



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 Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 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>A Virgin Pure</i>	Nicolas LeBegue
Processional Hymn	<i>"O come, O come, Emmanuel"</i>	v 1, 5, 6, 7 Hymn 56

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.

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (7:10-16)

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*

The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) *sung in unison, standing* **Hymnal S 185**
(omitting the Antiphon)

Reader A reading from Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome (1:1-7)

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*

Sequence Hymn *"Gabriel's Message does away"* **Hymn 270**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew (1:18-25)

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

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.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord
People *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*

Ideas to ponder:

- Have you ever encountered an Eeyore or Debbie Downer in real life?
- How do you overcome your own Ahaz-like inclinations?

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.

The Prayers of the People

Standing or kneeling

BCP 328

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, Margaret*, 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.

“Maria walks amid the thorn which seven years no leaf had born. Kyrie eleison.
What ‘neath her heart doth Mary bear? A little child doth doth Mary bear, beneath her
heart he nestles there. Kyrie eleison.
And as the two are passing near, Lo, roses on the thorn appear!
Kyrie eleison, Jesus and Maria.”

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 *The Lord shall give you a sign* **Isaiah 7, Psalm 19**

Communion Hymn *"The angel Gabriel from heaven came"* **Hymn 265**

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.

Recessional Hymn *"Sleepers wake!" A voice astounds us* **Hymn 61**

Celebrant Let us bless the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Closing Voluntary *Magnificat* Jean Francois D'Andrieu

*The beauty of the Altar Flowers are
Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
Skip Critz
By Susan Critz & Family*

*The beauty of the Narthex Flowers are
Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of
William Cutler (Buck) Cole III
By Betsy Cole and 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 Christ Church, Martinsville and their rector, the Rev. John Adams. 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.

- 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.
- Signup to attend the 12th Night at the Gardner Farm by January 2

Monday Bible Study

Our Monday evening study meets in the Parish House from 7:00 to 8:00. On December 22, we will finish reading the Book of Ecclesiastes with chapters 11 and 12, before taking December 29 off. All are welcome and encouraged to join at any time; no reading ahead of time is necessary.

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

Christmas

Our Christmas service, including the singing of Silent Night by candlelight, will be at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, December 24.

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.

Twelfth Night

At 5:30 pm on **Sunday, January 4**, Lynn and Phil Gardner invite us to their farm (4064 Barrows Mill Road) for a celebration of **Twelfth Night**. Following brief prayers for the burning of the Christmas greens and the blessing of the house for Epiphany, we will enjoy a time of fellowship. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share; the Gardners will provide chili and beverages (beer, wine, and soft drinks). You are welcome to bring your Christmas tree or any other greens you wish to burn. **If you are planning to come, please RSVP to the Office (276-632-2896, christchurchmvl@gmail.com, or sign up under ‘volunteers’) by Friday, January 2.**

2026 Pledges

Pledges of financial support for 2026. To this point, we have received 44 pledges totaling \$193,250 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.

Church History

Our next church history session will be **January 14 at 10:30 in the Undercroft**, when we’ll survey the unfortunate entanglements of church and state in the time of King Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, and the English Civil War.

Grace Network - Our Grace Network Assignments for December: Oatmeal canister or instant packets. **For December: dish detergent, deodorant, laundry detergent, 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: Will Zimmer

Chalists: Bob Bushnell, Rives Coleman

Ushers: John Swezey, Ben Lewis

Organist/Choirmaster: Lynn Gardner

Chorister/Cantor: Raul West

Christ Church Choir: St. Christopher’s Choir

Camera Operator: Andy Williams

Counters: Susan Critz, Pat Russell

Nursery: Caroline Davis

Altar Guild Team #4 – Becky Farrar, Susan Smith, Natalie Coleman,
Ashley Ullstein, Dawn Stone, Kyle Trent

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