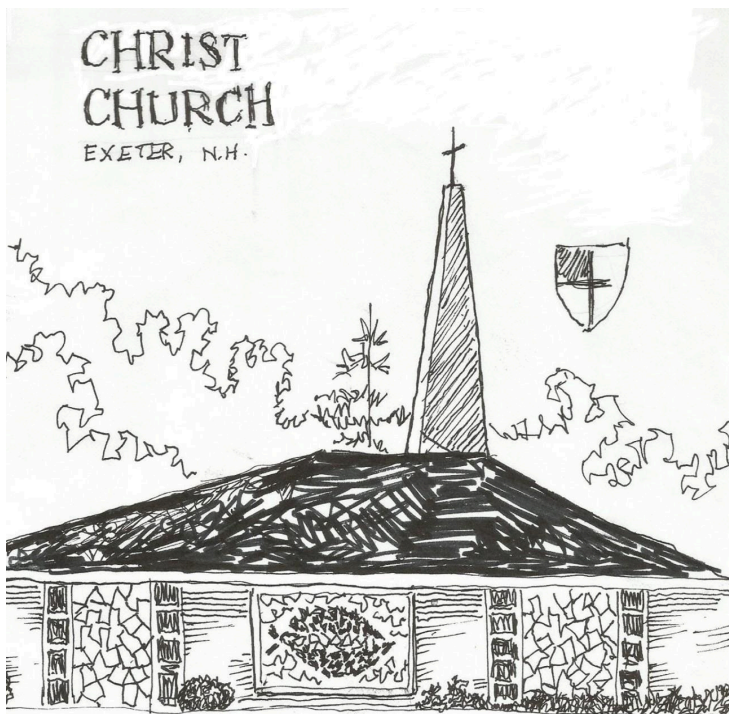


CHRIST CHURCH of Exeter



Live
joyfully in faith

Connect
with God and one another

Serve
the local and global community

Third Sunday of Advent
December 15, 2024
8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

Reflections on Today's Readings

In our readings and in the Collect for today, the major themes of biblical, prophetic religion come together, deepening the preparation of God's faithful people for the approaching Christmas festival. We pray that God will "stir up his power and come among us" and we are given the paradoxical message of fearful judgment and joyful anticipation.

This message is given first in Zephaniah's announcement of "the Day of the Lord" when God will come to draw all people into a saving and life-giving community. "The Lord, your God, is in your midst." "Sing aloud... Rejoice... Exult."

For Paul and the church in Philippi, the Lord has indeed come in Jesus' death and resurrection. "Rejoice," Paul says, and be

partakers in the peace of God, which is our true guardian and protector.

But first, we hear the harsh words from John the Baptist, warning that we must be prepared for that coming if it is indeed to be a time of rejoicing. Repentance is the key to that preparation. However, repentance must be more than a feeling, and it must be deeper than outward rituals such as water baptism, or tracing one's descent from Abraham. That repentance must bear fruit in social righteousness—in self-giving and concrete actions of love and mercy toward others.

The Lord is in the midst of us, and so we sing out joyful Alleluias as he comes to us in his Word, and again as he comes to us in the breaking of the bread.

From *The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year*. Copyright © 2009 by Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing Incorporated, New York.

Welcome to Christ Church: If you are visiting for the first time, please fill out the welcome cards in the pews and hand it to a member of the clergy after the service. Books and resources for children are located on the table near the side left door. Although there are customary postures (such as standing and kneeling) in Episcopal worship, you are invited to be seated at any point, according to your needs and comfort. Children's Chapel is offered today during the 10 AM service. Children ages 5-12 are welcome to attend with or without their families or caregivers. Children under the age of 4 are also welcome to attend with caregivers for supervision. There is no Sunday School today.

The Holy Eucharist

[10:00 a.m. service]

Prelude

Three Settings of "How Shall I Welcome Thee"

Ernst Pepping

Welcome

☩ *All stand, as they are able, as the the clergy enter or the bell tolls.*

[10:00 a.m. service]

Processional Hymn 616, vv. 1-3

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Es flog en kleins Waldvögelein

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

Presider and People: **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.**

[10:00 service] **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

Leader: Today we light the third candle of the Advent wreath. There is a tradition that each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and third is JOY. We have spent these past weeks and months reflecting on how JOY can shape how we gather as a worshipping community and how we steward the blessings and resources we have been given to create a more Christ-like world.

