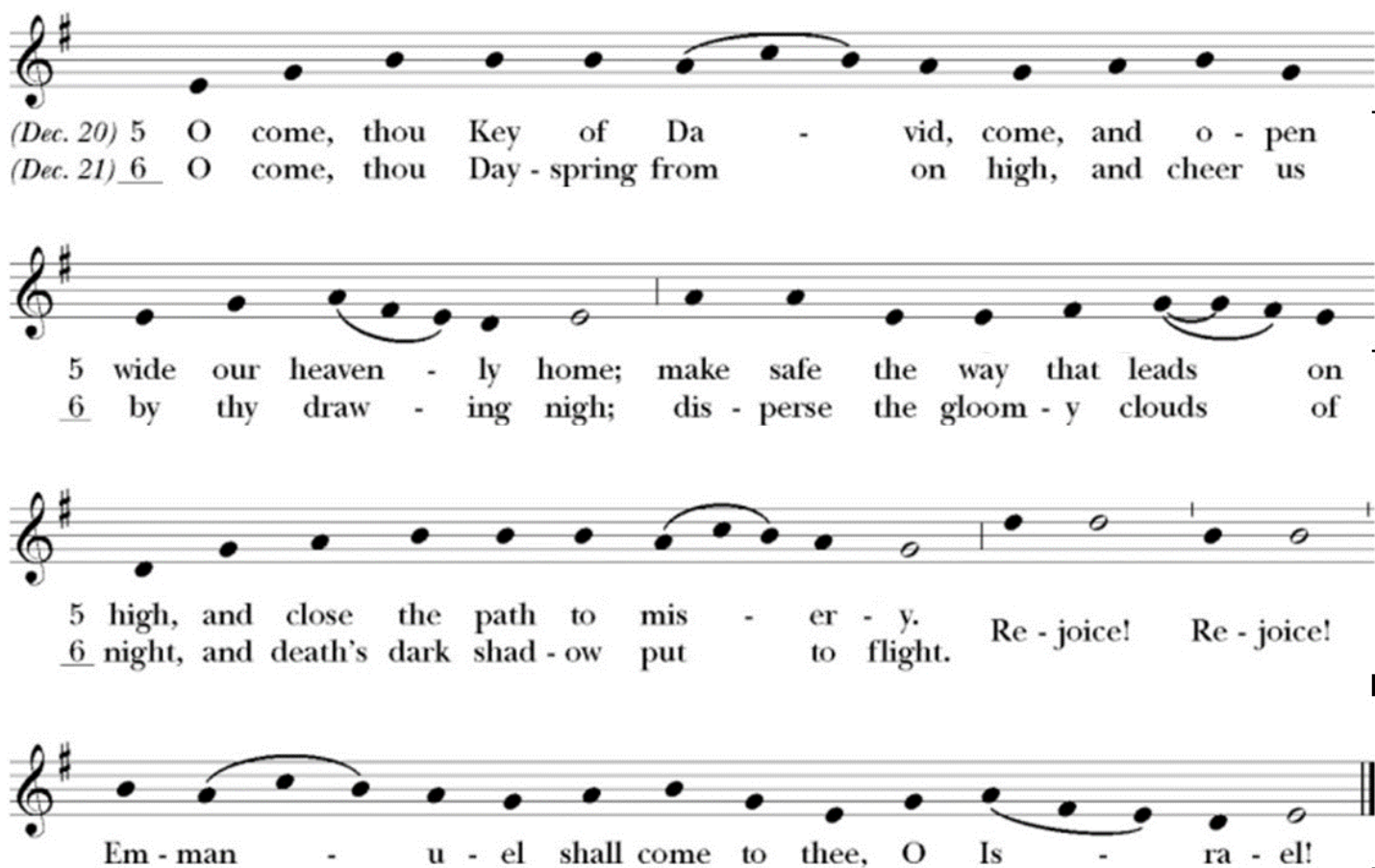
Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

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

Sequence Hymn 56 | O Come, O Come Emmanuel (Vs 5 & 6)

Veni, veni, Emmanuel



(Dec. 20) 5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen
(Dec. 21) 6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us

5 wide our heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
6 by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of

5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y. Re - joice! Re - joice!
6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.

Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

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

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

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

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

Sermon | Michael Looney, *Seminarian Associate*

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.

Prayers of the People |

Beloved God, on this third Sunday of Advent, we give thanks for Mary whom you called to be the mother of your son Jesus Christ. Help us to be aware of the ways in which you call us into your ministry, that we may answer as Mary did. We pray following her example, **May our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord.**

We pray for those who lead the church in the work you have given us to do: for Michael, our presiding bishop, especially for his continued recovery from surgery; for our diocesan bishops, Eugene and Carrie; for our clergy, Manny and Denise; for Richard, our Rector Emeritus; and for our postulants, vestry, commission leaders, and our staff. We pray for the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea and in our diocese for Emmanuel, Cumberland; St. George's, Mount Savage; St. James' Westernport; and St. John's Frostburg. **Thank you, God, for calling your lowly servants to serve your Church and the world.**

