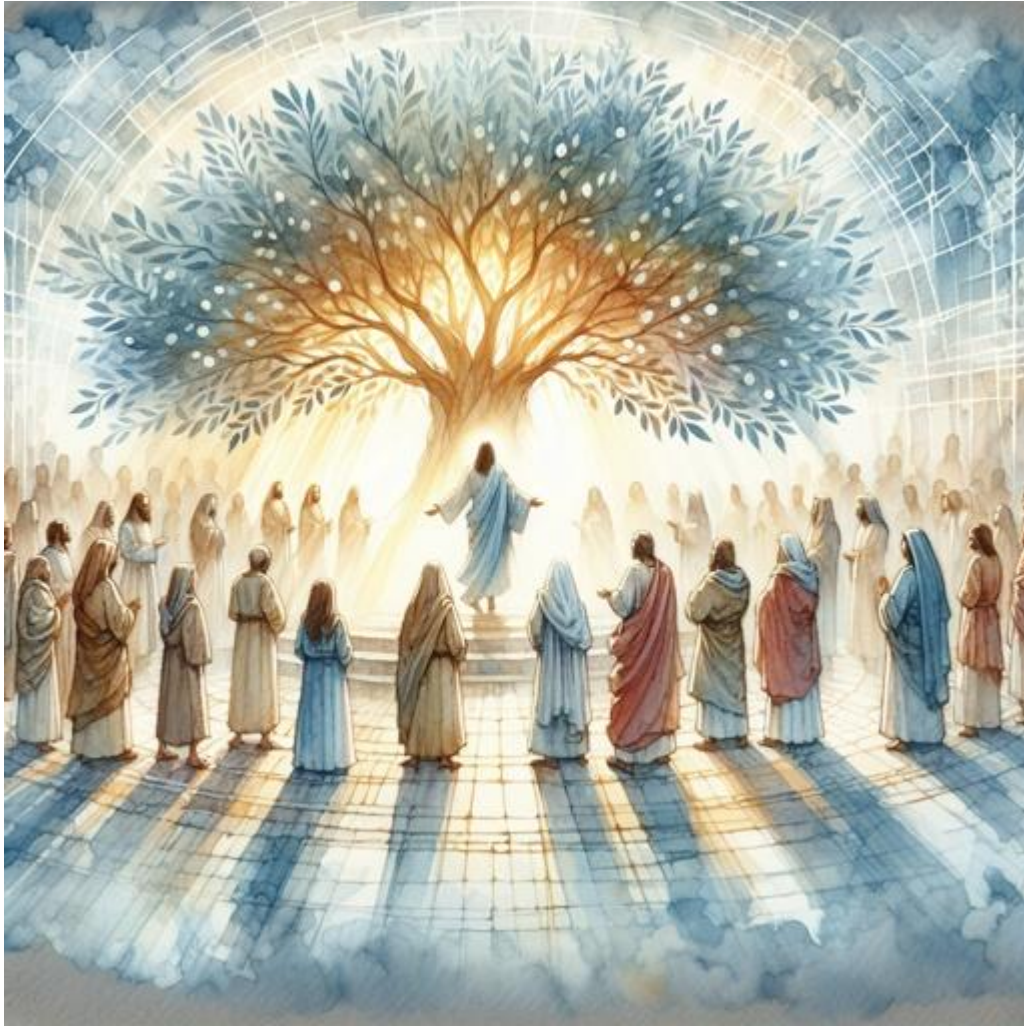


Christ Episcopal Church

Sparta, NC

A home to all sharing God's unconditional love.



The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026

The Rev. Karla Woggon
Priest-in-Charge
Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina

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 christchurchspartanc@gmail.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 christchurchspartanc@gmail.com.

Do you need prayer? We have an active prayer ministry here at Christ Church. If prayer would be helpful to you, please fill out a prayer request card (found in the pew back), making sure you include your name and contact information (email and/or phone). We'll include you in our weekly prayers. Just complete the card & put it in the offering plate during the Offertory or share your request with the greeter.

We extend special thanks today to:

The Rev George Greer for leading us in worship today,
Jonathan Halsey for serving as musician and for being so generous with his talents,
Jim Halsey for opening the Parish Hall and making coffee,
Mary Lee Joines for providing coffee hour refreshments, and
Marybeth Lentz in loving memory of her sister, Suzanne Conlon Wolar.

Please enter the Sanctuary in silence to respect those who are preparing for worship. Save conversations, whispered or out loud, for outside or Coffee Hour.

Please silence your cell phone, too

Christ Episcopal Church

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Online giving link: <https://onrealm.org/CCEpiscopal/give/now>

Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 8:00-1:00, Wednesday remote

Music used by permission CCLI License #11138616

Cover art: "Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." BibleArt

The Gathering

Prelude

Jonathan Halsey

Announcements

Larry Seckel

Please stand, as able.