The candles are lit.

We hear from the prophet Isaiah: "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."

We pray that the God who came to us and abides with us will fill us with joy and help us shine as a light to the world.

May we have grace to find and experience joy in our lives.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Collect of the Day

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider 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 people sit.*

The First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Reader A Reading from the Book of Zephaniah

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. I will deal with all your

oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 9: The First Song of Isaiah

(read responsively by verse)

Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.

**For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, *
and he will be my Savior.**

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.

**And on that day you shall say, *
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;**

Make his deeds known among the peoples; *
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

**Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

The Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

Reader A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say,
Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to
everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about
anything, but in everything by prayer and

supplication with thanksgiving let your
requests be made known to God. And the peace
of God, which surpasses all understanding, will

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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

[10:00 a.m. service]

Sequence Hymn 72, vv. 1, 3

Hark! The glad sound!

Richmond

The Gospel

Luke 3:7-18

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

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

✠ *The people sit.*

Sermon

The Rev. Mark Pendleton

✠ *A brief period of silence follows the sermon.*

The Nicene Creed *(said together)*

**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.**

Prayers of the People

As we wait to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us make our requests known to God who saves the lost and gathers the outcast.

For the peace of the world, and for our unity in Christ.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For Sean our Presiding Bishop, Rob our Bishop and for all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For the church throughout the world and the faithful in every place.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For the leaders of the nations and all in authority.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For justice, peace, and freedom among peoples of the earth.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, and for those in prison.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For the dying and the dead.

We remember Bobbi Rountree, in whose memory the flowers are given.

Silence

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Hear our prayer.

For our deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need.

We offer prayers for Greg, Mary, Lela, Susan, Kass, Julie, Pat, Sharon, Cathy, Sue, Beatrice, Jewelle, Justin.

Please add names either silently or aloud for those for whom you are praying.

Silence

Joining our voices with the Blessed Virgin Mary, blessed John the Baptist, and all the saints and angels of God, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

Silence

Presider: Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

**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.**

Absolution

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

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

✠ *The people greet one another in the name of the Lord. The Peace may be expressed by shaking hands, bowing, "fist or elbow bumps", namaste greeting, putting hand over heart, waving, making the peace sign, and by offering a smile.*

Announcements

The Holy Communion

[8:00 a.m. service at the Presentation of the Gifts]

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord.

People **And of thine own have we given thee. Amen.**

[10:00 a.m. service]

Offertory Anthem

Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth
Christ Church Choir

David Willcocks, arr.

✠ *The people stand for the hymn as they are able.*

[10:00 a.m. service]

Offertory Hymn 600

O day of God, draw nigh

Bellwoods

The Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic Prayer B Pg. 367

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider 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, Father Almighty, 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:

[8:00 a.m.] *Presider and People*

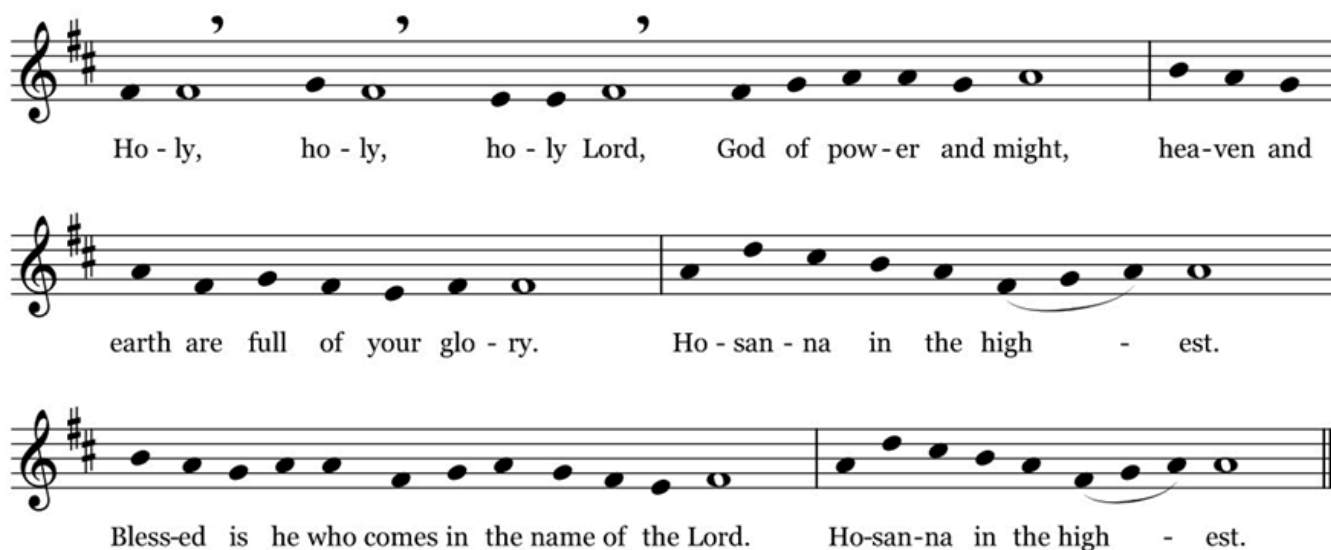
**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

