CHRIST *Episcopal* CHURCH
WARREN - OHIO

Sunday, December 14, 2025 (8 & 10 am)

Third Sunday of Advent

The Rt. Reverend Anne B. Jolly, Bishop of Ohio
The Reverend Dr. Robin Woodberry, Rector
James W. Shiell, Director of Music
Paul W. Keriotis, Director of Spiritual Formation

WELCOME TO CHRIST CHURCH! *We are happy to have you worship with us today! If you are a visitor or would like to know more about the life, work, and ministry of Christ Church, talk to a member of our staff, an usher, or a Vestry member following the service. You can also fill out a Connect Card located in the pews. Fill it out and hand it to an Usher.*

Prelude Savior of the Nations, Come (*Leipzig Chorales*) – Johann Sebastian Bach

Lighting of Advent Wreath **(see page 13)**

AT THE PROCESSION TO THE ALTAR

The People stand for the Processional Hymn and remain standing through the Collect of the Day

Processional Hymn No. 76 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry – *Winchester New*

Opening Acclamation (BCP p. 355)

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Celebrant Blessed are you, holy and living One.
People You come to your people and set them free.

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: WLP 899 Glory to God in the highest – Carl Haywood

(Refrain)
Glory hallelujah, Lord we praise your Holy name,
Glory hallelujah, Lord we praise your Holy name.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heav'nly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, *(Refrain)*
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. *(Refrain)*

Collect of the Day

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

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

THE WORD OF GOD

Please be seated.

The First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

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.

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

Psalm 146:4-9 [read @ 08:00 AM, *sung by the choir @ 10:00 AM*]

Lauda, anima mea

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.
The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
The LORD loves the righteous;
the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way of the wicked.
The LORD shall reign for ever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Hallelujah!

The Second Reading: James 5:7-10

A Reading from James

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

Sequence Hymn No. 54 Savior of the nations, come – *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*

The Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

> 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
> who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

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

Sermon Kathi Kovacic

THE CREED (BCP p. 358)
All stand as able

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. ***Amen.***

The Prayers of the People for Advent

All remain standing.

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. Isaiah 9:2

You who dwell in darkness and light, in silence and sound, dwell in the hearts of your people. In hope, peace, and joy may we await with anticipation the coming of Christ the Morning Star. Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who framed the brightness of the first light in creation, dispel the arrogance, animosity, and anger that shatter the unity of your holy Church. Fill your faithful people with the radiant light of truth. Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who delivered your people from the misery of bondage in slavery to the land of promise, set us free from enslavement to division, disunity, and distrust in our public life and labor. Illumine those in authority with the light of vision. Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who patterned the stars and called the sun into being, who appointed the moon and chartered the cosmos, pattern the hearts of people everywhere to see in each other the beauty of the universe and the splendor of creation, that divisions of Race, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity may be recreated into one common humanity. Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who shower comfort and hope to the lowest, the lost, and the least, shower the light of compassion on the sick, the sorrowful, and the suffering especially….. Help us to be your compassion and hope in the world. Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who welcome into the brilliant light of eternity those who have died, welcome those whose lives have been cut short by violence, warfare, strife or illness, especially….. Shine the light of hope.
Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

You who delight in the complexity and splendor of creation, help us to delight in the diversity of this earth, our island home. Inspire your people to care for all you have made.
Christ, be our light. ***Shine in our hearts.***

We offer you, O Lord, our prayers for thanksgiving, especially for Mary Ellen Rogers and John Carl Vath II as they celebrate their birthdays this week. Are there others?
Lord, in your mercy. ***Hear our prayer.***

Celebrant: Lord God, may we, your people who look forward to the birthday of Christ, experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and Thanksgiving. We ask this through Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

CONFESSION OF SIN (BCP p. 359)
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. ***Amen.***

The Priest stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. ***Amen.***

The Peace

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Offertory Sentence: Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Offertory Anthem: Coventry Carol – arr. Lloyd Larson

Offertory Response: No. 66 (v. 1 & 4 only) Come, thou long expected Jesus - *Stuttgart*

Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A (BCP p.361)

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.**

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

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

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 S-129 – Holy, holy, holy *setting:* Robert Powell

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Holy and gracious God: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and maker of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, Almighty God, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. ***AMEN.***

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

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.***

Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem no. S155 Christ our Passover *setting*: Gerald Near

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on Him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Celebrant: Please join us in praying with our siblings in Christ who are with us online and receiving communion spiritually.