All loving God, we ask that you guide those in authority in this nation and in the world to may follow your example of lifting up the lowly and filling the hungry with good things. **Help us Lord, as you were the help of your servant Israel.**

Lord, the beautiful world you created is in turmoil with more conflicts happening since the second World War. We ask you to watch over those serving in the military, especially Kofi Abdullah and Conner Warlow. We ask that in your mercy you help us to end violence and spread the light of your love, so we may banish those things that cause war, hatred, and evil. **Lord, remember your promise of mercy.**

Healing Lord, our hearts cry out to you for those whose prayers are known to you alone and for those we know of, especially Nathan, Debbie, Sarah, Harriet, Doug, Mary Ann, Lexi, Jon, Sunny, Georgia, Dennis, Altra, Barbara, Sherry, Tim, Christine, Jan, Patricia, Cindy, Roberta, Samuel, Ashley, Alta, Farris, Mildred, Nell, and those we now name. We pray for those who have passed from this earthly life, that they may rest in peace and rise in glory, remembering especially this day Raymond Nze and those we now name. We trust in you, Lord, knowing that in your great mercy and love you walk with us through all the challenges in this life. **Look with favor on us, Lord.**

As Mary rejoiced, we rejoice with all those celebrating birthdays and wedding anniversaries, this week especially Marjorie & Paul Peart, Rose, Kyle, Devon, Trina, Theo, April, Kathleen & Roger. We give thanks for all those who are visiting with us today and enriching our worship. **Our spirits rejoice in God our savior.**

Almighty God, we are humbled that you love your people so much you were willing to send your only son into the world to save us. In response to your unending, boundless love, we pray as your servant Mary did: **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. 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.
Amen.

Prayers for Healing |

You may step forward to the altar for a blessing from the Celebrant.

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

Offertory Anthem | Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Anna Laura Page

Please scan to give.



The people stand as able.

Presentation Hymn 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 GREAT THANKSGIVING

Eucharistic Prayer B |

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

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

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

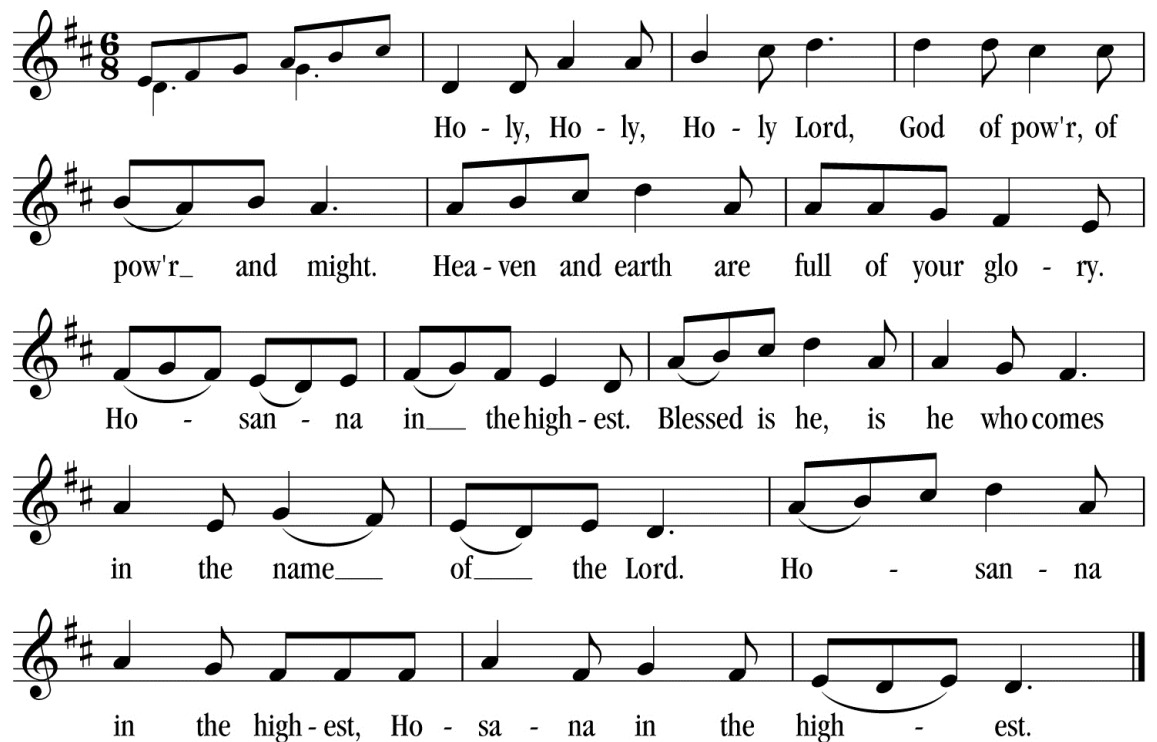
***People:* We lift them to the Lord.**

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:



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r, of
pow'r_ and might. Hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he, is he who comes
in the name_ of the Lord. Ho - san - na
in the high - est, Ho - sa - na in the high - est.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

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.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

