



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Extending the Love and Embrace of Christ

6:00 P.M. TAIZE SERVICE

Sunday, December 1, 2024 | First Sunday of Advent

WELCOME TO SUNDAY TAIZE VESPERS AT CHRIST CHURCH

For centuries, people have asked God for guidance and care as day turns to night. This night, we ask God to refresh, inspire, and call us into a deeper relationship with the Divine Spark that is in this world. Enter into God's presence through prayers, readings, songs, silence and poetry. And as you feel so moved: breathe deeply, be still, and know that you are loved.

May God bless you in this time of reflection and meditation.

TAIZÉ

Taizé (named for the ecumenical Christian community formed in Taizé, France, in 1940) is a quiet, sung, meditative prayer. The songs are short phrases that we sing repeatedly so that the words may enter our hearts. The songs may be sung in many different languages, reminding us that the Gospel is for all the world and we are all God's people.

THE PATTERN OF VESPERS

GATHERING: God beckons us to gather, to reflect on life where we live it, and to be engaged as fully as possible in the world around us. We light candles and sing a song of thanksgiving for God's bringing light into the darkness of our lives.

WORD: God continues to communicate through words of wisdom, encouragement, hope, and challenge spoken throughout the ages by God's beloved children.

PSALMS: Psalms are the Bible's language of prayer and praise. They provide us language to speak about all of life, including our joys, disappointments, confusion and anger, sadness, and concern for ourselves, others, and this world.

MEDITATION: When we listen and pray while gathered in community, we are reminded that we are not alone. We also affirm that life is not about "just me," but about participating in a larger movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

PRAYERS: Prayer is honest, holy conversation with God and those who gather. God invites our honesty, joys, sorrows, confusion, anger, and wonder. Prayer practices can open us up to deeper understanding and meaningful spiritual connections with God, others, and ourselves.

GOING OUT: As we leave the Vesper service, we are reminded of Christ's peace, presence and purpose in all of life.

OPENING SONG | PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

Canon

1

2

Pre - pare the way of the Lord. Pre - pare the way of the Lord, and

3

4

all peo - ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God. —

Secondary Canon

1

2

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le -

3

4

lu - - - ia. Al - le - lu - - - ia.

Officiant: God dwells in you.

People: And also in you.

Officiant: Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp to put it under a bucket, but on a lamp-stand where it gives light for everyone in the house. And you, like the lamp, must shed light among your fellow men, so that they may see the deed you do, and give glory to your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:14-16*

Let us pray.

All: Almighty God, we give you thanks for surrounding us, as daylight fades, with the brightness of the vesper light; and we implore you of your great mercy that, as you enfold us with the radiance of this light, so you would shine into our hearts the brightness of your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty and most merciful God, kindle within us the fire of love, that by its cleansing flame we may be purged of all our sins and made worthy to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

SONG | WAIT FOR THE LORD



CONSOLATIONS | Giving

Giving is a difficult and almost contemplative art form that has to be practiced to be done well; to learn to give is almost always the simple, sometimes heartbreaking art of just giving again. To stop giving in any situation to call an end to relationship. Giving is an essence of existence, and a test of our character; it asks deep questions about our relationship to others, to ourselves and strangely, to time itself: all gifts change with the maturation of their recipients. To give well, appropriately and often is to establish a beautiful seasonal symmetry between the urgency within us that wishes to be generous, and the part of the world that is suddenly surprised and happy to receive. To give generously but appropriately and then, most difficult of all, and as the full apotheosis of the art, with feeling, in the moment and spontaneously, has always been recognized as one of the greatest of human qualities.

Giving is not done easily, giving is difficult; giving well is in fact a discipline that must be practiced and observed over years to be done properly. The art often involves giving the wrong thing to the wrong person at the wrong time and learning how to do the opposite through time and trial, it means getting beyond the boundaries of our own needs, it means understanding another and another's life, it acknowledges implicitly that we ourselves must be recipients of things we cannot often identify or even find ourselves.

Giving has an enormous horizon and a breadth that is hard to compass: it is both a practicality, it creates bonds and dependencies necessary to our communal well-being, but it is also an essentiality, the essence of giving being that the other person is simply alive and by corollary, not only a privilege to know but a living privilege themselves, who has the astonishing ability to acknowledge both the somebody who has given and the something that is given to them. As far as we know, no other corner of creation but a human being has the ability to fully acknowledge the spirit of another in this way.

