



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EXTENDING THE LOVE AND EMBRACE OF CHRIST

TAIZÉ VESPERS
6:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 22, 2026 | Fifth Sunday in Lent



WELCOME TO SUNDAY TAIZÉ VESPERS AT CHRIST CHURCH

For centuries, people have asked God for guidance and care as day turns to night. This night, we ask God to refresh, inspire, and call us into a deeper relationship with the Divine Spark that is in this world. Enter into God's presence through prayers, readings, songs, silence and poetry. And as you feel so moved: breathe deeply, be still, and know that you are loved.

May God bless you in this time of reflection and meditation.

Taizé (named for the ecumenical Christian community formed in Taizé, France, in 1940) is a quiet, sung, meditative prayer. The songs are short phrases that we sing repeatedly so that the words may enter our hearts. The songs may be sung in many different languages, reminding us that the Gospel is for all the world and we are all God's people.

THE PATTERN OF VESPERS

GATHERING: God beckons us to gather, to reflect on life where we live it, and to be engaged as fully as possible in the world around us. We light candles and sing a song of thanksgiving for God's bringing light into the darkness of our lives.

WORD: God continues to communicate through words of wisdom, encouragement, hope, and challenge spoken throughout the ages by God's beloved children.

PSALMS: Psalms are the Bible's language of prayer and praise. They provide us language to speak about all of life, including our joys, disappointments, confusion and anger, sadness, and concern for ourselves, others, and this world.

MEDITATION: When we listen and pray while gathered in community, we are reminded that we are not alone. We also affirm that life is not about "just me," but about participating in a larger movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.

PRAYERS: Prayer is honest, holy conversation with God and those who gather. God invites our honesty, joys, sorrows, confusion, anger, and wonder. Prayer practices can open us up to deeper understanding and meaningful spiritual connections with God, others, and ourselves.

GOING OUT: As we leave the Vesper service, we are reminded of Christ's peace, presence and purpose in all of life.

OPENING SONG | Adoramus te I



Officiant: God dwells in you.

People: **And also in you.**

Officiant: Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp to put it under a bucket, but on a lampstand where it gives light for everyone in the house. And you, like the lamp, must shed light among your fellow men, so that they may see the deed you do, and give glory to your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:14-16*

Let us pray.

All: Almighty God, we give you thanks for surrounding us, as daylight fades, with the brightness of the vesper light; and we implore you of your great mercy that, as you enfold us with the radiance of this light, so you would shine into our hearts the brightness of your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty and most merciful God, kindle within us the fire of love, that by its cleansing flame we may be purged of all our sins and made worthy to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

SONG | O Christe Domine Jesu



CONSOLATIONS | VULNERABILITY

is not a weakness, a passing indisposition, or something we can arrange to do without, vulnerability is not a choice, vulnerability is the underlying, ever present and abiding undercurrent of our natural state. To run from vulnerability is to run from the essence of our nature, the attempt to be invulnerable is the vain attempt to become something we are not and most especially, to close off our understanding of the grief of others. More seriously, in refusing our vulnerability we refuse the help needed at every turn of our existence and immobilize the essential, tidal and conversational foundations of our identity.

To have a temporary, isolated sense of power over all events and circumstances, is a lovely illusionary privilege and perhaps the prime and most beautifully constructed conceit of being human and especially of being youth-fully human, but it is a privilege that must be surrendered with that same youth, with ill health, with accident, with the loss of loved ones who do not share our untouchable powers; powers eventually and most emphatically given up, as we approach our last breath.

The only choice we have as we mature is how we inhabit our vulnerability, how we become larger and more courageous and more com-passionate through our intimacy with disappearance, our choice is to inhabit vulnerability as generous citizens of loss, robustly and fully, or conversely, as misers and complainers, reluctant and fearful, always at the gates of existence, but never bravely and completely attempting to enter, never wanting to risk ourselves, never walking fully through the door.



SONG | Miserere nobis (Have mercy on us)

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Miserere nobis'. It consists of two systems of music, labeled A and B. Each system has a vocal line (soprano and alto) and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: 'Mi - se - re - re no - bis Do - mi - ne, mi - se - re - re no - bis.' The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

The following psalm is read responsively by half-verse.

THE PSALM |

Psalm 130 | *De profundis*

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice; *

let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, *

O Lord, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you; *

therefore you shall be feared.

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; *

in his word is my hope.

My soul waits for the Lord,
more than watchmen for the morning, *

more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, wait for the Lord, *

for with the Lord there is mercy;

With him there is plenteous redemption, *

and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

SCRIPTURE READING | Romans 8:6-11

Reader: *A reading from Romans.*

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law-- indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOMILY/REFLECTION | Jim Berkson



THE SILENT MEDITATION | SILHOUETTES

In winter, the trees are bare, and the sun is glorious, casting silhouetted tree limbs. The air blows cold around us.