Processional Hymn #525

The Church's one foundation

Remain standing, as able.

Opening Acclamation

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

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

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.

Gloria: S280 (sung by all)



1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly
King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy

on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -
 ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
 you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most
 High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
 glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Music: Robert Powell (b. 1932), rev. Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

The Collect

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray,

Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: A reading from Exodus 1:8-2:10

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool,

if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.” But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.”

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

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

People Thanks be to God.

The Response

Psalm 124

If the LORD had not been on our side, *

let Israel now say;

If the LORD had not been on our side, *

when enemies rose up against us;

Then would they have swallowed us up alive *

in their fierce anger toward us;

Then would the waters have overwhelmed us *

and the torrent gone over us;

Then would the raging waters *

have gone right over us.

Blessed be the LORD! *

he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; *

the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

Our help is in the Name of the LORD, *
the maker of heaven and earth.

The Second Reading: A reading from Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God~ what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

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

People Thanks be to God.

Please stand, as able.

Gospel Hymn #401

The God of Abraham praise

Proulx Alleluia (sung twice)



Please remain standing, as able.

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

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Gospel

Matthew 16:13-20

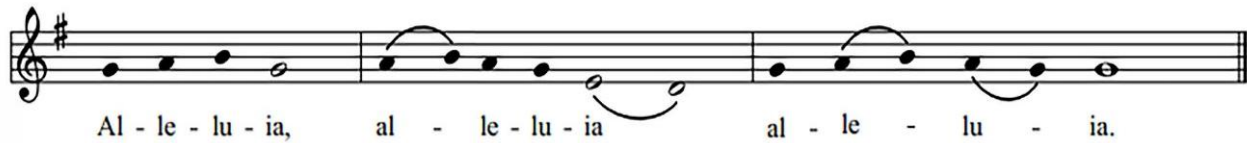
When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be

loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Proulx *Alleluia* (sung once)



All are seated.

The Sermon

The Rev George Greer

A time of silence following the sermon.

Please stand, as able.

The Nicene Creed

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.

Please stand or kneel, as able.

Prayers of the People

BCP, Form III, pg 387

Leader Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
People **That we all may be one.**

Leader Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
People **That your Name may be glorified by all people.**

Leader We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons; especially Archbishop of
Canterbury, Sarah, our Presiding Bishop, Sean, our Bishop Search Committee,
our Priest in Charge, Karla, and our Celebrant, George.
People **That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.**

Leader We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
People **That there may be justice and peace on the earth.**

Leader Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
People **That our works may find favor in your sight.**

Leader Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
People **That they may be delivered from their distress.**

Leader Give to the departed eternal rest.
People **Let light perpetual shine upon them.**

Leader We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
People **May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.**

Leader Let us pray for our own needs and those of others. *Please add your own petitions
silently or aloud.*

Silence

Confession of Sin

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All **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.**

Celebrant 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.**

Please stand, as able.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Please greet one another in a way that is comfortable as a sign of our participation in Christ's reconciling work in the world.

Please be seated.

Offertory Music

Jonathan Halsey

Please stand, as able.

Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

The Great Thanksgiving

BCP, Eucharistic Prayer A, pgs 361-365

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

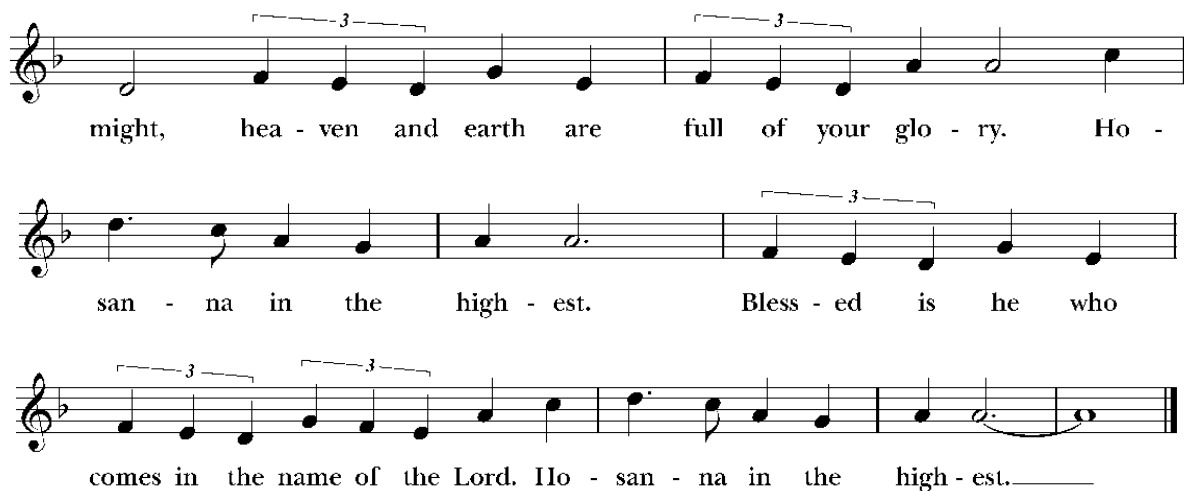
It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Proper Preface of the day