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.*

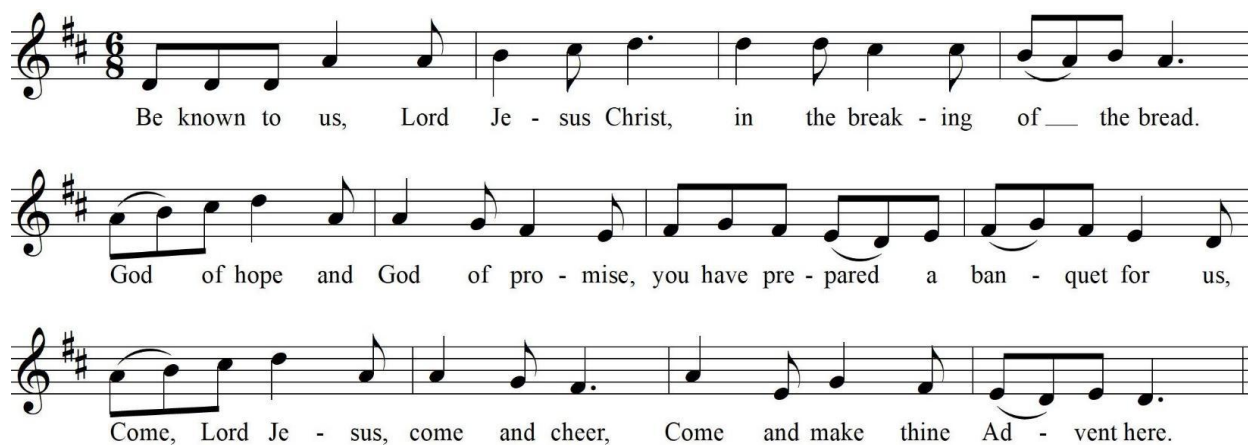
The Lord's Prayer |

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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread |

