



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA

200 Duhring Street, Bluefield, WV 24701

(304) 327-6861

www.christchurchbluefield.org



December 5, 2021

This bulletin contains our liturgy today.

Given the circumstances during this pandemic era our worship is somewhat different. We respectfully ask that you wear and keep a face mask on during this service. UV Light Air Sanitizers are present to help ensure a pathogen free worship space. We hope that you will feel safe in this place and leave edified by our celebration today.

The Vestry of Christ Church encourages everyone, out of love and respect to all, to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Our Parish Nurse can answer any questions you may have about the vaccine. Our ushers can direct you to a Vestry Member or the Parish Nurse for more information.

If you are new or visiting this congregation for the first time, we invite you to fill out a Visitor's Card and place it in the collection plate located in the back of the church. We are honored you have chosen to worship with us today and hope that you will continue your faith journey here.

Prelude

Our Service Begins

The Opening Sentences

Please stand for the procession

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect for Purity

Celebrant

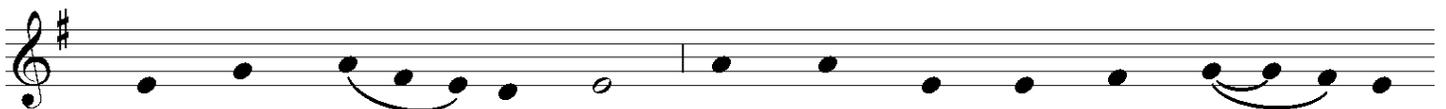
Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Hymn of Praise

O come, O come, Emmanuel



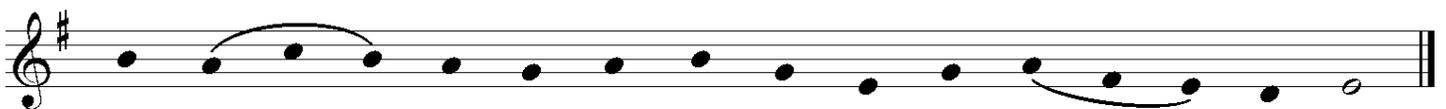
(Dec. 18) 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
(Dec. 19) 4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from



3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
4 Sa - tan's ty - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to



3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe. Re - joice! Re - joice!
4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

The stanzas may be used as antiphons with "The Song of Mary" on the dates given.

The Collect of the Day

Our collective prayer for the day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

We Hear and Respond to God's Word

The First Lesson

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God!

Canticle 16

The Song of Zechariah

Benedictus Dominus Deus

Luke 1:68-79

We will recite the Canticle in unison.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior,

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,

that he would save us from our enemies,

from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham,
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Said by all Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Second Lesson

1 Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God!

The Gospel Lesson

Luke 3:1-6

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.



The Sermon

the Very Rev. Chad Slater

The Nicene Creed

All stand as they are 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.

**meaning the church universal, that all Christians are one people regardless of denomination*

The Prayers of the People

The intercessor greets the congregation with the following words and leads us in prayer.

As we joyfully await the glorious coming of Christ, we pray to you for the needs of the church and the world.

Heavenly Father, prepare your Church for the coming of your Son. From valleys of despair and cold-heartedness, raise it to heights of praise and compassion. Level mountains of false teaching and self-importance; and lead it along level pathways of faithfulness and humility, so that many may journey to your Kingdom.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Prepare us for the coming of our Savior. Help us to exalt the humble; to bring low the mountains of self-will in our lives; and to make level pathways for leading others to Jesus. Look with favor upon our work and ministries which we offer for the greater glory of your Kingdom. Bless the work of Justin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Mike, our Bishop, Matthew, our Bishop-elect, and Chad, our priest.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Be merciful to our persecuted brothers and sisters who proclaim the name of Jesus even amidst their enemies. Make their witness to shine as a light in the world's darkest places and pierce the hearts of their tormentors with the truth of the Gospel.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Prepare the hearts of all your children, especially John Lee Allen, Niko Parks, and Nelson Kersey who celebrate birthdays this week, to hear the cry of the one in the wilderness and serve you all their days.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Prepare the world for the coming of its King. Grant wisdom to our leaders, especially Joe, our President, Jim and Ralph, our Governors, and Ron and Donnie, our Mayors. Raise all people from the depths of poverty and despair. Level, O Lord, the mountains of injustice and arrogance throughout the world. We pray that nation would no longer rise against nation; and we beseech you to guide all people in the pathways of your righteousness and peace.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

