

Christ Episcopal Church

Sparta, NC

*Christ Church is an active, joyful, transforming, faith community that practices radical welcome.
Together we feed our minds, souls, and bodies with study, worship, and hospitality.
We are a growing fellowship of people who seek to love like Jesus.*



Morning Prayer: Rite Two
The Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2020 – 10:30 AM

The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin
Bishop of Western North Carolina

Jann Boggs
Senior Warden

Welcome to Christ Episcopal Church

We are delighted God has brought you to this special place.

What do you need to know about worship? Everything you need for your worship today is in the booklet you are holding. Our service is based on the Book of Common Prayer, using music from sources including the Hymnal 1982 and Taizé.

Are you worshipping with us for the first time? We would love to get to know you! Please email our office at ccepisopal@skybest.com with your name and contact information, and let us know if we can call you, answer questions, or pray for you. And know that wherever you are on your journey of faith, there is a place for you at Christ Church.

Newsletter: Sign-up today to receive our electronic newsletter, the weekly *Good News & Notes*. Email the church office at ccepisopal@skybest.com.

We extend special thanks today to:

Jann Boggs, for leading us in worship this morning,

Betty Upchurch, for serving as musician and for being so generous with her talents, and

The Altar Guild, for providing the arrangement at the altar.

Social media: Please join us for online worship by visiting our Facebook page or our YouTube page at Church Episcopal Church – Sparta, North Carolina.

And for more information about Christ Church, please visit our website – christchurchallegghany.com.

Christ Episcopal Church

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Office: 336.372.7983

Email: ccepisopal@skybest.com

Website: christchurchallegghany.org

Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

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The Gathering

Prelude

Betty Upchurch

Announcements

Processional Hymn #470

There's a wideness in God's mercy

1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 There is no place where earth's sor-rows are more felt than up in heaven;
3 For the love of God is broad-er than the mea-sure of the mind;

there's a kind-ness in his jus-tice, which is more than lib - er - ty.
there is no place where earth's fail-ings have such kind - ly judg-ment given.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.

There is wel-come for the sin - ner, and more gra - ces for the good;
There is plen - ti - ful re - demp-tion in the blood that has been shed;
If our love were but more faith - ful, we should take him at his word;

there is mer - cy with the Sa - vior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
there is joy for all the mem - bers in the sor - rows of the Head.
and our life would be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Please stand, as able.

Prayers at the Lighting of the Advent Candles

Second Sunday of Advent

Leader High on the mountains
Someone is shouting

People **Here comes God!**

Justice is marching
Peace is following
Here comes God!

Help is near
Shout for glory
Here comes God!

Through years and millennia
Through days and moments
We are traveling home.

Trusting in promises
Covered in mercy
We are traveling home.

Growing in holiness
Heading for glory
We are traveling home.

We travel in time;
May God walk with us into eternity.

We travel in hope;
May God sing with us through the darkness.

We travel in wonder;
May God dance with us in holy joy.

All So may the blessing of the God of glory, Traveler, Storyteller, Dancer, be in us today
and every day. AMEN.

We light two blue candles.

Opening Acclamation

Presider Watch, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening,
or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning lest he come suddenly and find you
asleep.

Presider Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom now and for ever. Amen.**

Please remain standing, as able.

Confession of Sin

Leader Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth his praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Silence.

Leader Most merciful God,
People **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.**

Leader Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

Leader Our King and Saviour now draws near.
People **Come let us adore him.**

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 for ever. Amen.**

Invitatory Psalm 100 *(read in unison)*

**Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.**

**Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.**

**For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

Please be seated.

Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People **Thanks be to God.**

The Response

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

You have been gracious to your land, O LORD, *
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

You have forgiven the iniquity of your people *
and blotted out all their sins.

I will listen to what the LORD God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.

Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

The Third Song of Isaiah 60:1-3, 11a, 14c, 18-19 (*read in unison*)

Arise, shine, for your light has come, *
and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.
For behold, darkness covers the land; *
deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.
But over you the Lord will rise, *
and his glory will appear upon you.
Nations Will stream to your light, *
and kings to the brightness of your dawning.
Your gates will always be open; *
by day or night they will never be shut.
They will call you, The City of the Lord, *
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
Violence will no more be heard in your land, *
ruin or destruction within your borders.
You will call your walls, Salvation, *
and all your portals, Praise.
The sun will no more be your light by day; *
by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.
The Lord will be your everlasting light, *
and your God will be your glory.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Silence.

The Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

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

People Thanks be to God.

The Song of the Lamb – Revelation 4:11; 5:9-10, 13 *(read in unison)*

Splendor and honor and kingly power *

are yours by right, O Lord our God,

For you created everything that is, *

and by your will they were created and have their being;

And yours by right, O Lamb that was slain, *

for with your blood you have redeemed for God,

From every family, language, people, and nation, *

a kingdom of priests to serve our God.

And so, to him who sits upon the throne, *

and to Christ the Lamb,

Be worship and praise, dominion and splendor, *

for ever and for evermore.

Please stand, as able, for the reading of the Gospel.

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight.’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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

People Thanks be to God.

Reflections

Jann Boggs

Please stand, as able.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Please stand or kneel, as able, for the Prayers.

The Prayers

Leader The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Leader Let us pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Show us your mercy, O Lord;
And grant us your salvation.
Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
Let your people sing with joy.
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
For only in you can we live in safety.
Lord, keep this nation under your care:
And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
Let your way be known upon earth;
Your saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us clean hearts, O God;
And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Prayers of the People

Leader Let us pray for the Church and for the world.
 Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right Spirit within us. Remind
 us of the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your love and grace.

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in
their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation, especially...

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may
honor one another and all people, friend and enemy, and serve the common good. We pray
especially for the health of the global economy and for all people who are suffering the pain of
poverty, war and violence.

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we
pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom, especially...

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

Open our eyes to see the destruction we cause by our careless consumption; open our ears to hear the groaning of all creation and the cries of your creatures without voice; open our hearts to feel remorse for our unfaithful care of your creation; inspire us to a greater love and wonder for the care of your natural world.

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us, especially...

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

We thank you for all the blessings of this life, especially...

God of Forgiveness and Compassion,
Thank you for your mercy.

Presider O God, mercifully hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; grant that we may both see and know the things we need to do and that we may also have the grace and courage to do them faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for Sundays

Leader The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Leader Let us pray,

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for Guidance

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please stand, as able, and read in unison.

A General Thanksgiving

BCP 836

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

The Blessing

Leader Let us pray,
Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Leader Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

The Dismissal

Leader May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Postlude

Betty Upchurch

Schedule

Sunday, December 6 – The Second Sunday of Advent (Recorded)

10:30 am – Morning Prayer: Rite Two with Jann Boggs – via YouTube & Facebook

Sunday, December 13 – The Third Sunday of Advent (Recorded)

10:30 am – Holy Eucharist with The Rev Mike Tanner – via YouTube & Facebook

Coming Lessons

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Prayer List

Intercessions: Amy Jones, Ben & Laura Davis, Brenda Weems, Chuck & Sally Besaw, Donna Hohnstein (Jann Bogg's cousin), Frank Withrow (Laura Davis' brother-in-law), Gary Medley, Jann Boggs, Jean Callison, Jonathan, Julie Ottesen, Laura, Lorene Ramsey, Margaret Blanck, Martha Willie Coleman, Marybeth Lentz, Nancy Meredith (Laura Davis' sister), and Smitty Hughes (Charles Besaw's friend). We also pray for all those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters around the world. And we pray for Christ Church, its leaders & ministry teams.

Departed:

Birthdays: Shelly Morris (Dec 12)

Wedding Anniversaries & Thanksgivings:

Announcements

Office and Church Guidelines during Phase III of COVID-19:

As you know, our in-person services are suspended for now. We will hope, along with you, that the Governor will be able to increase our indoor numbers back to 25. We will keep you posted! Meanwhile, all other COVID-19 restrictions remain in place here.

Scheduling update...

The Vestry met on Wednesday, December 2nd, and after discussion decided to suspend Morning Prayer services as an offering for worship beginning December 4th until further notice. We will continue to record services with supply clergy twice a month for the foreseeable future. The schedule will be updated in the bulletin and in the weekly Good News & Notes.

Please read the Good News & Notes weekly for more updates.