

# SERVICE OF ADVENT
# LESSONS and CAROLS

Christ Church Parish
Sunday, December 14, 2025
10:00 AM

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.

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

**PRELUDE**

**OPENING HYMN**
***O Come, O Come Emmanuel*** **v. 1-4, #56 Hymnal 1982**
*All stand.*

**THE BIDDING PRAYER**

*Officiant:* Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas, let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. Let us hear, in lessons from Holy Scripture, how the prophets foretold that God would visit and redeem the waiting people. Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will bring all people and all things into the glory of God's eternal kingdom. The sick are healed, the dead are raised up, and the poor hear and see the Gospel.

First, let us pray for the world God so loves, for those who have not heard the good news of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in the shadow of death; and for the Church in this and every place, that it may be freed from all evil and fear, and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words that Christ himself taught us:

**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.**

May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting, now and at all times. **Amen.**

**THE FIRST LESSON** **Genesis 3:8-14**
*The people sit.*

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life."

**HYMN** ***Creator of the stars of night*** **#60 - Hymnal 1982**
*The people stand.*

**THE SECOND LESSON** **Isaiah 35: 1-10**
*The people sit.*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel

and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**HYMN** ***Lo, How a rose e'er blooming*** **#81 - Hymnal 1982**
*The people stand.*

**THE THIRD LESSON** **Micah 5: 2-4**
*The people sit.*

But 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.

**HYMN** ***Let all mortal flesh keep silence*** **#324 - Hymnal 1982**
*The people stand.*

**THE FOURTH LESSON** **Zephaniah 3: 14-18**
*The people sit.*

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

**HYMN**
***Lo! He comes, with clouds descending*** **# 57 - Hymnal 1982**
*The people stand.*

**THE FIFTH LESSON** **Luke 1: 26-56**
*The people sit.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her

who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

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." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

**HYMN** ***Tell Out My Soul*** **#438 Hymnal 1982**
*All stand.*

**ADVENT VESPERS RESPONSORY**

*Officiant* We wait for thy loving kindness, O Lord.
*People* **in the midst of thy temple.**
Fear not, nor be dismayed.
**Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord shall be with you.**
Stand ye still and you shall see the salvation of the Lord.
**Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord shall be with you.**
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
**Tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord shall be with you.**
*The Officiant prays:*
O God, who makes us glad with the yearly expectation of your coming, grant that we, who with joy receive your only-begotten Son as our Redeemer, may without fear behold him when he shall come to be our Judge, even your son our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM**
*The people sit.*

*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!*

*All undesignated gifts from today's special Advent offering will support the Christ Church rector's discretionary fund, which provides direct financial aid year-round to parishioners and greater Plymouth community members in need, and our holiday gift card ministry, which sends grocery store gift cards to Christ Church parishioners who may be in need of extra support this Christmas season. Please write or type "Advent offering 2025" in the memo line of your check or in the online donation form. Thank you for your generous support.*

**THE COLLECT FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
*All stand.*

*Officiant:* The Lord be with you.
**And also with you.**
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 for ever. **Amen.**

**THE ADVENT BLESSING**
May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of God's blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May Christ, whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN**
***O Come, O Come Emmanuel*** **v. 5-8, #56 Hymnal 1982**

**DISMISSAL**
*Deacon:* Go in peace to prepare the way of the Lord.
*People:* **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; 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.

**Christmas Flowers and Musicians -** If you wish to remember or honor a loved one or give in thanksgiving, you may do so by sponsoring the flowers and guest musicians for our Christmas services. The form is included at the end of the bulletin. In order to have your memorial listed in the Christmas bulletins, please return the form by Sunday, December 21.

**Special Advent Collection and Offering -** *"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." – Hebrews 6:19*

As an act of sharing God's gift of hope this Advent, at all three services on both the weekends of December 7th and December 14th, all non-designated plate offerings and online donations will be split between:

- The Rector's Discretionary Fund, which provides financial support to individuals and families in need in the wider Plymouth community. So far in 2025, the fund has provided over $8,500 in direct support to over 30 households and individuals.
- The purchase of grocery gift cards, which will be mailed to parishioners who may be in need of extra support this Christmas season.

When making your gift by paper check or online at our website, please write or type "Advent offering 2025" in the memo line. Thank you for all of the ways you generously and prayerfully support our neighbors.