[10:00 a.m. service] **Sanctus S-124**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: David Hurd, "New Plainsong." © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net A700244

The Presider 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;

Presider and People

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Presider 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 all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; 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 Presider then continues

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

People and Presider

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.

The Breaking of the Bread

✠ *A period of silence is kept.*

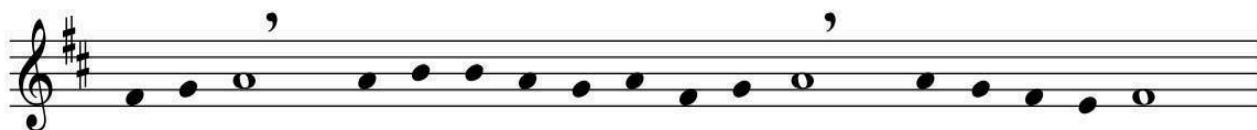
[8:00 a.m. service]

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

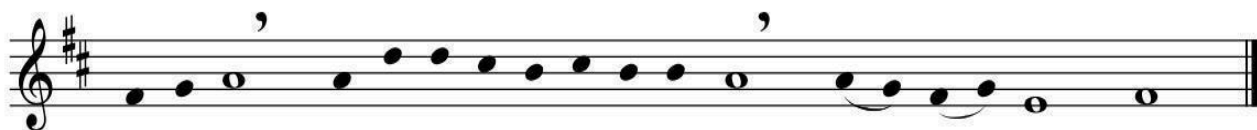
[10:00 a.m. service] **Fraction Anthem S-161**



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: have mer - cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: have mer - cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

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Invitation to Communion

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 those Participating Online

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer to you praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, Lord Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. Since we cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we beseech you to come spiritually into our heart. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Instructions Concerning Communion and Healing

You are invited to receive Holy Communion. Following the usher's instructions, we begin with those seated in the side sections, starting with the front pews. Please go to the back of the church and proceed down the center aisle to the communion rail. Return to your seat using the outside aisles of those sections. Those seated in the center sections, please come forward beginning with the back pews using the center aisle and return using the diagonal aisles.

Communion may be received kneeling or standing at the altar rails. The bread is received in the open palm. (Gluten-free wafers are available). You may drink from the cup, or place your hand on the base as a sign of devotion. Intinction, dipping the wafer into the wine, is also acceptable. Those who do not wish to receive Communion are invited to come forward for a blessing, indicated by crossing your arms over your chest.

Communion can also be brought to you in the pews. Please communicate this request to an usher or the clergy. The Healing team is available to offer healing prayers at the side of the church. Please tell your healing minister if you have a specific prayer need and if you would like a laying on of hands, just prayers or both.