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:

Sanctus: 129 (*sung by all*)





Music: Robert Powell (b. 1932). Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

Please stand or kneel, as able.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: 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. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

The Lord's Prayer

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

A period of silence is kept.

Fraction: S154 (*sung by all*)

This setting is not used in Lent.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;

there - fore let us keep the feast.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

The Invitation to Holy Communion

*All who seek God and are drawn to Christ are welcome at the Lord's Table.
If you are gluten allergic, please ask for a rice wafer at the distribution.*

Please be seated.

Communion Music

Jonathan Halsey

Surely the Presence of the Lord

*Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place,
I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace,
I can hear the brush of angels' wings,
I see glory on each face.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.*

Please stand or kneel, as able.

Prayer after Communion

Celebrant Let us pray,

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

The Rev George Greer

Please stand, as able.

Recessional Hymn #522

Glorious things of thee are spoken

The Dismissal

Celebrant Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia.

Postlude

Jonathan Halsey

Coming Lessons

Exodus 3:1-15

Psalms 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c

Romans 12:9-21

Matthew 16:21-28

The following people are assisting with the services

Role	This Sunday	Next Sunday
Altar Guild	Nancy Wilson	Nancy Wilson
Chalice Bearer	Jeanne Green	Elizabeth Barr Bryant
Lector I	Louise Law	Geoff Jones
Lector II	Louise Law	Geoff Jones
Prayers of the People	Louise Law	Geoff Jones
Greeter/Usher(s)	Patti Phelps & Ruthie Maxwell	Barbara & Jim Halsey

Prayer List

Intercessions:

Bob & Emma Caswell, Brenda Weems, Chris, Denise Seckel, Diana Asher (Les' friend), Donald & Audrey Carter (Denise & Larry's friend), Erin Mohr & her family, Jeff (community friend), John & Jane Gehring, Karen & Dick Dewald (Erin's parents), Louise Law, Martha Honaker, Marybeth Lentz and her family, and Michael. We also pray for all those impacted by violence, war, fires, and weather disasters, our local neighbors that fear detention, and Christ Church, its leaders & ministry teams.

Long-term prayers:

Antje & Bill, Buck Hunnicutt, Carl & Carol Greer, Cathy Davis (The Rev), Coralie & her mother Mary, Donna & Mike Hohnstine, Edwin (Nancy's brother), Gary Medley & Allan Joyce, Gwen (Ann), Inza & Blair, Isabel, Janice Harrison, Jonathan, Linda/Cindy/Trent, Lynn Ellis, Lynn & Ajit, Margaret, Raymond Hindman, Rita Woodruff, Rudy McKnight, Susan & Jim Doss (The Rev), Tom & Kate Warndorf, and Vanita.

Departed: Angelia Miller (Aug 13)

Birthdays:

Wedding Anniversaries & Thanksgivings: Hal & Nancy Wilson (Aug 25)

Sarah, **Archbishop of Canterbury**, Sean, **Presiding Bishop**, our **Bishop Search Committee**, Karla, our **Priest-in-Charge**, and George, our **Celebrant**

In the Anglican Community: the Church of the Province of West Africa

In the Diocese of WNC: Church of the Savior in Newland

In Alleghany County: Mountain View Regular Baptist Church

Schedule

Sunday, August 23 – The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 am – Holy Eucharist with The Rev George Greer

Coffee hour follows the service

10,000 Villages sale in the Parish Hall during coffee hour!

Tuesday, August 25

9:30 am – 2:00 pm – Volunteers are at SRFC

1:00 pm – Centering Prayer group

2:00 pm – Book Discussion group

Wednesday, August 26

9:30 am – 2:00 pm – Volunteers are at SRFC

Sunday, August 30 – The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 am – Holy Eucharist with The Rev Karla Woggon

Coffee hour follows the service

12:00 – 1:00 pm – Living & Dying Well

Tuesday, September 1

1:00 pm – Centering Prayer group

2:00 pm – Book Discussion group

Sunday, September 6 – The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 am – Holy Eucharist with The Rev Martha Honaker

Coffee hour follows the service

Monday, September 7 – Labor Day – the office will be closed today

Announcements

TODAY: Ten Thousand Villages items will be sold in the Parish Hall during coffee hour. Cash or check only. All the proceeds will benefit our outreach efforts.

Living & Dying Well – Begins NEXT Sunday: Aug 30! The other two classes will be on Sept 27, and Oct 25 from 12:00 – 1:00 pm What does it mean to live well, even as we near the end of life? Have you made arrangements for your funeral? Does your family know where all your important documents are? Do you know where your parents' or loved ones' important documents are? Or what their wishes are?

Join us for a three-week series exploring the acclaimed PBS Frontline documentary *Being Mortal*, based on surgeon and writer Atul Gawande's bestselling book. Through intimate stories of patients, families, and doctors, the film asks hard but important questions about aging, illness, autonomy, and what truly matters when time is limited. The first two sessions include a portion of the film followed by open, faith-grounded conversation. The third session will include practical handouts for planning your funeral and making sure your family has all the documents they need. You're welcome to attend one or all three weeks. This is a gentle, thoughtful space to reflect on mortality, care for loved ones, and hope. Led by The Rev Karla Woggon.

There's a new shopping list for the Solid Rock Food Closet in the red wagon. See what's most needed and contribute what you can. *A new notice from the food closet asks that we double-check expiration dates because they cannot accept expired items.*

The Season of Creation will be honored on Sundays beginning September 13th and finishing up October 4th. *For more information, please read further in the bulletin.*

Our Annual Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, Sept 13 here at Christ Church following the service. *The sign-up sheet is available on the information table.*

Do you want to participate more fully during our worship services? There are different ways you can participate from serving as a greeter/usher, a crucifer, an Altar Guild member or a lector. *For more information, please read the GNN.*

The Centering Prayer/Book Discussion groups continue on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm The Centering Prayer group will use *The Enneagram of the Soul* by Nhien Vuong to continue learning more about the enneagram. If you have any questions, contact Patti Phelps at frankandpatti@yahoo.com. All are welcome to join either or both groups.

If you have a pastoral need or would like home communion or a visit when you are sick or homebound, please contact Karla at priest.christchurchspartanc@gmail.com or 828.638.0533.

The Prayer Shawls & Lap Blankets are available for you to give someone who needs our Christ Church love and support. *For more information, read the GNN.*

The first Sunday of the month we collect money gifts, nonperishable food and/or personal care items for our local food closet, Solid Rock Food Closet (SRFC). You can share non-perishable food and/or personal care items (most in need right now are toilet paper, laundry detergent, and/or sweet individually-wrapped treats for the Summer Backpack Pals Program). All donated items can be put in the red wagon in the narthex and they'll be delivered the following week. **We also accept and encourage money gifts on this Sunday.** If you opt to give cash, use an offering envelope (in the pew back) and make sure to write SRFC on it. If you write a check, make sure you write SRFC on the memo line. Every gift helps so give as generously as you're able!

Monthly Altar Flowers and Coffee Hour sign-ups:

Date	Altar Flowers	Coffee Guild	Coffee Hour
Aug 23	Marybeth Lentz	Jim Halsey	Mary Lee Joines
Aug 30	Cynthia Grant	Rod Pace	Cynthia Grant
Sept 6	Wanda McKnight	Rod Pace	Wanda McKnight
Sept 13	Mary Lee Joines	Rod Pace	Annual Picnic!

The Season of Creation

The Season of Creation is celebrated by Christians around the world as a time for renewing, repairing, and restoring our relationship with God, one another, and all of creation. **At Christ Church, we will celebrate Creation Season from September 13 – October 4 with special liturgies and activities.**

Our Sunday morning liturgy will reflect the focus on creation. We will be using new prayers, a creed, confession, and Eucharistic Prayer recommended by the National Episcopal Church. The hymns will also reflect creation themes.

Additional celebrations:

Sunday September 13: Annual Parish Picnic here at Christ Church.

Sunday September 20 at 4:00 pm: Outdoor Celtic Christian Eucharist marking the fall equinox. We will meet at **Wildcat Rock**, which is just past the Bluffs Lodge in Doughton Park on the BRP. *{You keep bearing to the left and drive to the parking lot beyond the Lodge. We'll meet right at the base of the water tower.}* Bring a camp chair to sit on and invite a friend.

October 4 at 2:00 pm: Blessing of the Animals will be held in the lower parking lot of Christ Church. We encourage all who would like their pet to be blessed to arrive before 2:00 pm and make sure you have control of them at all times. If your animal friend is *not able* to be around other animals, let us know and stay with your animal in your vehicle.