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

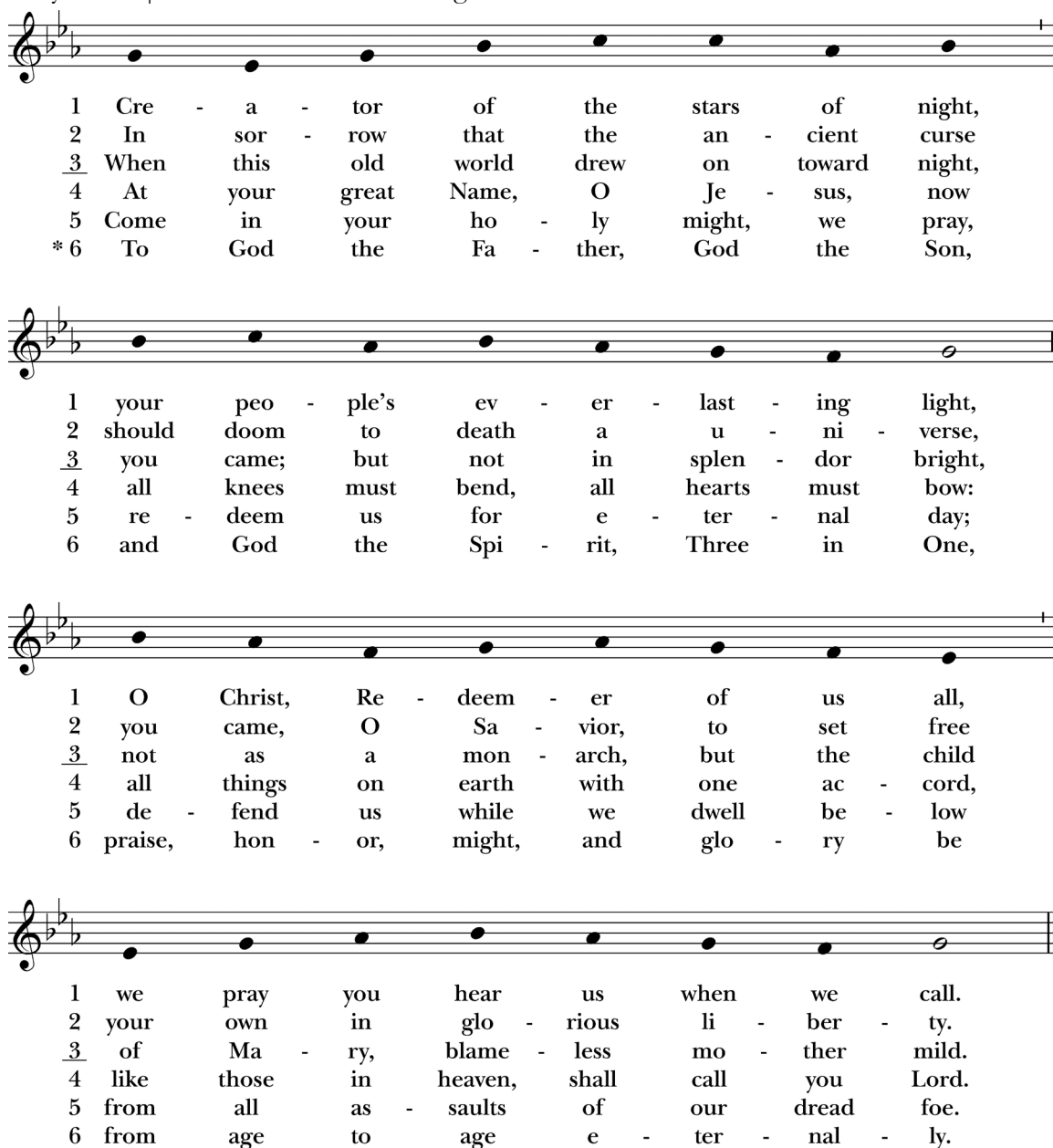


Be known to us, Lord Je - sus Christ, in the break - ing of — the bread.

God of hope and God of pro - mise, you have pre - pared a ban - quet for us,

Come, Lord Je - sus, come and cheer, Come and make thine Ad - vent here.

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night,
 2 In sor - row that the an - cient curse
 3 When this old world drew on toward night,
 4 At your great Name, O Je - sus, now
 5 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray,
 * 6 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son,

1 your peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light,
 2 should doom to death a u - ni - verse,
 3 you came; but not in splen - dor bright,
 4 all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:
 5 re - deem us for e - ter - nal day;
 6 and God the Spi - rit, Three in One,

1 O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,
 2 you came, O Sa - vior, to set free
 3 not as a mon - arch, but the child
 4 all things on earth with one ac - cord,
 5 de - fend us while we dwell be - low
 6 praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be

1 we pray you hear us when we call.
 2 your own in glo - rious li - ber - ty.
 3 of Ma - ry, blame - less mo - ther mild.
 4 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.
 5 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
 6 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

The people stand as able.

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.**

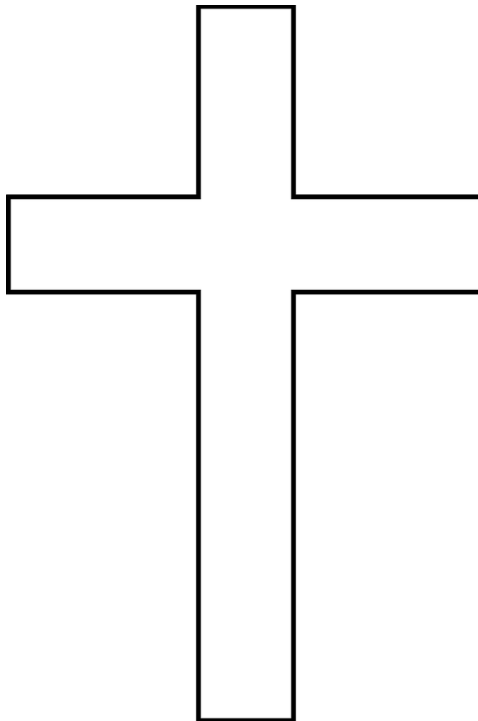
Eucharistic Visitors' Prayer | 8:00 & 10:30 a.m. services

Celebrant: In the name of this congregation, we send you forth bearing these gifts that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

People: **We who are many are one body because we all share one bread, one cup.**

The Blessing |

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





1 Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of the Lord!
 2 Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of his Name!
 3 Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of his might!
 4 Tell out, my soul, the glo - ries of his word!



Un - num - bered bless - ings give my spi - rit voice;
 Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
 Powers and do - min - ions lay their glo - ry by.
 Firm is his prom - ise, and his mer - cy sure.



ten - der to me the prom - ise of his word;
 his mer - cy sure, from age to age the same;
 Proud hearts and stub - born wills are put to flight,
 Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of the Lord



in God my Sa - vior shall my heart re - joice.
 his ho - ly Name— the Lord, the Might - y One.
 the hun - gry fed, the hum - ble lift - ed high.
 to chil - dren's chil - dren and for ev - er - more!

The Dismissal |

The Deacon dismisses the people, who respond:

Thanks be to God!

Postlude |

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ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

8:00 a.m. Service

Lectors/Readers: Joan Harvey

Ushers: Jo Emily Knox

Chalicerist: Joan Harvey

10:30 a.m. Service

Lectors/Readers: Greg Schuckman

Ushers: Isaac Olajide, Yetti Lipede, Jane Adams, Cherry Williams, Beth Dagne, Alex Amponsah, Hope Oladipupo, Eva Oladipupo

Acolytes and Crucifer: Ava Kelso, Everett Kelso, Luke Aribiah

Chalicerist: Mary Vail

Altar Guild

Sonni Aribiah, Ivy Amponsah, Eileen Harlee



View our website's Advent and Christmas page for more information: <https://www.christchurchcolumbia.org/advent-and-christmas> and check [our parish calendar](#) for timing details.

A FEW OF OUR UPCOMING GATHERINGS:

December 24: Christmas Pageant in New Brick at 4 p.m.

December 24: Christmas Eve services in New Brick at 8 and 11 p.m.

