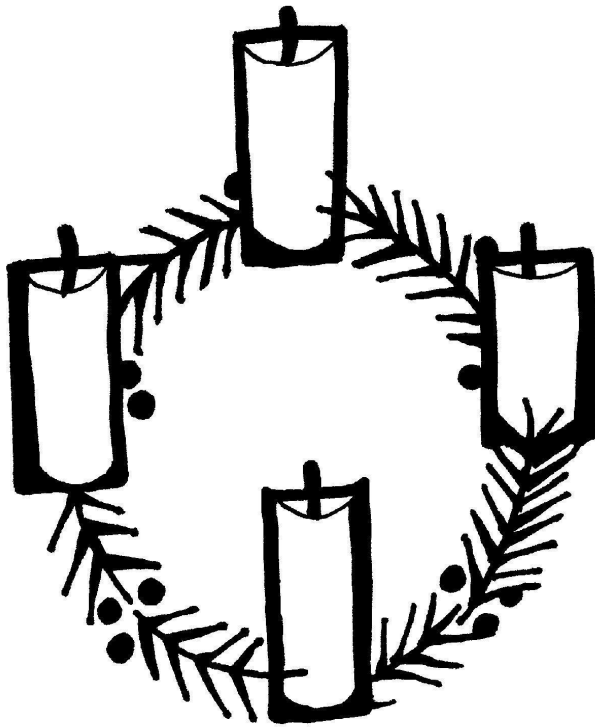


CHRIST CHURCH of Exeter



Live
joyfully in faith

Connect
with God and one another

Serve
the local and global community

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025
8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

Welcome to Christ Church: If you are visiting for the first time, please fill out a welcome card 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 and childcare are offered during the 10:00 a.m. service today.

The Holy Eucharist

[10:00 a.m. service]

Prelude

Arietta in F

Johann Pachelbel

Welcome

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

[10:00 a.m. service]

Processional Hymn 475

God Himself is With Us

Tysk

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 fourth candle of the Advent wreath. There is a tradition that each candle has a meaning: hope, peace, joy, and today the fourth candle is LOVE.

The four candles are lit.

From the First Letter of John we hear: "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."

God IS love. We pray that we continue the work of spreading this love that binds together the Kingdom of God.

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.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

✠ *The people sit.*

The First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

Reader A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the

young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 (*read responsively by verse*)

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, ***
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 **O Lord God of hosts, ***
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 **You have made us the derision of our neighbors, ***
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

**16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.**

17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

**18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

The Second Reading

Romans 1:1-7

Reader A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead,

Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

[10:00 a.m. service]

Sequence Hymn 261 vv. 1 & 3 By the Creator, Joseph Was Appointed

Caelitum Joseph

The Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Gospeler The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

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

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She

will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus."

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

In our prayers this morning let us appeal to the Lord praying, "Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance, Lord hear our prayer."

We ask you, O God, to bless your Church. Give us your grace. Stir up your strength and come to help us.

Silence

Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance,
Lord hear our prayer.

We ask you, O God, to bless this nation. May our leaders trust not in their own strength but in you, O God of hosts. Teach us to refuse the evil and choose the good. We pray for the President, the Governor and members of Congress and the Courts.

Silence

Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance,
Lord hear our prayer.

We ask you, O God, to bless this good earth. By your creative power bring forth new life in the places in which we have reaped too much or sown too little.

Silence

Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance,
Lord hear our prayer.

We ask you, O God, to bless the town of Exeter and the Seacoast region. Let your hand be upon us. Guide and strengthen all those who find themselves in difficult situations this time of year.

Silence

Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance,
Lord hear our prayer.

We ask you, O God, to bless all those who are distressed. Hear their prayers, O Shepherd of the flock. May they take comfort in the knowledge that you are with them.

This morning we offer prayers for Jeff, Kathy, Cara, Rick, Sue.

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

Silence

We ask you, O God, to bless all who have died. Welcome into your heavenly kingdom all who are called to be saints.

Silence

We remember Jean d'arc Vigeant in whose memory the flowers are given.

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 Soon and Very Soon Andraé Crouch/arr. J. Schrader

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

[10:00 a.m. service]
Offertory Hymn 436 Lift Up Your Heads *Truro*

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 him 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-128**

Ho - ly, ho - ly,

ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,

heaven 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.

Setting: William Matthias (b. 1934)

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.

