

Christ Episcopal Church

CELTIC BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

December 17, 2017

Celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 5 p.m.



**Disciples making Disciples for Jesus Christ:
By Encountering God, Equipping God's People,
and Extending God's Kingdom**

WELCOME GUESTS!

Christ Episcopal Church is a Christ-centered, joy-filled community that is blessed by your presence. Be assured that no matter who you are or where you are in your journey of faith, you are welcome here.

Please observe a period of silence to center yourself before worship.

PRELUDE "Hallelujah" Leonard Cohen arr. By Phillip Keveren
Zach Kim, *piano*
"Coventry Carol" Trad. English Melody arr. by Jay Rouse
Larry Arnold, *piano*

CALL TO WORSHIP *begun by the ringing of the Tibetan Singing bowl, standing*

Celebrant Prepare the way of the Lord,
People **Who comes to light up our darkness.**
Celebrant Open our eyes to your presence, open our ears to your call;
People **Open our hearts to your mercies; tonight be our all in all.**

The candles on the altar are lit.

Celebrant The light of Christ has come into the world.
People **The light of Christ has come into the world.**

Celebrant O God, our God, we shrink before the great mystery of your presence and power. You are the source and redeemer of life; we are the mortal ones who work so very hard to trust in you and the eternity you provide. Only you fully know and understand the places that we find ourselves: between faith and doubt, light and darkness, hope and despair, love and fatigue of spirit, joy and harsh reality, peace and unrest. Only you can deliver us from what seems too real unto the truth of your consolation. We seek not to be comfortable, for that would be selfish and contrary to your call to joyful obedience as servant-disciples. We do seek, to be comforted, for we know that You are our Comforter. So help us in this night, to see beyond the darkness unto your glorious light, to move in heart and mind beyond our grief unto your ever-present care; and in it all to find in this season of celebration your permission to be and to feel as is fully human. For we long to know Christmas despite our pain and sadness, even though it might be celebrated by us in a minor key; in the One who was born to set us free and give us the gift of life. **Amen.**

PSALM 66:1-4, said by all, in unison

remain standing

Hear my cry, O God,
and listen to my prayer.
I call upon you from the ends of the earth
with heaviness in my heart;
set me upon the rock that is higher than I.
For you have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.
I will dwell in your house for ever;
I will take refuge under the cover of your wings.

Celebrant We offer to you, Lord, the troubles of this day, this month, this year;
we lay down our burdens at your feet.
Forgive us our sins, give us your peace,
and help us receive your Word.

PREPARATION HYMN 115

“What Child Is This”

sung by all, standing

Unison



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,



Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for
peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -



an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain



This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds
guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to
bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Please be seated.

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Luke 2:1-14

Reader In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION OF THE DAY

Reflection: The Rev. Tom E. Mathews, Jr.

PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

standing, as you are able

The Intercessor and People pray responsively

Leader In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all that we need:

Leader For ourselves as we participate in Advent and Christmas as people coping with our many different losses. God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer us.**

Leader For our families and friends, that they may continue to help and support us.
God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer us.**

Leader For any person we have loved who has died and for all the losses we know in our lives, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise. God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer us.**

Leader For our family and friends, that you may bless them with love, peace, and joy.
God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For peace throughout the world as proclaimed by the Christmas Angels on that faraway hillside. God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For greater understanding of the lessons of love and acceptance as taught by Jesus your Christ. God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Celebrant God of great compassion and love, listen to the prayers of these your people.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

begun by the ringing of the Tibetan Singing bowl

The lighting of the First candle

Celebrant We light this candle to remember all those we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us during this season of holy waiting.

People **May God's eternal love surround them.**

The lighting of the Second candle

Celebrant We light this second candle to redeem our wounds. We remember before us the pain and loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, and the loss of health. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, Holy One. We pray that into our broken hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

People **Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us in your future.**

The lighting of the Third candle

Celebrant We light this third candle to remember ourselves in this holy time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and for some of us, years of down times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

People **Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.**

The lighting of the Fourth candle

Celebrant This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

People **Let us remember the one who shows the way and goes with us into tomorrow.**

ended by the ringing of the Tibetan Singing bowl

The central Christ Candle is lit by the Celebrant during the singing of the Taize chant below

RESPONSE "The Lord Is My Light" *sung multiple times by all, standing*

Theme A

The Lord is my light, my light and sal - va - tion: in
God I trust, in God I trust. The

THE PEACE

Celebrant The Peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION

MUSIC MEDITATION “O Come All Ye Faithful” John Francis Wade arr. by Jennifer Eklund
 Mia Kim, *piano*

Collection plates are not passed through the congregation at this service. For your offerings, collection plates are located at each entrance of the church. We appreciate your generosity in supporting the mission and ministries of Christ Episcopal Church. The parish is supported primarily by its parishioners and friends.

