

**CHRIST CHURCH PARISH
EPISCOPAL**

10:00 AM

The Second Sunday after Christmas

January 4, 2026



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

PRELUDE

ENTRANCE HYMN *Once in royal David's city* Voices Found 38

OPENING ACCLAMATION

The people standing, the Celebrant says

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

COLLECT FOR PURITY

The Celebrant may say

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

SONG OF PRAISE *O sisters, too* 1982 Hymnal 247

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

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 Lessons

FIRST READING:

Jeremiah 31:7-14

The people sit.

A Reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

Thus says the LORD: "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.' See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.' For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty," says the LORD.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Silence may follow.

Psalm 84

Remain seated.

¹How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! *

My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

²The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts,
my King and my God.

³Happy are they who dwell in your house! *
they will always be praising you.

⁴Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

⁵Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, *
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

⁶They will climb from height to height, *
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

⁷LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.

⁸Behold our defender, O God; *
and look upon the face of your Anointed.

⁹For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room, *
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹⁰For the LORD God is both sun and shield; *
he will give grace and glory;

¹¹No good thing will the LORD withhold *
from those who walk with integrity.

¹²O LORD of hosts, *
happy are they who put their trust in you!

SECOND READING:**Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a***The people sit.*

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

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Silence may follow.

SEQUENCE HYMN***Unto us a boy is born*****1982 Hymnal 98**

All stand.

GOSPEL:**Matthew 2:1-23**

All stand.

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

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

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler

who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead. Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

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

THE SERMON
Silence may follow.

The Rev. Melissa Howell

THE CREED

**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, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

All stand.

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS

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!*



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

DOXOLOGY

1982 Hymnal 380, v3

The Great Thanksgiving

The People remain standing.

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 God thanks and praise.**

Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy

1982 Hymnal S 125

Celebrant and People

The People stand or kneel.

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.

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, with [_____ and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; 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 for ever. **AMEN.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has 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

Christ our Passover

WLP 865

Al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass-o-ver is sac - ri-ficed for us;

there-fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.

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 in two lines down the center aisle, to either the main altar or the chapel altar rail. Please fill in all the spaces along the rail. Standing or kneeling, 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 across

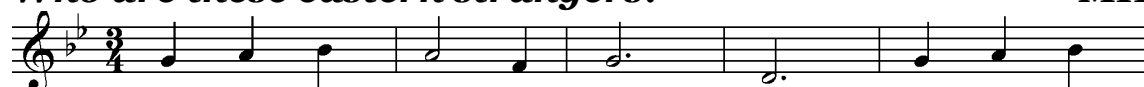
your chest as the cup bearers come to you. If you would prefer a blessing, come forward to the rail, cross your arms across your chest, and the minister will bless you.

At the main altar, once you have received, stand and exit through the side door closest to you (either left past the organ or right through the choir room) to walk around and back into the sanctuary, using the side aisles to return to your seat.

COMMUNION HYMN

Who are these eastern strangers?

MHSO 72



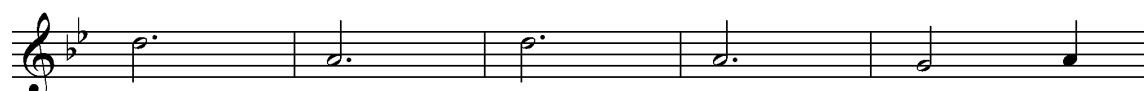
1 Who are these east - ern strang - ers? Why have they
2 Why do they stop in our yard? What can they
3 See how the ba - by's smil - ing— reach - ing to



come so far? _____ Why do they gaze in -
hope to see? _____ Why do they come with
hold the myrrh! _____ Why is his mo - ther



tent - ly eyes on a gold - en star? _____
pre - sents bend - ing so rev - 'rent - ly? _____
si - lent what can it mean to her? _____



Hush, now, hush now, let us
Look now, look now, they must
Come now, come now, strange the



quiet - ly fo - - - low; hush now,
be mis - tak - - - en! Look now,
things that hap - - - pen! Come now,



hush now, see which way they go. _____
look now, cost - ly gifts they bring! _____
come now, who can tell us why? _____

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

**Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of Christ,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Savior.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. 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.**

CLOSING HYMN

On this day earth shall ring

1982 Hymnal 92

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 - The Thrift Shoppe volunteers are looking forward to re-opening on Thursday, January 8th, and being able to wish all our shoppers a Happy New Year in person. Be sure to be on the lookout for special sales each week!

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 * January 4, 2025 –January 11, 2025

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
MONDAY	9:00 AM	Morning Prayer – Facebook Live
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
TUESDAY	10:00 AM	Companions Group
	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	Evening Women's Group
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
	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Fore & Aft
SATURDAY	9:00 AM	Grief Retreat Day
	10:00 AM – 11:15 AM	Food Pantry
	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Thrift Shoppe
	5:00 PM	Holy Eucharist Rite II – The First Saturday after the Epiphany
SUNDAY	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist Rite I – The First Sunday After the Epiphany
	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 the Epiphany
	11:30 AM	Coffee Hour
	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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Scan here to visit our website:

<https://www.christchurchplymouth.org/>



Office Hours

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