CHRIST CHURCH PARISH
EPISCOPAL

8:00 AM

The First Sunday after Christmas

December 28, 2025



WELCOME

Christ Church is an Episcopal Parish in the Diocese of Massachusetts. We welcome and honor the God-given gifts that make us unique as individuals and strong as community. You and your family are welcome regardless of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status or prior religious affiliation.

A Note to Parents and Caregivers with Children in Church

Thank you for bringing your children to church. We are so glad you are here!

We know it can be difficult at times to manage little ones during the service.

For that reason, we have provided some resources which we hope will make it easier for you and your family to enjoy worship together.

You will find books and coloring pages at the back of the Mary Chapel. Please feel free to utilize these at any point during the service.

We have installed a TV in the nursery! You are welcome to visit the nursery with your child during any portion of our service and join us via our livestream.

It is okay to take breaks. If you need to step out with your child, our parish grounds are a great place to get the wiggles out.

Above all, please remember: You and your family are very welcome here!

Though your children may be squirming, talking, or making noise, they are also observing, copying, and learning. Children are a gift and an important part of our community; we are grateful to have them worship with us.

Hearing assistance devices are available in labeled baskets by the sanctuary entrances.

The Word of God

OPENING ACCLAMATION
The people standing, the Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY AND GREAT COMMANDMENTS
The Celebrant says

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

OPENING ANTHEM
The following is said, all standing

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace, good will towards men.
We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee,
we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy;
thou only art the Lord;
thou only, O Christ,
with the Holy Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And with thy spirit.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word: Grant that the same light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Lessons

FIRST READING: **Isaiah 61:10--62:3**

The people sit.

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

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

Silence may follow.

Psalm 147
Remain seated.

1 Hallelujah!
How good it is to sing praises to our God! *
how pleasant it is to honor him with praise!

2 The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; *
he gathers the exiles of Israel.

3 He heals the brokenhearted *
and binds up their wounds.

4 He counts the number of the stars *
and calls them all by their names.

5 Great is our LORD and mighty in power; *
there is no limit to his wisdom.

6 The LORD lifts up the lowly, *
but casts the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; *
make music to our God upon the harp.

8 He covers the heavens with clouds *
and prepares rain for the earth;

9 He makes grass to grow upon the mountains *
and green plants to serve mankind.

10 He provides food for flocks and herds *
and for the young ravens when they cry.

11 He is not impressed by the might of a horse; *
he has no pleasure in the strength of a man;

12 But the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, *
in those who await his gracious favor.

13 Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; *
praise your God, O Zion;

14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *
he has blessed your children within you.

15 He has established peace on your borders; *
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

16 He sends out his command to the earth, *
and his word runs very swiftly.

17 He gives snow like wool; *
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
who can stand against his cold?

19 He sends forth his word and melts them; *
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

20 He declares his word to Jacob, *
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.

21 He has not done so to any other nation; *
to them he has not revealed his judgments.
Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

The people sit.

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Galatia.

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit

of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

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

Silence may follow.

GOSPEL: **John 1:1-18**
All stand.

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
People **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. 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. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ”) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

THE SERMON **The Rev. Melissa Howell**
Silence may follow.

THE CREED
All stand.

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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
Deacon or Celebrant: Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Leader: Gracious God, guide your holy Church, that its members may be united in your love, enlightened in your truth, and strengthened in your service.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Bring the peace and hope of this holy season to this nation and to all nations, that we and all the world's people may heed your call to justice and righteousness in our care for one another.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Give all people a reverence for your creation, that we may respect and safeguard the earth and the plants and animals who live on it.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Bestow your grace on us and on all those we love and to whom we are connected, that Christ's light may shine forth through our lives and our relationships.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Comfort and uplift those who suffer from sickness, poverty, grief, imprisonment, violence, persecution, or any kind of trouble, that they may be relieved and protected in their time of need.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Bless all who have died, that with holy Mary, mother of God, and with all your saints, they may find eternal joy and rest in you, and that we may also one day come to dwell in your heavenly kingdom.
We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

The Celebrant prays a concluding collect:
O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE PEACE
All stand.

Celebrant	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People	**And with thy spirit.**

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Holy Communion

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

If you wish to make a gift to support the ministries of Christ Church Parish, you may place your offering in the plate, or scan the QR code to the right to donate online. Thank you!

The Great Thanksgiving

The People remain standing.

Celebrant	The Lord be with you.
People	**And with thy spirit.**
Celebrant	Lift up your hearts.
People	**We lift them up unto the Lord.**
Celebrant	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People	**It is meet and right so to do.**

Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become thy children.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

SANCTUS
Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The people kneel or stand.

Then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.
AMEN.

THE LORD'S PRAYER
The Celebrant then continues

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

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

FRACTION ANTHEM
Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS
The following prayer may be said. The People may join in saying this prayer

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

INVITATION
The Presider invites the people to Communion with these or similar words:

Wherever you are on your journey, you are welcome at God's table.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

To receive the Sacrament, come forward and hold out your hands. The minister will place the bread in your palm. You may then receive the wine by drinking from the larger cup or intincting (dipping) the bread in the smaller cup. If you do not wish to receive the wine, cross your arms as you pass by the cup bearers to return to your seat.

If you would prefer a blessing, come forward, cross your arms across your chest, and the minister will bless you.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER
After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

The People may join in saying this prayer

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual

food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

If Lay Eucharistic Visitors are being sent out to bring the Sacrament to those who cannot be with us in-person, the following is said as the Visitors are handed the bread and wine:

Celebrant: In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy 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, for we all share one bread and one cup.**

BLESSING

The priest blesses the people, saying

May Almighty God, who sent Jesus to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you Christ's peace and favor. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and upon all those you love, this day and always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

The Deacon or Celebrant dismisses the people.
The people respond: **Thanks be to God.**

Announcements

Please keep the following people in your prayers during the coming week. Any names added this week are in bold.