[10:00 a.m. service]

Communion Hymn 640

75

Watchman, tell us of the night
There's a voice in the wilderness crying

Aberystwyth

Ascension

Post-Communion Prayer

✠ *The people kneel or stand as they are able.*

Presider and People

**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.**

The Blessing

Be people of joy.
Let joy live in your heart and share the joy of Christ with all you meet.
Share joy by seeing the good in each other.
Share joy by praying for our world.
As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet.
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.**

[10:00 a.m. service]

Recessional Hymn WLP 782

Gracious Spirit, give your servants

Abbot's Leigh

The Dismissal

Priest Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

[10:00 a.m. service]

Postlude

Toccata: Aberystwyth

David Bednall

*The worship is over * The service begins*

Participating in Today's Liturgy:

Presider and Preacher: The Rev. Mark Pendleton

Presider at 8:00 a.m.: The Rev. Nicole Benevenia

Lector at 8:00 a.m.: Fran Hall

Lector at 10:00 a.m.: Charles Johnson

Intercessor at 10:00 a.m.: Danielle Larson-Clark

Eucharistic Minister at 8:00 a.m.:

Eucharistic Minister at 10:00 a.m.: Carol Allard

Welcome Team/Usher: Wendy MacArthur, Scott Anders

Live Streaming Tech: Joe DiPalermo

Altar Guild: Shannon Tosatti, Patti Buck

Flower Delivery: Carol Allard

Hospitality: Liz Bauman

Altar Flowers: Given to the glory of God, in humble gratitude for His many blessings to Botti Rountree throughout her lifetime by Mike Rountree.

Together for Joy Pledge Cards have been mailed to our households. More are available in the narthex lobby. If you have not received one, please call the church office at 603 772-3332 or you can make a secure pledge online. Please prayerfully consider your giving for 2025. As of this past week, we have received **116 pledges** for **\$329,804**. In 2024 we received **139** pledges for **\$365,020**.

Today we continue rehearsals for the **Christmas Pageant** following the 10 a.m. service. The third rehearsal will be December 22nd following the 10 a.m. service. Please be in touch with Rev. Nicole with any questions: nbenevenia@christchurchexeter.org

Save the Date: Greening of the church on **Sunday December 22 at 12:30 p.m.** We are looking for helping hands to put up aisle candles and wreaths.

CHRISTMAS DINNER BASKETS ARE DUE ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:15-8:45 a.m.

Last Day for MEMORIAL WREATHS AND POINSETTIAS: As in the past, we will place memorial flowers, poinsettias, and wreaths in the church for Christmas. Anyone wishing to provide a poinsettia (or a financial contribution toward a plant or flowers) in memory of a loved one(s) is asked to contact Darla in the church office to give her the names you would like included at office@christchurchexeter.org or call 772-3332 by Monday, December 16.

A free **CPR class** will be offered at Christ Church for anyone interested in learning Basic Life Support. The date will probably be on a Saturday morning, depending on everyone's availability. As of now, January 11, 18 and 26 are available. If you are interested, send an email with your preference for dates to Darla in the church office (office@christchurchexeter.org) or Wendy Gladstone (WAGladstone@comcast.net).

CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. – Pageant

7:30 p.m. - Music begins

8:00 p.m. – Traditional Christmas Eve Service*

Christmas Day

10:00 am – Christmas Day Holy Communion & Carols

Sunday, December 29

No 8:00 a.m.

Join us for

One service at 10:00 a.m. – Lessons and Carols – Holy Eucharist*

*service will be livestreamed

The office will be closed December 25-Jan 1.

To make a donation, you are welcome to use this QR code from your smartphone.



**This week at Christ Church
December 15-21**

Sunday	Pageant Rehearsal 11:30 a.m. Nominating Committee meets 11:30 a.m. PSP Rehearsal 1:00 p.m.
Tuesday	Bible study 11:00 a.m. PSP Rehearsal 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	Oasis Group 9:00 a.m. PSP Rehearsal 4:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.

CHRIST CHURCH

43 Pine St., Exeter, NH 03833

Phone: (603) 772-3332 E-mail: office@christchurchexeter.org

Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Thur 9 a.m. - 12 Noon, Weds 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. OFFICE CLOSED FRIDAYS

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Ext. 12 [cell phone 860 490-8544]

mpendleton@christchurchexeter.org

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Christina DeMaio

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VESTRY FOR 2024

Senior Warden

Patricia Gianotti

Junior Warden

Judy Blaisdell

Treasurer

Richard Ingram

Clerk

John Cofer

Scott Anders

John Hodsdon

Susan Dixon

Blake Carrico

Jennifer Murray

John Woodard

Juliette Gavin

Morgan McCay

Alice Bentley