We lift before you those on our Prayer List and those we now name before you, either silently or aloud... Raise them up from sickness and sorrow; lay low the mountains of pain; and by your Son's gentle hand, lead them and their loved ones along level pathways into health and hope.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Holy God, we thank you for keeping in your tender care all who have died trusting in your promises, especially Marsha Mead, Betsy Davis, the loved ones of the Richardson Family, and of the Meachum Family. Prepare our hearts for the near approach of our Savior, who raises us up from death's dark valley.

Come Lord Jesus....*hear our prayer*

Hear our humble prayer that we may serve you in holiness and faith and give voice to your presence among us until the day of the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Confession and Absolution

The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept. Minister and People

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 Bishop, when present, or 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.

At this time we will greet those around us in the name of the Lord. Please refrain from physical touch during this time so as to ensure proper social distancing for all members of the congregation. Thank you.



The Holy Eucharist, sometimes call *The Mass*

Offertory *O Come Emmanuel* played on viola da gamba and a bass recorder (17th century)

After the Offertory piece has been played the People stand and sing to the familiar tune of the "Old 100th"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Prayer of Preparation at the Altar

As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside are now united on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your kingdom. *Amen.*

Eucharistic Prayer "B"

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

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 him thanks and praise.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every-where 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:

Celebrant and People

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.

The people stand or kneel. Then 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 St. Mary, St. Margret, and 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.

The Celebrant and People together sing



A - men.



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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Fraction

The Celebrant then breaks the Consecrated Bread and says

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Celebrant then presents the Sacrament to the People

These are 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.

The Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Should you prefer not to receive the physical elements of the Holy Communion you are invited to read the following in silent prayer as the physical sacrament is being distributed.

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

The Distribution of the Holy Sacrament

All baptized Christians, of any tradition, are welcome to receive the sacrament. Everyone, regardless of faith, is welcome to receive a blessing— simply cross your arms in front of you approach the priest. Each row, beginning in the front, should come up to the chancel step to receive the Blessed Bread. The Chalice cannot be offered at this time by direction of the Bishop of West Virginia. Once the priest has dropped the Blessed Bread in your hand you should return by the side aisle to your pew. Once a row has been Communed, the next is free to come to the chancel steps.

Gluten free wafers are available to those who request them.

Our Prayer after Communion

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 your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing

The Celebrant then pronounces the following blessing over the people

May Almighty God,
by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility,
sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin.
May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await,
make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love.
May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer,
at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life.
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you for ever.

People Amen!

The Dismissal

We are dismissed from this gathering to go into the world to spread the Good News and the love of Christ! We respond to this instruction with:

Thanks be to God!

Postlude



The following are given today for the greater Glory of God:

Altar Flowers – by Art Mead in memory of Marsha Mead

Chrismon Tree –by Peter & Patty Richardson in memory of loved ones.

Advent Wreath – by Marc & Patricia Meachum in memory of loved ones

Door Wreathes – by Bill Davis in memory of Betsy Davis



Participants in Today's Liturgy

Celebrant

the Very Rev. Chad Slater

Organist & Choirmaster

Terry E. Whittington, Jr.