Giving means paying attention and crating imaginative contact with the one to whom we are giving, it is a form of attention itself, a way of acknowledging and giving thanks for lives other than our own. The first step in giving may be to create a budget, to make a list or to browse a storefront but the essential deed is done through the door of contemplation: of the person, the charity, the cause, finding the essence of the need, the person or the relationship. Out of this image comes the surprise of understanding and the ability again to surprise the recipient by showing that someone else understands them and through a display of giving virtuosity, can even identify needs they cannot admit themselves. The full genius of gift giving is found when we give what a person does not fully feel they deserve, but that does not overstretch the point, it is the appropriate but surprising next step in their lives. It disarms and moves and empowers all at once while gratifying the one who gives beyond most everyday satisfactions.

To give is to make an imaginative journey and put oneself in the body, the mind and the anticipation of another. To give is make our own identities more real in the world by committing to something specific in the other person and something tangible that could represent that quality. To give is also to carry out the difficult task of putting something of our own essence in what we have given. The perfect gift may be tiny and inexpensive, but accompanied by a note that moves the recipient; it can be enormous, extravagant and jaw-dropping as a courageous act of flamboyance and devil-may-care love, but to give appropriately, always involves a tiny act of courage, a step of coming to meet, of saying I see you, and appreciate you and am also making an implicit promise for the future. Little wonder then that the holiday giving that is none of these, that is automatic, chore-based, walking round the mall-based, exhausts us, debilitates us, and in the end is quite often subtly insulting to the one whom we eventually give the random item.

Better to spend a long time sitting in our armchairs in silent contemplation of those we want to gift, looking for the imaginative doorway that says I know you and see you and this is how I give thanks for you, which may bring us to the perfect objet but also may bring us instead to write the short heartfelt message that acknowledges their place in our lives – (*Nota bene*, rarely appropriate for children)

Clichés are clichés often because they are so stubbornly true; it is the thought that counts, but even more it is the imagination behind the thought that counts, made tangible through gifts that find their definition through being twice blessed.

THE PSALM |

Psalm 25 *Ad te, Domine, levavi*

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *

**let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who look to you be put to shame; *

let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

Show me your ways, O Lord, *

and teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me, *

**for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**

Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, *

for they are from everlasting.

Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *

**remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.**

Gracious and upright is the Lord; *

therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

He guides the humble in doing right *

and teaches his way to the lowly.

All the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness *

to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

SONG | OUR DARKNESS IS NEVER DARKNESS IN YOUR SIGHT



SCRIPTURE READING | Jeremiah 33: 14-16

Reader: A reading from Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Reader: The word of the Lord.

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

SCRIPTURE READING | 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13

Reader: A reading to the Thessalonians.

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

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

THE SILENT MEDITATION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES FOR THE DEPARTED |

Candles are lit in memory of those from our parish community who have departed this life, and those you now name.

Iquo Aribiah	Ed O'Connor
Anne Eaton	Ronke Bailey
Richard Hallow	Mike Bruggink
Ann Marie Leeman	Frances Warlow
Kathleen D. Leahy	Alfreda Baran
Farris Forsythe	Nana Banyin Arbuah
John West	Jeremiah Darden
Ronald A. Leahy	Ellis L. Lyon
Helen May Lyon	Marie Chrzanowski
Frances Annin	Francis Annin
Ama Spio-Garbrah	Christian Johnson
Richard Lucente	Michael Bruggink
Michael John Clark	



OFFERTORY SONG | O LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER

During the singing, you are invited to come forward to light a candle in prayer.

O Lord, Hear my Prayer

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are: "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me." The score consists of two systems of staves, each with four parts. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, and the second system covers the next two lines. The music is written in a clear, legible font, with notes and rests clearly marked.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O

Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.

Please scan to give.



The Christmas Star

There are moments
When I cannot
Find The Star --
Shining in the night;
I merely
See all the glitter
And not the Glory.

There are occasions
When mortal distractions
Cloud the path
Between
What is enticing
And what is Eternal.

But I should know
Its direction
By heart.
Although, I often
Wander
Seemingly
Without purpose,

The Star never moves.

PRAYERS FOR WHEN LIFE IS DIFFICULT |

*Take two or three deep breaths with slow, long exhalations.
Imagine the breath moving through the center of your chest -- in the area of your heart.
Feel your energy settle into your body and into the moment.
If there is someone or some situation for whom you would like to light your candle, you may do so now.*

All: We pray for God's people throughout the world and our gathering here.

Jesus said: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."

We pray for all who are coping with loss and disappointment in this season leading up to
Christmas.

Jesus said: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you
rest."

(continued)

We pray for peace, for nations in conflict and the well-being of all people. Jesus said: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

We pray for those whose pain goes unnoticed.