OFFERTORY HYMN, WLP 831 “Ubi Caritas” sung multiple times by all, standing

Descant

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of a descant section followed by two main sections, A and B. Each section has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal lines.

Section A:
 U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,
 Ai - a nō e loa'a ke a - lo - ha

Section B:
 u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.
 Ai - a nō e loa'a ke A - kua nō.

Translation: Where true charity and love abide, God is there.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, standing from All Saints' Church, Pasadena, CA

Celebrant God dwells in you.

People **And also in you.**

Celebrant Come to the table with thankful hearts.

People **We open our hearts to God and to one another.**

Creative God, source of all life, you are the vibrant energy dancing at the center of the universe!
 Through us you move, and through us you are made known to the world. Co-creators with you,
 we are emboldened to move beyond ourselves, to find the courage to let go of old ways and
 welcome new life.

And so, in concert with those of every generation who have been touched by your redeeming
 love, we lift our praise to you:

Leader (piano) Ho - ly, Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
 pow'r_ and might, heav - en 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. —

Celebrant Holy God, known and beyond all knowing, in your image you created us, giving the earth into our care. In our arrogance, we lost touch with the breath of God within us, with the divinity of the creation, growing blind to its beauty and deaf to its harmonies. But through Christ, born of Mary, your deep abiding love reclaimed us and realigned us with you.

On that evening in an upper room, with friends around him, Jesus blessed the bread, broke it, and shared it with all who gathered: This bread is my body, an offering of God's love for all. When you eat it, remember me. Taking the cup of wine, he blessed it and shared it with all who gathered: This wine is my blood, God's promise of new life for all. When you drink it, remember me.

God, in the memory of Jesus who healed people and washed his disciples' feet, who loved children and honored outcasts, who fed people and turned water into wine, who died and rose to new and unending life, we ask that you send your Holy Spirit upon this bread and wine, making them the Body and Blood of Christ.

People and Celebrant

Breathe through us, God,
that our bodies, minds, souls, and spirits
may be filled with your life-giving presence.
Make us again a holy people,
strongly bound to you,
firmly rooted in the earth,
with eyes to see all life as sacred.
Empower us to spread the light of Christ
in our wondrous and confusing world. AMEN.

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

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

Celebrant We are one bread, one body.

People We will love one another as Christ loves us.

Celebrant The Gifts of God for you, the People of God.

AT COMMUNION

All who desire to receive the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ are welcome. Receive the Bread (wafer) in the palm of your outstretched hands. (Gluten-free wafers are available; tell the Celebrant if you prefer one.) The Blood of Christ is available in Wine or non-alcoholic Grape Juice (in the crystal chalice). You can drink from the chalice as it is extended to you, or touch the wafer lightly to the Wine or Juice. If you do not wish to receive Communion, please come forward to receive God's blessing. You may indicate your desire for a blessing by crossing your arms over the chest.

COMMUNION MUSIC "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" arr. by Kristin Campbell
Marlene Whittemore, *flute*; Larry Arnold, *piano*

CLOSING PRAYER *all standing* By Ted Loder, Guerillas of Grace

O God of all seasons and senses, grant us the sense of your timing to submit gracefully and rejoice quietly in the turn of the seasons. In this season of short days and long nights, of grey and white and cold, teach us the lessons of endings; children growing, friends leaving, loved ones dying, grieving over, grudges over, -11- blaming over, excuses over. O God, grant us a sense of your timing. In this season of short days and long nights, of grey and white and cold, teach us the lessons of beginnings; that such waitings and endings may be the starting place, a planting of seeds which bring to birth what is ready to be born— something right and just and different, a new song, a deeper relationship, a fuller love— in the fullness of your time. O God, grant us the sense of your timing.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May the God of Grace heal you, body and soul. May your pain cease. May your strength increase. May your fears and worries be released. And may blessings, love, and joy surround you—now and always. Amen.

POSTLUDE

“Still, Still, Still”
Larry Arnold, *piano*

Traditional Austin Melody arr. by Jay Rouse

You are welcome to remain in church.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT THE ADVENT CELTIC WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, AT 5 P.M. (3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH).**

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Celebrant: The Reverend Thomas E. Mathews Jr.

Flute: Marlene Whittemore

Piano: Lawrell Arnold, Zach Kim, Mia Kim

COME WELCOME THE CHRIST CHILD AT CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS EVE, *Sunday, Dec. 24*

4:00 p.m. Children’s Pageant & Family Mass

10:00 p.m. Candlelight Eucharist with Carol Singing

CHRISTMAS DAY, *Monday, Dec. 25*

10:00 a.m. The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS, *Sunday, Dec. 31*

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols with Communion

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH *Franklin Avenue and Cottage Place, Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450*