Musicians

Tim & Maggie Mainland

Acolyte

Emma Slater

Lector

Katherine Lewis

Altar Guild

Betty Nash and Linda Ammar

Attendance Last Sunday:

28

Birthdays This Week:

John Lee Allen, Niko Parks, and Nelson Kersey

Please Keep the Following in Your Prayers: Dorene Dimes, Bonnie Taylor, Joe Sanders, Bea Paine, Bob and Peggy Walk, John Kersey, Martha Linkous, Jay Kephart, Buck and Louisa Sowers, Donna Fortune, Ed and Gladys Fortune, Sarah Irwin, Janet Slager, Dean Farmer, Haddon Lazenby, Jack Burchette, Nick, JL, Randy Snider, Margarette Joplin, David, Martin, Harry, Ben Rose, Jack, Sheri, Dan, Kensley, John, Betty, Matt, Eric, Carol, Dave, Gail, Jean, Lane, Loraine, Sherry, all Healthcare Personnel and Frontline Workers, Ivy and the Gaines Family, John, the Rev. Brian Shoda, the Patterson Family, Velma Harmon, Taylor Frazier, III, Brian, and Owen Kersey.

Calendar of Events

Sunday –December 5

Children's Evening Prayer (St. Nicholas) 5:00 pm

Wednesday – December 8

DOK meeting 10:00 am

Thursday – December 16

Food Pantry 9 – 11:00 am

Friday – December 24

Christmas Eve 5 & 11:00 pm

Sunday – December 26

1st Sunday After Christmas Virtual Service

Sunday – January 9

Canterbury Club at L. Thomas Home 6:00pm

Sunday – January 16

Fr. Chad's Farewell Service 10:00 am

Announcements:

Worship Assistant Scheduling: If you are interested in serving as an acolyte or other worship assistant, please let Fr. Chad know. He is working on a schedule for services after his departure and help is needed. Thank you!

We've Come This Far by Faith Pledge Drive: Pledge Cards have been mailed out to all households of the parish. If for some reason you did not receive your Pledge Card, please let the Parish Office know as soon as possible. Pledge Cards may be returned to the church either by mail or in the Sunday offering plate. Thank you!

Christmas Poinsettias: If you would like to order a poinsettia for Christmas to decorate our Church in either honor or memory of someone, a sign-up sheet will be available in the Narthex Poinsettias are \$15. Requests for Poinsettias should be in the church office by Monday, December 12th.

Food Pantry Collection: Our Food Pantry has a tradition of giving hats, gloves, scarves, blankets, socks, and other items to help make winter a little warmer for our friends. Blankets have been given out at our November Pantry, and warm clothing will be given out at the December Pantry. Collection boxes are in the Narthex for donations. These items can be homemade, purchased, or gently used.

ECW Christmas Cookies: The ECW will again be preparing cookie platters for our shut-in members. ECW members are asked to make a recipe of 3 to 4 dozen cookies to be distributed to our members who are shut-in or living in a care facility. If you would like to help with this outreach, please contact Patty Richardson at 304-952-8502 by text or by leaving a message. Cookies will need to be at the church on December 15. Volunteers will also be necessary to help with the delivery of the cookies. This is an important outreach for our ECW, and we hope you will take time to help us.



A message from the Vestry

We are very sorry to see Father Chad, Jennifer, Ben and Emma leave for Charleston. While we say goodbye over the next few weeks, we need to work to fill the void they will leave behind. We are in discussions with a prospective supply priest for the beginning of the year. We will need parish members to fill the acolyte and videographer roles that will be left open when the Slaters leave. We will need to assemble a search committee to seek a new permanent rector. We have three Vestry terms which expire in January and will need to be filled at the annual meeting.

All of us will need to remain active in the church and intentional with our church life. It is very important for you to complete and return your annual pledge card. As we vet prospective rectors, they will be vetting us and it is important that we fully fund the "Rector Expenses" line items in our annual budget to demonstrate our wherewithal to pay a full time priest. If you need a pledge card, one may be obtained from the church office.

Please send an email to Emma Bennett in the Parish Office to let her know which of the roles noted above that you can take on. If we all pitch in and work together, we will find that the future for our church will be bright.



Clergy, Staff, and Wardens of this Parish

the Very Rev. Chad Slater

Mr. Terry E. Whittington, Jr.

Ms. Emma Bennett

Mrs. Vanessa Hall

Mr. David Kersey

Mr. Peter Richardson

Rector

Organist & Choirmaster

Parish Administrator

Sexton

Senior Warden

Junior Warden