(music starts a half hour earlier for each, so arrive at 7:30 and 10:30 to grab great seats and sing along)

December 17: Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in New Brick

December 25: Christmas Day worship in New Brick at 10 a.m.

PARISH CALENDAR
DECEMBER 17 TO DECEMBER 23

Sunday, December 17

8:00 am	Holy Eucharist – Old Brick
8:30 am	Breakfast – New Brick, lower level
8:45 – 9:30 am	Coffee Hour – Old Brick
9:00 – 9:30 am	Family Service – New Brick, upper level
9:30 am	Sunday School & Pageant Rehearsal
9:30 – 10:30 am	Bible Study – Parish Hall, conference room
9:30 – 10:30 am	Sunday Circle – Old Brick
10:30 am	Holy Eucharist w/music – New Brick, upper level
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Virtual Coffee Hour – Zoom
12:30 – 5:30 pm	Tabernacle of David Church – Old Brick
1:15 – 5:30 pm	Sundays at Three Concert – New Brick, upper level
2:00 pm	Confirmation Class – Parish Hall, lower level
2:00 pm	EFM – Parish Hall, conference Room
6:00 – 10:00 pm	Ministerio Embajadores M.E.J. – Parish Hall, lower level
6:00 – 7:30 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols – New Brick, upper level

Monday, December 18

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Centering Prayer – Old Brick & Zoom

Tuesday, December 19

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
11:00 – 12:00 pm	Weekly Staff Meeting – Zoom
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Virtual Coffee Hour – Zoom
6:30 – 8:30 pm	Vestry Meeting – Old Brick & Zoom
7:00 – 11:00 pm	Ministerio Embajadores M.E.J. – Parish Hall, lower level

Wednesday, December 20

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
7:00 – 8:00 pm	Adult Children of Alcoholics – Parish Hall, lower level
7:30 – 8:30 pm	Health Ministry Meeting – Zoom

Thursday, December 21

8:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
12:00 pm	Healing Eucharist – Old Brick
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Virtual Coffee Hour – Zoom
6:30 – 7:30 pm	Refugee Ministry Meeting – Zoom
7:00 – 7:30 pm	Handbell Choir Rehearsal – New Brick, upper level
7:00 – 11:00 pm	Ministerio Embajadores M.E.J. – Parish Hall, lower level
7:30 – 9:00 pm	Adult Choir Rehearsal – New Brick, upper level
7:30 – 9:00 pm	Boy Scouts – New Brick, lower level

Friday, December 22

7:00 am	Morning Prayer Livestream
7:00 pm	Evening Prayer Livestream
8:00 pm – 12:00 am	Tabernacle of David Church – Old Brick

(continued)

Saturday, December 23

11:00 am	Greening of the Church
2:00 pm	AA Meeting, Parish Hall, lower level
3:00 pm	Christmas Carol Visitation
7:00 – 11:00 pm	Ministerio Embajadores M.E.J. – Parish Hall, lower level

ANNOUNCEMENTS

To submit announcements, email to communications@christchurchcolumbia.org by Tuesday evening. For a digital copy of the complete service leaflet with working links, etc., visit the main page of our website, or visit www.christchurchcolumbia.org/worship-archive

Advent and Christmas at Christ Church

Christ Church's Advent and Christmas page contains the schedule of the main services and gatherings occurring throughout the season, so be sure to check back regularly and join us. Visit christchurchcolumbia.org/advent-and-christmas.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols - Sunday Evening

Christ Church will hold a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in New Brick, a truly wonderful gathering whose origins date back to late 19th century England. All are most welcome to join us in this celebration of glorious carols, anthems, and hymns led by our wonderful choir, interspersed with Bible passages. Please join us at 6 p.m. in New Brick for an evening of joyful expression, in word and song, of the greatest story that has ever been told.

Centering Prayer - December 18

Join us in Old Brick at 7:00 p.m. Monday evenings for Centering Prayer, a special evening prayer gathering that helps us be present and open to God. You can also take part virtually from wherever you are; **The Zoom link is here**, the Meeting ID is **859 2522 4340**, and the Passcode is **Centering!**

Christmas Flowers and Music - Deadline is December 20

Christmas Flowers and Music donations in memory or dedication of a loved one are being gratefully accepted. These help fund the wonderful greenery, flowers, and musicians that assist in bringing the seasons of Advent and Christmas to life for everyone. There are two ways you can donate - you can do so digitally using our **Online Giving Form** and simply select "Christmas Flowers & Music" or "Christmas General Offering" from the *FUND* dropdown menu and write the dedication name(s) on the *MEMO* line. If doing so by check, you'll find both Christmas envelopes in the Narthex and in Old Brick. When using either method, please be sure to submit yours no later than next Wednesday, December 20th.

Healing Eucharist - December 21

Christ Church offers midday worship in historic Old Brick on Thursday at 12 noon, including readings, prayers, a litany for healing, and the Holy Eucharist. Everyone is welcome to join us for a prayerful time as we seek healing for ourselves and our loved ones, so come reflect, pray, and participate in a service in our beautiful chapel, the oldest building of worship still in regular use in Howard County.