Anita Chase; Arnie Kaupp; Barbara Hulme; Carol MacPhee; David Flynn; Don Bolt; Donna Eby; Ellen Nordquist; Evelyn Ferioli; Forrest Berardi; **the repose of the soul of Gregory Hayward;** Greta Couter; Jack Willett; James Elksnin; Jane Murphy; Jim Kelly; John Powderly; John Steele; Karen Guerra; Katharine LiBretto; Kathy Rust; Kenny Blackwell; Laurie Ghelfi Smith; Mark Poster; Nancy Dixon; Norm Harbinson; Peter Trenouth; Polly Chadwick; Raymond Reid; Sandy Underhill; Skip Nielsen; Stephanie "Petie" Blanchard; Suzanne and Dave Salois; Sylvia Wade; Theodora; Mark Ouellette; Valerie B. Pflock; William Underhill

We ask your prayers for those serving in the military and their families:
Aidan McKinney, Andrew Barton, Austin Vico, Harry Morini, Joel Carveiro, Josh Zabin, Peter Leone

From the Office

In order to have your announcements included in the weekly bulletin and *Keeping Connected,* please send them to the office by 12 Noon on Wednesday. They should include date, time, place, description of event and contact information and should be written exactly the way you want them to appear.

Evening Women's Group - On January 8th at 5pm the Evening Women's Group will celebrate Epiphany at Cynthia's Stafford St home. Please rsvp cynsykes46@gmail.com

Christ Church Thrift Shoppe - If you are one who finds themselves making New Year's resolutions, why not one about clearing out all those things you no longer have use for, and donate them to the Thrift Shoppe? Housewares, clothing that doesn't fit, novels you've read — they all are needed by the Thrift Shoppe in order to start 2026 off strong.

Thrift Shoppe Hours (re-opening January 8th)
Thursday and Friday 10-4
Saturday 10-1

Grief Retreat Day - Saturday, January 10, 2026 9 AM – 4 PM
Blessed are they who mourn,… (Matthew 5:4)

The holidays can be a very difficult time for those grieving the loss of a loved one whether that loss is recent or occurred a long time ago. Memories live on, grief persists. Christ Church is offering a grief retreat day, for men and women alike, where participants will have the opportunity to share their grief story, receive support, get information on ways to cope, and may, through prayer and meditation, find new strength and hope to continue on their healing journey. By acknowledging your sorrow, you will learn to recognize the grace that is guiding you through recovery and to a redefined identity.

9:00 AM – The day begins with Morning Prayer in the Sanctuary, Rev. Melissa presiding.
Sharing, meditation, and learning about grief – all sessions in the dining room and upstairs.
Noon – Noonday Prayer followed by lunch (provided).
Guided meditation and learning to pray during grief.
4:00 PM – Close of day.

The day is being facilitated by parishioners Margery Buckingham and Ann Fowler both of whom are experienced in the field. Any questions? Contact those below.

RSVP (as soon as possible or by December 31st) –
Margery Buckingham 617-710-0174 or morganbuckingham@msn.com
Ann Fowler 207-751-2004 or dafowler2@comcast.net
Louise Woodruff 508-380-2922 or Lwoodr1451@aol.com

Week At - A - Glance * December 28, 2025 –January 4, 2025

SUNDAY	7:00 AM	Overnights of Hospitality End
	8:00 AM	**Holy Eucharist Rite I – The First Sunday After Christmas**
	9:00 AM	Church School, Grades PreK-5
	9:00 AM	Adult Sunday School
	9:00 AM	Youth Formation
	10:00 AM	**Holy Eucharist Rite II – The First Sunday After Christmas**
	11:30 AM	Coffee Hour
MONDAY	**9:00 AM**	**Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live
	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Office Closed
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
TUESDAY	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Office Closed
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
WEDNESDAY	**9:00 AM**	**Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live
	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Office Closed
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
THURSDAY	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Office Closed
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
FRIDAY	**9:00 AM**	**Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live
	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Office Closed
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
SATURDAY	10:00 AM – 11:15 AM	Food Pantry
	11:00 AM	Memorial Service for Gregory Hayward
	5:00 PM	**Holy Eucharist Rite II – The Second Saturday after Christmas**
SUNDAY	**8:00 AM**	**Holy Eucharist Rite I – The Second Sunday After Christmas**
	9:00 AM	Church School, Grades PreK-5
	9:00 AM	Adult Sunday School
	9:00 AM	Youth Formation
	10:00 AM	**Holy Eucharist Rite II – The Second Sunday After Christmas**
	11:30 AM	Coffee Hour

Christ Church Parish
Seeking Christ in Ourselves * Serving Christ in the World

JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

MINISTERS

All the people of Christ Church Parish

Staff
The Rev. Melissa Howell, Rector
The Rev. Deacons James & Natalie Thomas
David Tyler, Parish Administrator
Lea Tyler, Choir Director
Peter Litchfield, Accompanist
Sam Stevenson, Sexton

Officers and Vestry Representatives
Robb Pflock, Senior Warden
John Steele, Junior Warden
Ray Rogers, Treasurer
Amanda Peterson, Clerk

Wil Bernard, David Greene, Don Hill, Barb Hurney, Kat LiBretto, Judy Lutz, Makenzie Manchester, Melissa Pechey, and Nancy Ricks

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Scan here to visit our website:
https://www.christchurchplymouth.org/

Office Hours
Monday - Friday 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM