



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

321 East Church Street • Martinsville, Virginia • 276-632-2896 • www.christchurchmvl.org
We are a community of faith striving to love God fully and our neighbors as ourselves.

The First Sunday of Advent
November 30, 2025
10:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

*Please silence your electronic devices.
Music and lyrics of hymns may be found in the blue Hymnal 1982.*

The Opening Voluntary	<i>Savior of the Nations, Come</i>	J. S. Bach
Processional Hymn	<i>"Savior of the nations, come!"</i>	Hymn 54

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

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

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

Celebrant Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Kyrie eleison *Sung, standing*

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Psalm 122 *Laetatus sum*

- 1 I was glad when they /said to me, *
"Let us go to the /house of the Lord."
- 2 Now our feet are /standing *
within your gates, /O Jerusalem.
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a /city *
that is at u/nity with itself;
- 4 To which the tribes go up,
the tribes of /the Lord, *
the assembly of Israel,
to praise the /Name of the Lord.
- 5 For there are the thrones of /judgment, *
the thrones of the /house of David.
- 6 Pray for the peace of Je/rusalem: *
"May they pros/per who love you.
- 7 Peace be within /your walls *
and quietness with/in your towers.
- 8 For my brethren and com/panions' sake, *
I pray for your /prosperity.
- 9 Because of the house of the Lord /our God, *
I will seek /to do you good."

You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

2

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew (24:36-44)

People: *Glory be to thee, O Lord.*

Jesus said to the disciples, "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord

People *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*

The Sermon

"A nightmare before Christmas"

The Rev. John Adams

Ideas to ponder:

- Do you have recurring nightmares, and are they plausible?
- How might we prepare for Christ's second coming?

The Nicene Creed

Standing

BCP 327

I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all
worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of
the Virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under
Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,

and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the
Father;
and he shall come again, with glory, to
judge both the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord,
and Giver of Life,
who proceedeth from the Father and
the Son;
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshiped
and glorified;
who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Catholic and
Apostolic Church;
I acknowledge one Baptism for the
remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the
dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Reader Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of Donald, our President, and all those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor *Sue, Julia, Jennifer, Mallory, Hope, Doug, Leon, Randy, Betsy E., Ruby, Joe, John, Ginger C., Jay A., David, Eliza*, and all those who in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Confession of Sin

Kneeling or standing

BCP 330

Celebrant Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

Almighty God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
maker of all things, judge of all men:
We acknowledge and bewail our
manifold sins
and wickedness,
which we from time to time most
grievously have committed,
by thought, word, and deed, against thy
divine Majesty,
provoking most justly thy wrath and
indignation against us.
We do earnestly repent,
and are heartily sorry for these our

misdoings;
the remembrance of them is grievous
unto us,
the burden of them is intolerable.
Have mercy upon us,
have mercy upon us, most merciful
Father;
for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
forgive us all that is past;
and grant that we may ever hereafter
serve and please thee in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of thy Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Celebrant

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace *Standing*

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

The Peace may be exchanged through handshakes, hugs, fist bumps, waves, nods, or other such expressions; please be attentive to how much or little physical contact your neighbors would prefer. Once the Peace has been sufficiently exchanged, the people may sit for announcements.

Offertory Anthem *O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion* G. F. Handel

The Doxology: “Hymn 380 v. 3” Old 100th

All: 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.

The Holy Communion, Eucharistic Prayer II *Standing* *Sung* BCP 340

Celebrant The Lord be with you. Hymnal S 112

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People **It is meet and right so to do.**

Celebrant

It is very meet, right... evermore praising thee and saying, BCP 341

Sanctus *Sung*

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The people kneel or stand.

All glory be to thee... through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

The Great Amen *Hymnal S 118*

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath 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.

Agnus Dei Sung

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

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.

Breaking of Bread

All baptized Christians are invited to receive at the altar rail, kneeling or standing. Gluten-free wafers are available by request. If you do not wish to receive communion, you may come forward and place your arms across your chest to receive a blessing. After receiving the bread, you may choose to consume the bread and take a sip of wine from the chalice or hold onto the bread and intinct (dip) it into the wine, in which case please hold the wafer in front of you so the chalice will know to bring you the intinction cup. You may also decline to receive the wine (as the bread in itself is full communion), in which case if you remain at the altar rail please place your arms across your chest to signal the chalice. Those who cannot or prefer not to come forward may inform an usher, and the Celebrant will come to you.