Christ Church Choirs - December 21

CEC Choirs are busy on Thursdays in December! Handbell Choir gathers from 7-7:30, and Adult Choir rehearses from 7:30-9 p.m. **You can find links to the registration forms on our website's Music Ministry page**. 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 choir. If you're interested, or if you have any questions, please speak with Larissa or email her at music@christchurchcolumbia.org

The Greening of the Church - December 23

A Christ Church tradition, the Greening of the Church is a time to gather and collectively decorate the campus in its holiday best. Poinsettias, wreaths, and many other beautiful holiday items will be placed around the altars and sanctuaries to help make this holiday complete. We'll start in New Brick at 11 a.m. next Saturday, so we encourage everyone to lend a hand. All ages are welcome! If you have any questions, please speak with Pam Foreman or email info@christchurchcolumbia.org.

Christ Church's "Christmas Caroling Carpool" - December 23

If you can spare a couple of hours next Saturday, why not help bring some holiday cheer to those who might not be able to celebrate Christmas with us in person? On December 23rd at 1:30 p.m., we will gather at the church and carpool to Vantage Point for a brief caroling session for the VP residents. Then we will break into groups and visit a dozen or so parishioners' homes and sing a few carols at each. To wrap up, we'll meet back at the church for pizza and refreshments. All ages are welcome to meet up and help spread joy.

Christmas Eve at Christ Episcopal Church - December 24

Our incredible youth and children are featured in the 4:00 Christmas Eve worship at Christ Church, a family service in New Brick that includes a live Nativity. All preschool - 5th grade kids are invited to join in and have a role, so email us at info@christchurchcolumbia.org or call the Church Office to participate. That evening, our excellent choir and musicians will lead the seasonal music presentation before both uplifting evening services, so arrive at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. to grab great seats in New Brick and join us as we celebrate in joyous song!

Celebrate Christmas Day - December 25

Christmas Day Eucharist is a truly wonderful service, and in 2023 it takes place in the Sanctuary of New Brick. And so, as the hymnist suggested... *"Come and worship... worship Christ, the new-born King!"*

New Year's Eve Worship - December 31

We will gather together for this final day of 2023, and collectively begin the New Year with worship and prayers for a healthier, safer, and more peaceful year to come. Join us at 8:00 a.m. in Old Brick and at 10:30 for Jazz Eucharist with the Leister Quartet in New Brick.

New Year's Day - January 1

Celebrating the first morning of the New Year is always special, so join us at 10 a.m. in New Brick for Holy Eucharist and a ringing in of the new year.

First Wednesday Fellowship - January 3

The inaugural FWF for 2024 will ring in the New Year in style, with a community potluck dinner and games of all sorts! This is also the only FWF we have until after Lent and Easter, so be sure to join us and unwind for a few hours after the holiday madness subsides. Please bring a dish that your family typically enjoys, and share your holiday stories! As mentioned, this will be the only FWF gathering until the spring, but we're still very busy! We hope that you will attend the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on February 13th and the Wednesday Lenten Supper Series throughout late February and March. Stay tuned for more on those gatherings in the new year.

Parish Budget Meeting for 2024 - January 14

On Sunday, January 14th, we encourage everyone to join us at 12 noon for Christ Church's 2024 Budget Meeting. It's a vital part of our common life process each year, and we hope you'll attend so we can all see how our gifts are to be used throughout the parish. The Zoom link is here, the Meeting ID is **863 3493 0960**, and the Password is **CECBudget**.

CEC Book Club - Fridays in 2024

Christ Church's Book Club decided to take a break this month so that we can focus on Advent and Christmas. We'll return in the new year and meet for about an hour or so on Friday evenings to discuss a chapter or two of our current book. The CECBC is always welcoming new people into our group, so if this sounds like something you might enjoy, give it a shot! Email Ellen Hoke at bookclub@christchurchcolumbia.org for more information.

Meals Ministry

The Stewardship season focuses on the giving of our time, talent, and treasure, and one way to do so is by lending a hand to those in need. Christ Church's Pastoral Care Commission is growing its Meals Ministry to ensure that there's always someone to provide a home-cooked meal to those who need one. If you would like to help, or if you know someone in need, please speak with Deacon Denise or email her at deacondenise@christchurchcolumbia.org

Healing Stations

Christ Church now has healing stations during the 10:30 Eucharist at the back of the sanctuary. If you need prayer, we invite you to visit the healing station after receiving Communion. We also welcome those of you who wish to help, so if you are interested in joining a group of parishioners who offer healing prayer, speak with or email Rebecca Warlow at rwarlow131@gmail.com

Please Support the Rector's Discretionary Fund

The RDF typically helps fulfill the needs of those in our community. There are real people with real needs that we help support, so we appeal to you to consider supporting the RDF in order for us to help our neighbors. **Visit our main Online Giving Form** and select "Rector's Discretionary Fund" from the *FUND* dropdown menu if you'd like to help.