The Breaking of the Bread

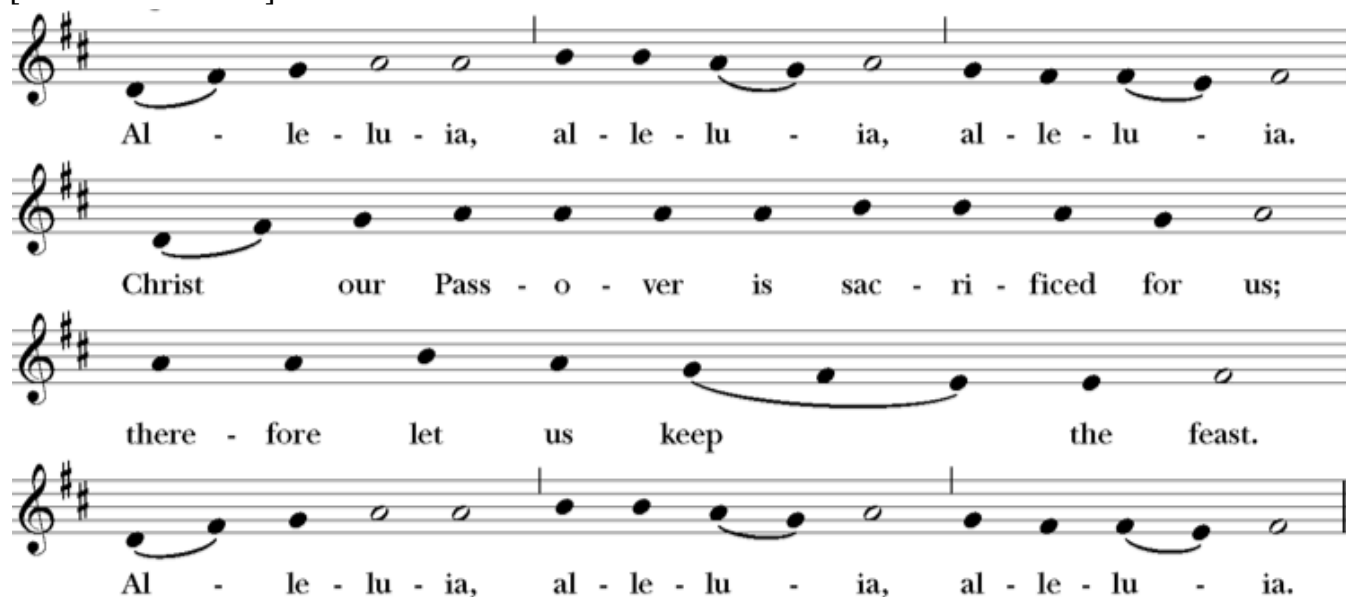
✠ *A period of silence is kept.*

[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-154**



Music: David Hurd, "New Plainsong"

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 60

Creator of the Stars of Night

Conditor alme siderum

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

[10:00 a.m. service]

Recessional Hymn 59

Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

Merton

The Dismissal

Priest Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Praeludium in C Major BuxWV 137

Dieterich Buxtehude

*The worship is over * The service begins*

Participating in Today's Liturgy:

Preacher/Presider: The Rev. Mark Pendleton

Children's Chapel: The Rev. Nicole Benevenia and Katie Mize

Organist: Adam Peithmann

Lector at 8:00 a.m.: Becky Moore

Intercessor at 8:00 a.m.:

Lector at 10:00 a.m.: Cindy Eaton

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

Eucharistic Minister at 8:00 a.m.: Lee Woodworth

Eucharistic Ministers at 10:00 a.m.: Jeannette McDonald, Robin Yergeau

Welcome Team/Usher: Donna McCay

Live Streaming Tech: Nick Castillo

Altar Guild: Cindy Eaton, Danielle Larson-Clark, Patti Buck

Flower Delivery: Patti Buck

Hospitality: Jen Murray, Kim Billings

Altar Flowers: Given by Jackie Vigeant in memory of Jean d'arc Vigeant

Heating update: Parts for the replacement second boiler are on order and we do not have an installation date as of date. We apologize for the colder than normal temps in our worship and meeting spaces. Dress warmly and may the Lord provide!

Christmas Pageant Rehearsals continue today following the 10 a.m. service.

Greening of the Church Today at 12:30 p.m.: We are looking for helping hands to put up aisle candles and wreaths. All are welcome.

There will be **no Bible study** on December 23 and December 30.

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



**This week at Christ Church
December 21-27**

Sunday	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 11:15 a.m. PSP Rehearsal 1:00 p.m.
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CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. – Pageant and Holy Communion

7:30 p.m. – Christmas Musical Prelude

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

Christmas Day

10:00 am – Christmas Day Holy Communion & Carols

Sunday, December 28

No 8:00 a.m. Today

Join us at 10:00 a.m. – Lessons and Carols & Holy Eucharist*

**service will be livestreamed*

The office will be closed December 25-Jan 1

CHRIST CHURCH

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

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VESTRY FOR 2025

Senior Warden

Patricia Gianotti

Junior Warden

Judy Blaisdell

Treasurer

Richard Ingram

Clerk

John Cofer

Scott Anders

Susan Dixon

Elizabeth Bauman

Blake Carrico

John Woodard

Cindy Eaton

Juliette Gavin

Alice Bentley

Athens Pullias, Jr.