Communion Chant *Let the skies pour down righteousness* Isaiah 45, Psalm 19

Communion Hymn *"Redeemer of the nations"* Hymn 55

Once all have received, the celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and people *Kneeling or standing* BCP 339

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

The celebrant blesses the people.

Celebrant Let us bless the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

The Closing Voluntary *“Savior of the Nations, Come”* Andreas Nikolas Vetter

*The beauty of the Altar Flowers are
 Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
 Kathleen Hylton
 By Her Great Nephew, Dustin Hylton and Family*

*The beauty of the Narthex Flowers are
 Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
 Paul B. Toms, May Hooker Toms,
 and Nathan Toms
 By the Family*

*The Advent wreath is Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
 Mr. and Mrs. Rives S. Brown, Jr., Lucy Brown Coleman,
 Betty Meade Cullinane and Richard A. Walmsley
 By Mr. and Mrs. James Coleman, Jr.*

*The Advent wreaths on the front doors are
 Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
 Virginia S. & William R. Windle and Margaret W. & Thomas C. Webster, MD,
 by Tom, Stuart, Win, Jessica, Evans, and Clay Webster*

*The Nativity Scene is given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
 R. B. McCutcheon, Finley S. McCutcheon, and R. B. “Cutch” McCutcheon, Jr.
 By the Family*

Pray today for the people of St. Paul’s, Lynchburg, their associate rector, the Rev. Nina Salmon, and their rector, the Rev. Todd Vie. For Grace and Peace in the Diocese of Haiti. Our companion diocese, the Diocese of Leeds, and their Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Toby Howarth.

Upcoming Deadlines – details listed below.

- Angel Tree CHECKS, made payable to the Boys and Girls Club, are due in the Church office by or before Monday, December 8
- Angel Tree GIFTS turned into the Church office or put under the tree in the Narthex by or before Monday, December 15
- Christmas poinsettia orders in the office by or before Monday, December 15
- ALL stock pledge payments for 2025 or 2026 are due by or before Monday, December 15
- If you have children or grandchildren who would like to sing during the Christmas service, please let Will Zimmer know (wilzim61@yahoo.com) by or before Thursday, December 18
- Reading a part for Lessons & Carols, names to John by or before Thursday, December 18
- 2025 pledge payments or donations turned in by or before Monday, December 29
- 2026 pledge cards, turned in as soon as possible for budgeting purposes.

Monday Bible Study

Our Monday evening study meets in the Parish House from 7:00 to 8:00. On **December 1**, we will continue reading the Book of Ecclesiastes with chapter 7 and following, as Qohelet offers a miscellany of proverbs. All are welcome and encouraged to join at any time; no reading ahead of time is necessary.

Kings Grant Eucharist

Fr. John celebrates Eucharist in the chapel at Kings Grant at 1:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month. The next services will be **December 4** and January 8 (changed to avoid New Years Day).

Christmas Poinsettia Memorials

If you wish to give Christmas flowers for the decoration of the Church as a memorial or in thanksgiving, please complete the **red form in the Narthex** and mail it to the church office, put it through the Church office mail slot or place it in the collection plate along with your check.

Checks should be made payable to Christ Episcopal Church, clearly noted "Christmas Flowers," and the cost is **\$15.00 for EACH person or couple honored or memorialized.**

ALL orders are due in the Church office no later than Monday, December 15th.

Angel Tree – the tree is up now and loaded with angels

Thank you to everyone who removed an angel card from the tree this past Sunday. Approximately 35 of the 80 angels on the tree are now in the hands of generous sponsors. Hopefully most if not all of the remaining angels will find sponsors this Sunday.

Christ Church is partnering with the Boys & Girls Club to provide Christmas gifts for local children in need. If you wish to participate, please take one (or more) angel cards from the tree in the Narthex and record that you have done so using the form on the table next to the tree. **ALL GIFTS, with the angel card attached, are due to either the Church office OR the Narthex no later than Monday, December 15.** Instructions were emailed to you, but feel free to pick up a copy when you sign out an angel card from the tree. The Church office is not accepting money for this ministry. **Make all checks payable to The Boys and Girls Club with a notation "For the Angel Tree Ministry".** *Thank you in advance for your support of this partnership ministry between CEC and BGC.*

Forward Day by Day

Advent is a wonderful time to start or renew a habit of daily scripture reading. And Forward Day by Day makes it easy, with daily scripture listings and reflections, prayer and action. Pick one up and open it to November 30...and your new Advent habit begins! They are in the Narthex racks.