**What Sweeter Music –** Start your Christmas early and join Lea Tyler and friends for What Sweeter Music: A Christmas Concert on December 21st at 5:00 PM at Christ Church. Admission is free.

**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.

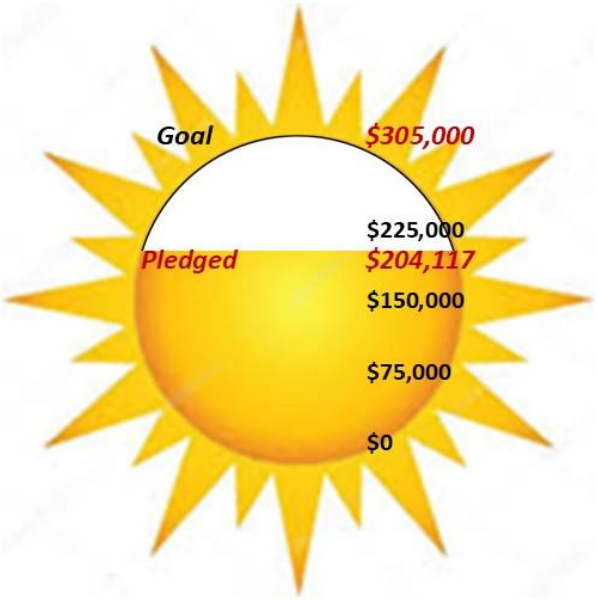
The day is being facilitated by parishioners Margery Buckingham and Ann Fowler both of whom are experienced in the field. Any questions? Contact those below.

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

# 2026 Stewardship Campaign

## Shining Our Light

## Support Christ Church and its Ministries



*In order to have your memorial included in the Christmas bulletins, please return this form to the parish office no later than*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025**

**Christmas Instrumentalists**



Given by**:** _____

In Loving Memory of**:** _____

_____

As a Thank Offering**:** _____

***Amount Enclosed:**_____ **Envelope Number:**_____

*****Please put **2025 Christmas Memorials** in Memo Line.

*In order to have your memorial included in the Christmas bulletins, please return this form to the parish office no later than*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025**

**Christmas Flowers**



Given by**:** _____

In Loving Memory of**:** _____

_____

As a Thank Offering**:** _____

***Amount Enclosed:**_____ **Envelope Number:**_____

***** Please put **2025 Christmas Memorials** in Memo Line

## Week At - A - Glance * December 14, 2025 – December 21, 2025

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **SUNDAY** | **8:00 AM** | **Holy Eucharist Rite I – The Third Sunday of Advent** |
| | 9:00 AM | Church School, Grades PreK-5 |
| | 9:00 AM | Adult Sunday School |
| | 9:00 AM | Youth Formation |
| | **10:00 AM** | **Advent Lessons & Carols (No Communion) – The Third Sunday of Advent** |
| | 11:30 AM | Coffee Hour |
| **MONDAY** | **9:00 AM** | **Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live |
| | 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM | Fore & Aft |
| **TUESDAY** | 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM | Fore & Aft |
| **WEDNESDAY** | **9:00 AM** | **Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live |
| | 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM | Fore & Aft |
| | 5:00 PM | Parish Ministry Network |
| **THURSDAY** | 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM | Thrift Shoppe |
| | 10:00 AM | Bible Study |
| | 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM | Fore & Aft |
| | 12:00 PM – 1:15 PM | Food Pantry |
| | 1:00 PM | Faith Based Book Study |
| | 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM | Food Pantry |
| **FRIDAY** | **9:00 AM** | **Morning Prayer –** Facebook Live |
| | 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM | Thrift Shoppe |
| | 5:30 PM | Youth Group |
| **SATURDAY** | 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM | Food Pantry |
| | 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM | Thrift Shoppe |
| | 10:00 AM | Brass Polishing |
| | **5:00 PM** | **Holy Eucharist Rite II – The Fourth Sunday of Advent – Music with The Hills** |
| **SUNDAY** | **8:00 AM** | **Holy Eucharist Rite I – The Fourth Sunday of Advent** |
| | 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 Fourth Sunday of Advent** |
| | 11:30 AM | Coffee Hour |
| | 5:00 PM | What Sweeter Music: A Christmas Concert |
| | 5:00 PM | Overnights of Hospitality Begin |

**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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E-mail: office.christchurchplymouth@gmail.com

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

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