Help Us Plan Christ Church's 300th Birthday

We are gathering and planning for Christ Church's 300th year - such an important milestone for our church - and we want participation and ideas from as many of us as possible. There are a variety of committees that you can serve on and so we would like to encourage everyone to consider being a part of this historic occasion. If you have ideas, are interested in assisting, or need more information, please speak with Robin Bradley or email 300@christchurchcolumbia.org.

Communion to You

In an effort to connect more directly with those of you who are local and worship virtually, Christ Church offers Communion to You, an opportunity to have altar gifts delivered to you or made available for pickup at the Church Office. If you want more information, **please complete this form** or **email** the Church Office.

Hearty Thanks for a Heartwarming 2023 Angel Tree Drive

What a memorable Christmas it will be for each of the 12 children whose 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 middle-school age "Angels" to meet a need identified by the Howard County (Central Maryland) division of **The Salvation Army**. It sponsors the Angel Tree in Howard County and elsewhere.

Generous parishioners granted all of the children's wishes, either by purchasing new items or by donating funds that went toward purchasing 12 pairs of shoes.

Soon after Thanksgiving, you rapidly filled up all 48 slots on the **Christ Church 2023 Angel Tree SignUp**. Our "angels" will be receiving gifts such as a scooter, snow pants, a soccer ball, twin sheets, and a comforter. And, thanks to you, each "Angel" will have new clothing to wear when returning to school next month.

Outreach Commission member Melanie Yaksich led the drive, which culminated in sorting on Dec. 9 in the Parish Hall. Fr. Manny paused to cheer on Melanie, Angela Braham, and Jenny Cecil during the process. Next step: delivery to a warehouse space set up by the Salvation Army (see photos). The timing allows families in need to receive and wrap their children's gifts in plenty of time. From the Outreach Commission to all who took part, please accept this hearty "Thank You!"

The WOCC Christmas Luncheon Brings Cheer to Springfield Hospital

Members of the WOCC and attendees brought gifts for Springfield Hospital to the WOCC's Annual Christmas Feast at King's Contrivance Restaurant last weekend. The many bags full of presents were then delivered to Andrea Pastor from Springfield Hospital Volunteer Services, who was very grateful for everyone's contributions. You can view all of the photos from the luncheon and the delivery of the presents [on our website's WOCC Blog](#). Deepest thanks to all of you who helped raise some Christmas cheer for those at Springfield, a very worthy cause.

Friends of Sabina Invites a Parishioner to Sponsor 15-year-old Lydia

Leaders of the nonprofit, [Friends of Sabina](#) (FOS), are currently seeking a sponsor for 15-year-old Lydia, whose destitute family resorted to interrupting her schooling to help make ends meet. The girl went to Uganda's capital, Kampala, to work as a housemaid. But now she has returned home to Sanje, Uganda, and re-enrolled at Sabina Boarding Primary School, which Christ Church supports through the Outreach Commission.

"She has high potential as she has always placed high in her class," according to FOS, which since taking over operation of Sabina strives to help students excel in their studies despite personal obstacles. Lydia's favorite subject is English and favorite hobby is netball. She comes from a family of five whose father is deceased and whose mother works as a food vendor. [You can learn more about Lydia here](#), and for more information, please email Christ Church Outreach at outreach@christchurchcolumbia.org.

Sponsors commit to fund an annual scholarship, which for a primary-level student such as Lydia, costs \$50 a month or \$600 a year. Another goal is to form relationships, like family across the miles. FOS helps accomplish that goal through its newsletters and by encouraging an exchange of letters and occasional video calls. FOS leader Ann Marie Davis, while on site in Uganda, arranged a video call with sponsors a few days ago.

A group of parishioners began to sponsor nine students at Sabina in 2020 and embraced two more earlier this year. Find a photo collage of seven of the nine children, pictured in 2020, on the [FOS page](#) of the Christ Church website. Sponsorship of Roger, 10, and Phionah, 15, came about in July during a Zoom session with parishioners. See it on our website: ["An Incredibly Heartwarming Zoom Recap with Friends of Sabina"](#).

A highlight of that session was a children's choir performance, posted as [FOS Choir July 23, 2023](#) on the Christ Church YouTube channel. "The children's choir is lovely; we enjoy listening to them on campus," says Davis, noting the rendition of "Sanctus-Latin" had been part of a prize-winning repertoire during a regional competition.

Columbia Community Care Recruits Volunteers on Friday, Dec. 15, to Transport Holiday Items for Kids' Giveaway the Next Day at OMHS

[Columbia Community Care](#) (CCC) has asked volunteers to help transport donated items for its holiday kids' giveaway this weekend. Volunteers are needed Friday, Dec. 15, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to take toys and books from the CCC pantry to Oakland Mills High School (OMHS). The pantry is located at 10750 Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia. The goods will be distributed during the annual giveaway starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16, at OMHS, 9410 Kilimanjaro Rd., Columbia. Check the [CCC Facebook Group](#) for updates or, to sign up to transport goods or volunteer at OMHS on Saturday, go to [this CCC SignUpGenius link](#).