Dearest Lord Jesus, we believe that you are truly present in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We love you above all things and long for you in our souls. Since we are not altogether in our church today to receive the bread and wine made holy, we ask you to come spiritually into our hearts. Fill us with your light and nourish us all with your word and Spirit. *Amen.*

Distribution

All are welcome and invited to the altar rail for communion. If you need communion brought to your pew, please inform an usher. You may eat the bread and take a sip from the common cup, or you can dip the bread into the common cup. If you would like to receive a blessing instead, please cross your arms on your chest. ***Please note:*** *real wine is used, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.*

Communion Hymn Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming – Michael Praetorius

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Blessing

The Celebrant blesses the people, saying

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. ***Amen.***

Recessional Hymn No. 640 Watchmen, tell us of the night - *Aberystwyth*

Dismissal

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude Savior of the Nations, Come (*Orgelbuchlein*) – Bach

Assisting with Worship Today:

Mike Maggiano 8am & Laurie Jones 10am – Lector
Joe Gladd 8am & Karen Andrus 10am – Lector/Chalice
Faith Scarmuzzi – Prayers/Chalice
Jim Crofford & Sam Heakin – Ushers
Beth Landers 8am; Amy Prezioso, Sam Davis & Kevin Knowlton 10am - Altar Guild
Terry & Gris Hurlbert, Nancy Forrester- Greeters
Steve & Becky Watts – Coffee Hour

The Parish Choir

Deb Murphy, Aaron Woodberry – AV/Video

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Growing Deeper Study & Healing Service: Please come join Mother Robin and others for this great opportunity to explore God's word and share in the Eucharist on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in the Church Chapel. Hope to see you!!

Cookie Bakers: Calling all world-class cookie bakers of Christ Episcopal Church. Lessons and Carols will be on Dec 21 at 6:00 PM. Please bring the cookies either to the office (Monday-Friday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM) or on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday mornings; cookies can be left in the kitchen.

Thank you, thank you, thank you: Joe Gladd asked that a BIG THANK YOU go out to all from the church who helped or donated for the Red Door Café on the 7th. Thank you for the participation and for the mountain of hats and gloves that were donated. There was plenty to eat and take home. God bless all of you.

Akron Derby Barbershop Chorus: TODAY, December 14 at 2 pm. Get into the holiday spirit with the Derbytown Chorus as they present their annual Christmas show, packed with beloved favorites in dazzling Barbershop style. A joyful, fun-filled afternoon—sure to delight audiences of all ages!

Book Club Meeting: The next meeting will be on Saturday, January 3rd at 11:00 a.m. This was going to be in the Library but will now be in Rooms 8 & 10. We will discuss the book, "The Rosie Project" by Graeme Simsion. Notice, we are taking a break for the holidays. Don't stop reading!!

Join Us at St. James on Sunday, January 4th

Dear Christ Church Family,

As many of you know, St. James Episcopal Church in Boardman will be closing in February 2026. It is a very painful and difficult time for them and our Diocese.

We have been invited to worship with our siblings at St. James on Sunday, January 4th. After the service, we will share in a special coffee hour as we begin an open and heartfelt conversation about who we are as Christ Church.

The service begins at 10:00 a.m., the same time as ours. While you are welcome to worship with them, you are also invited to come to St. James after our service ends to join in the conversation.

Your presence will mean so much in showing our unity, hospitality, and care as members of the Body of Christ.

Let us go in support, compassion, and hope as we strengthen our bonds with one another.

We look forward to seeing you there.

In Christ's love,

Mother Robin+

2025 Christmas Memorials: Please use the form below to indicate how you would like your contribution to be used and **return it by Dec. 14**

I (we) wish to contribute to:

☐ Christmas Altar Flowers

In memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving for _____

Given by: _____

Please return to the office or place in the offering plate.