End of the Year - 2025 or 2026 Pledge Payments or Donations

Please have all pledge payments or donations into the Church office **no later than Monday, December 29th**. All stock transfers for 2025 or 2026 need to be made by **Monday, December 15th**. **NOTE:** Charles Schwab is our broker. Contact the Church office for trading information. Please email the office with all information for stock transfers at office@christchurchmvl.org.

Nursery Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed in the Nursery on December 14, Christmas Eve (5:00 pm), and December 28. Please contact the Church office if you are available to volunteer.

Christmas

Our Christmas service will be at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, December 24. During the service, Will Zimmer will lead an anthem during the offertory, and he invites any children who will be present to join him. If you have children or grandchildren who would like to sing, please let him know (wilzim61@yahoo.com) by **December 18**.

Christmas Lessons & Carols – December 28

Our 10:30 service on Sunday, **December 28**, will be the Festival of Christmas Lessons & Carols. This is an opportunity to hear the fullness of the Christmas story from Holy Scripture and to sing more Christmas carols than we can on Christmas Eve. If you expect to attend and are willing to read a lesson (even and especially if you are not part of the regular reading rotation), please contact Fr. John (johndavidadams85@gmail.com or 571-232-1294) by **December 18**.

2025 Vestry

At our Annual Meeting on November 16, we elected Kelly Cain, Jay Dickens, Linda O'Dell, and Ron Probst to three-year terms on the Vestry expiring at the end of 2028. They join continuing members Bob Bushnell, Rives Coleman, LaRue Powers, and Bob Weatherall (2026) and Susan Critz, Butch Hamlet, Michael Hodges, and Steve Keyser (2027). Many thanks to Natalie Coleman, Pat Russell, Will Zimmer, and the late Betty Budde, whose terms expire at the end of this year, for their three years of dedicated service on the Vestry.

2026 Pledges

Pledges of financial support for 2026. To this point, we have received 39 pledges totaling \$174,030 for 2026, compared to 54 totaling \$234,410 for 2025. If you've not yet done so, we ask that you take some time to pray about your giving to Christ Church next year and submit your pledge as soon as possible. Pledge cards are available in the Narthex or from the office.

Grace Network - Our Grace Network Assignments for **November through December: Oatmeal canister or instant packets. For November: bath soap, toilet paper, toothpaste, toothbrush (toothbrushes need to be individually wrapped), and other hygiene items.** As a Church family, we have committed to helping Grace Network with stocking their food pantry for those in need. Please remember to pick up our assigned item the next time you visit the grocery store. You can bring your items to the Church office OR put them in the little red wagon in the Narthex.

St. Nicholas Appeal

A Message from the Standing Committee: The St. Nicholas Appeal will be directed toward Boys Home of Virginia's growing extracurricular club program. The student-driven clubs give the young men the opportunity to extend learning beyond the classroom and explore their personal interests in a structured, supportive environment. Each club was started by the students themselves, reflecting their creativity, initiative, and desire to build community. They range from skateboard and bike clubs, which teach balance and perseverance, to the Lego and robotics clubs, where creativity meets problem-solving, each activity helps students develop confidence and leadership. The archaeology club connects them to history through hands-on discovery, while the drama club encourages self-expression, teamwork, and confidence on stage. The weightlifting, equine, and outdoor clubs provide healthy outlets for physical activity, teamwork, and personal growth. E-sports offers an opportunity for strategic thinking, digital collaboration, and friendly competition, while the cooking club teaches valuable life skills and the joy of

preparing and sharing food together. Please consider faithfully how you might support this effort, either by donating online at www.dioswva.org or by mailing a check payable to the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia with “St. Nicholas Day Appeal” marked in the memo to PO Box 2279, Roanoke, VA 24009.

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVE!

Celebrant: The Rev. John Adams

Reader: Susan Critz

Chalists: Jay Dickens, John Swezey

Ushers: Gus Barber, Pete Scouras

Organist/Choirmaster: Lynn Gardner

Chorister/Cantor: Raul West

Christ Church Choir: St. Christopher’s Choir

Camera Operator: Andy Williams

Counters: Susan Critz

Nursery: Caroline Davis

Altar Guild Team #3 – Page Beeler, Karen Jones, Nancy Spilman,
Ellen Maxwell, Ben Beeler

2025 Christ Church Vestry

Year 3: Natalie Coleman; Secretary, Pat Russell. Will Zimmer

Year 2: Bob Bushnell, Rives Coleman; Senior Warden, LaRue Powers,
Bob Weatherall, Junior Warden

Year 1: Susan Critz, Butch Hamlet; Treasurer, Michael Hodges, Steve Keyser