Please help CCC replenish its inventory of baby wipes and diapers, especially sizes 3 through 6. Put these, along with sanitary and personal care items and adult diapers, in the yellow bin, marked “CCC,” inside the Parish Hall. Our point of contact is Leigh Smith, who monitors the bin and delivers its contents.

Please Donate All Kinds of Grocery Non-Perishables and Toiletries to FISH

FISH of Howard County needs non-perishable foods and toiletries. FISH provides committed support to select families in need. Please put donations in the basket at the altar or in the marked yellow bin on the breezeway between Old Brick and Parish Hall. The neighbors you help give thanks for all you do in their support.

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.



**HELP US DECORATE
CHRIST CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS!**

**JOIN US
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23
AT 11 A.M.**

Help Spread Christmas Cheer
with **CHRIST CHURCH'S CHRISTMAS CAROLING CARPOOL**
DECEMBER 23 at 1:30 P.M.

Come to Christ Church
and spend a few hours
going around town and
caroling to those unable
to be with us!

**SPEAK WITH
JAN or KIONA**





YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

The Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree is back! This tradition honors the genealogy of Jesus Christ, tracing his Old and New Testament ancestors and telling the history of God's act of salvation. Our own Jesse Tree, complete with beautiful hand-made ornaments by artist Jenn Lavanish, is in the Narthex, and each weekday, Mother Marcia Davenport posts a brief video explaining the Jesse Tree subject of the day. Those who wish to honor this wonderful, daily tradition will find a brief Scripture reading and an ornament template to print, decorate, and display on a Jesse Tree of their own on our website throughout Advent. Visit www.christchurchcolumbia.org/jessetree each weekday between December 1st and Christmas.

Children & Youth Ministry Schedule for December

The Children's Ministry Program for the month of December will be as follows:

December 17 from 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.:

Pageant dress rehearsal and final Handbell Choir practice.

December 23 from 2 - 4 p.m.:

Christmas Caroling

December 24:

There is no 9 a.m. service and no Sunday School.

The Christmas Pageant is at 4:00 p.m. sharp, so please arrive by 3:30 p.m. Thanks!



CHRIST CHURCH STEWARDSHIP

We have a pledge goal of \$550,000 this year.

To date, we have \$345,746 in pledges.

Thank you. Your faithfulness is what makes life happen at Christ Church. Your faithfulness makes Christ Church stronger. Your faithfulness enables our parish 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.

Stewardship 2024

We are so blessed to have a community of dedicated parishioners who support our ministry of faithful service, and we hope that each parishioner will prayerfully consider their contribution to Christ Church. You may pick up a pledge card in the Narthex to complete, or you can complete one electronically on our website - www.christchurchcolumbia.org/2024-pledge

Text Giving

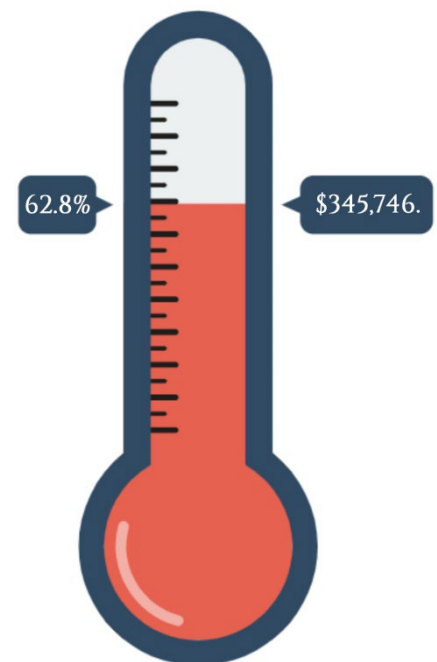
You can give securely and conveniently by using your mobile phone! Simply text **CECGIVING** to **73256**, and you'll receive a secure link to our page where you can set up a one-time or recurring gift.

Online Giving

You can also continue to pledge and give to Christ Church online. It's a safe and secure method of contributing toward 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

You can read the latest Vestry-approved monthly report [here](#).

GOAL: \$550,000.





Christ Episcopal Church

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office@christchurchcolumbia.org

The Rev'd Emmanuel Ato Mercer, *Rector*

The Rev'd Denise Schiavone, *Deacon*

Kiona Lookingbill, *Director of Youth and Family Ministries*

Michael Looney, *Seminarian Associate*

Larissa Sanders, *Music Director*

Yetti Lipede, *Ministry Coordinator*

Christopher Pouch, *Communications Administrator*

Aisha White, *Parish Administrator*

Amanda Kirkpatrick, *Nursery Care Coordinator*

Nytia Perry, *Nursery Care*

Jefferson Cuarezma Flores, *Sexton*

Vestry

Jan DeBoissiere (*Senior Warden*) • Isaac Olajide (*Junior Warden*) •

Andrew Eaton (*Treasurer*) Ron Couch (*Registrar*) • Jonah Aribiah (*Youth Liaison*)

Denisa Abdallah • Ronald Baran • Tim Beaty • John Curley • Simone Kolnik • Ray Lyon • Diane Phillips-LaGuerre

Greg Schuckman • Alfred Titus-Glover • Cherry Lynn Williams