Advent Wreath Lighting

Material Adapted from the Rev. Matthew Kozlowski

Third Sunday of Advent

Leaders

8:00 a.m. – Mike Maggiano, Diane Snelson
10:00 a.m. – Crofford Family (Jim, Tess, Jimmy)

Leader: Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and the third candle is JOY.

Lighting of 3rd Candle

Leader: You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. *(Isaiah 55:12)*

Congregational Prayer

Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh, and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. ***Amen.***

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (H 56) Verse 3

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times didst give the law, in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Advent

ANTICIPATION AND HOPE

Preparation for Jesus' Birth

The word **ADVENT** comes from the Latin for "arrival" or "coming". Jesus came into the world in human form in a lowly stable in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago.

ADVENT takes place during the four weeks preceding Jesus' birth. It is a time of preparation, hope, and waiting for the miracle of Christmas. This year it begins on Sunday, November 30th, then continues on Sundays December 7th, 14th until December 21st.

Christians celebrate Christmas on December 25th. A spirit of expectation, anticipation, and preparation marks Advent. We eagerly await the coming of Christ, preparing ourselves through Bible reading, prayer, and inward reflection to draw near to His presence.

Whether we're at church or at home, let's set aside time each day to remember the true heart of Christmas — Jesus!

Upcoming Holiday Schedule

Sunday, **TODAY**, the Akron Derby Barbershop Chorus, 2:00p

Sunday, December 21st, the Festival of Lessons and Carols, 6:00p

Wednesday, December 24th, Festive Christmas Eve Service & Pageant, 4:00p
Quiet Service (Chapel), 7:00p

Sunday, December 28th, Quiet Holiday Service (Chapel), 9:00a

NOTE: ONLY ONE SERVICE THIS DAY!

Holiday Office Hours

December 22nd: Open

December 23-26th: Closed

December 29th: Closed

December 30th: Open

December 31st: Open until 12 noon

January 1-2nd: Closed

December Birthdays

1st-Daniel Mason
2nd- Roger Carnahan
2nd- Carole Lewis
5th-Deborah Gold
8th-Jim Crofford
8th-Reese Tomko
12th-Jamie Shiell
14th-Mary Ellen Rogers
21st-Carl John Vath II
22nd-Paul Homa
22nd-Paul Homa
25th-Deb Murphy
27th- Alexis Fisher

Save the Date: Annual Parish Meeting

Please mark your calendar for our **Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 25th**, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service. We'll share a light meal together as we review the past year, look ahead to the future, and conduct essential parish business.

Your presence matters — we need a quorum in order to hold elections and vote on parish matters.

We look forward to gathering as a parish family for this important time of reflection and planning.

Thank You, Red Door Café Volunteers

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jan and Wynn Henery, Pam Brown, and Joe Gladd for their many years of dedicated service at the Red Door Café. Their dedication to feeding our neighbors has been a living witness of Christ's love in action. As they now step into a well-deserved retirement, we celebrate their compassion, their hard work, and the countless lives they have touched. Please join us in praying God's blessings upon them in this next chapter, and in giving thanks for the legacy of hospitality they leave with us.

We also welcome Liz Clark as the new coordinator and all the new faces who have joined this place of service.

Coffee & Conversations – Coming in 2026!

Beginning in January, we will host monthly Coffee & Conversations gatherings during Coffee Hour following both the 8a & 10a services. These informal sessions will give us a chance to explore topics that matter to our life together as a parish—faith, ministry, community concerns, and more.

If you have a specific topic, you'd like us to consider, please fill out the suggestion slip and place it in the offering basket, or contact the church office at 330-372-4998.

Come, share, learn, and grow with us in 2026!

Coffee & Conversations — Topic Suggestion Form (2026)

Your Name (optional): _____

Preferred Contact (optional): _____ ■ Phone ■ Email

Topic You Would Like to Explore:

_____

_____

_____

Why is this topic important to you or to our parish?

_____

_____

_____

Additional comments or suggestions:

_____

_____

Please place this form in the offering basket or return it to the church office.
You may also call the office at 330-372-4998.