Jesus said: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

We pray for all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble.

Jesus said: “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done.”

We pray for those who are adrift or alone because of a lost job or relationship and whose experience of Christmas is not what it was.

Jesus said: “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done.”

Lord, in the midst of our difficulties and among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, help us to remember that you do not faint or grow weary.

“but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint. ***Amen.***”

After a few moments of silence, the Officiant continues:

Officiant: Be still...
Officiant: Be still and know...
Officiant: Be still and know that I am...
Officiant: Be still and know that I am God.

GREETING AND WELCOME

THE BLESSING OF THE “ROSE OF MARY” |

Hold in your hearts those people, places and things for which you feel loss or hurt.



THE LORD'S PRAYER |

Officiant: Let us pray.

All: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. **Amen.**

Officiant: The coming night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives be dispelled in this hour. The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all who are dear to us, and all who have no peace. The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

Officiant: The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**

The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you. **Amen.**

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace. **Amen.**



CLOSING SONG | Nunc Dimittis

1st time in Latin, all following repetitions in English.

Ostinato Refrain

Nunc di - mīt - tis ser - vum tu - um, Dó - mi -
Let your ser - vant now go in peace, O

ne, Lord, se - cún - dum ver - bum
Lord, Dó - mi - ne, O Lord, ac -

tu - um in pa - ce, Dó - mi - ne. Nunc di -
cord - ing to your word, to your word. Let your

Last time

Caitlin Gompf, soprano
Catherine Hinton, soprano
Maureen Monk, flute
Larissa Sanders, piano

Thank you for joining us today!



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS **AT CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**



Morning and Evening Prayer Livestreams

Monday - Friday mornings at 7:00 a.m. and Friday evenings at 7:00 p.m. via our website and Facebook

The Jesse Tree

Daily throughout Advent at www.christchurchcolumbia.org/jesstree

Poems for Advent

Through Christmas, on our website and Facebook

Begins Monday, December 2

Advent I

Sunday, December 1 at 8:00 a.m. in Old Brick

9:00 a.m. Family Worship in New Brick

and 10:30 a.m. with music and choir in the New Brick Sanctuary

10:30 a.m. is livestreamed via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

Taizé: Rosemary for Remembrance

Sunday, December 1 at 6:00 p.m. in New Brick

Centering Prayer

Monday evenings, December 2, 9, and 16 at 7:00 p.m.

in person in Old Brick, and virtually via Zoom

Advent Compline

Presented by Mother Marcia Davenport

Each weeknight at 7:30 p.m. on YouTube and Facebook

Beginning on Monday, December 2

First Wednesday Fellowship

Wednesday, December 4 at 6:00 p.m. in the Great Hall of New Brick

Advent Quiet Day

Presented by the Christ Church Spiritual Life Commission

Led by The Reverend Kirk Kubicek

Saturday, December 7 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon in Old Brick

Advent II and Youth Sunday

Sunday, December 8 at 8:00 a.m. in Old Brick

9:00 a.m. Family Worship in New Brick

and 10:30 a.m. with music and choir in the New Brick Sanctuary

10:30 a.m. is livestreamed via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

WOCC Christmas Party

Sunday, December 8 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

at The Kings Contrivance Restaurant

Center for Spiritual Nourishment

Saturday, December 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon
throughout the Christ Church campus

MOCC Christmas Party

Saturday, December 14 from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m.
at The Kings Contrivance Restaurant

Advent III

Sunday, December 15 at 8:00 in Old Brick
9:00 a.m. Family Worship in New Brick
and 10:30 a.m. with music and choir in the New Brick Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. is livestreamed via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

Community Caroling and Lunch

Sunday, December 15 in the Great Hall at 12 noon
Community Caroling begins at 1:00 p.m.

Christ Church Christmas Social: A CEC Youth Group Fundraiser

Friday, December 20 in the Great Hall from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Advent IV

Sunday, December 22 at 8:00 a.m. in Old Brick
9:00 a.m. a.m. Family Worship in New Brick
and 10:30 a.m. with music and choir in the New Brick Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. is livestreamed via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

The Greening of the Church

Sunday, December 22 at 12:00 noon in the New Brick Sanctuary

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

Christ Church on Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Pageant at 4:00 p.m. in New Brick
Holy Eucharist at 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and via the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube
Music begins 30 minutes before the 8 and 11 p.m. services

Celebrate Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and livestreamed on the CEC website, Facebook, and YouTube

New Year's Day

Wednesday, January 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary
and also on our website, Facebook, and YouTube