We are seen. We are known.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SONG | O Lord hear my prayer

Please scan to give



During the singing, you are invited to come forward to light a candle in prayer.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O

Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.

The Sunlight
 Came through
 My bedroom
 Window
 This morning
 In shades of
 Purple

Reminding
 Me
 That
 God's Altar
 Is not
 Always
 Just in
 Church.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE |

Intercessor: Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world. Almighty and ever living 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, especially Presiding Bishop, Sean; our Diocesan Bishop Carrie; our rector, Emmanuel; Clergy; Richard & Marcia, and Seminarian, Yehinuel. 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 those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, especially our President, Governor; and County Executive; that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor Steve, Emmy, Carol, Greg, Kimberley, MaryAnn, Alta, Mark, Clarence, Diane, Natasha, Mildred, Nancy, Patrick, Winifred, Priscilla, Kayode, Rachan & Sherry, and those who care for them.

The People may add additional petitions and thanksgivings.

Intercessor: And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear especially Mollie McCoy, Priscilla Pitt and those you now name, 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

THE LORD'S PRAYER |

Officiant: Let us pray.

***All:* 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, forever and ever. Amen.**

Officiant: The coming night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives be dispelled in this hour. The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all who are dear to us, and all who have no peace. The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities. In your name we pray. ***Amen.***

Officiant: The Lord bless you and keep you. ***Amen.***

The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you. ***Amen.***

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace. ***Amen.***

CLOSING SONG | Nunc Dimittis

1st time in Latin, all following repetitions in English.

Ostinato Refrain

Nunc di - mīt - tis ser - vum tu - um, Dó - mi -
Let your ser - vant now go in peace, O

ne, se - cún - dum ver - bum
Lord, now go in peace ac -

ne, Dó - mi - ne,
Lord, O Lord,

pa - ce.
word.

tu - um in pa - ce, Dó - mi - ne. Nunc di -
cord - ing to your word, to your word. Let your

Last time

Last time

Thank you for joining us today!

Assisting in Worship Today

Choir: Caitlin Gompf (soprano)
Catherine Hinton (soprano)
Maureen Monk (flute)
YaShauna Swan (viola)
Larissa Sanders (piano)

Homily: Jim Berkson

Lectors/Readers: Various

Ushers: Betty Dagne, Yetti Lipede

PARISH CALENDAR

MARCH 23 –28, 2026

Monday, March 23

7:00 am Morning Prayer Livestream
6:00 – 8:30 pm Food Addicts Anonymous – New Brick, LL
7:00 – 8:00 pm Centering Prayer – Old Brick & Zoom
7:00 – 8:00 pm Refugee Ministry Meeting – Zoom
8:00 pm Evening Compline Livestream with Mother Marcia – website, YouTube

Tuesday, March 24

7:00 am Morning Prayer Livestream
11:00 am– 12:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting
6:30 – 8:30 pm Vestry Meeting – New Brick, LL
7:30 – 9:00 pm CEC Book Club – Zoom

Wednesday, March 25

7:00 am Morning Prayer Livestream
6:00 – 9:00 pm Wednesday Evening Lenten Supper Series – New Brick, LL

Thursday, March 26

7:00 am Morning Prayer Livestream
12:00 – 1:00 pm Lenten Healing Eucharist – Old Brick
6:30 – 9:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
6:30 – 9:00 pm Education for Ministry (EfM): Fast Track – Zoom
7:30 – 9:00 pm Boy Scouts – New Brick, LL

Friday, March 27

7:00 am Morning Prayer Livestream
8:00 pm Evening Compline Livestream with Mother Marcia – website, YouTube

Saturday, March 28

9:00 am – 11:30 am MOCC Breakfast – Silver Diner, Elkridge
10:00 am – 12:00 pm WOCC Labyrinth Walk – St. John's, Ellicott City
2:00 pm AA Meeting – Parish Hall, LL
3:30 – 4:30 pm Altar Guild prep
5:00 – 9:00 pm Washington Chamber Orchestra - New Brick, UL



ANNOUNCEMENTS



If you have an announcement to share with the church,
Please send to communications@christchurchcolumbia.org by Tuesday evening.

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR ALL OF THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & LINKS

Holy Week at Christ Church

Holy Week is when the foundational story of Christianity – Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection – is remembered and retold, both in words and in ritual actions, at services throughout the week. We gather together as a community of faith to journey with Jesus to Jerusalem, to stand with him before his accusers, to walk to Golgotha, and to stand at the foot of his cross. Finally, on Easter Sunday, we will joyously celebrate the resurrection of Christ, lifting our voices in praise of the hope that is ours and the world's. Visit our website for the details - www.christchurchcolumbia.org/holyweek - and join us for all of it, if you can, remembering that without the journey of Holy Week, Easter loses its deep meaning.

Easter Altar Flowers, Music, and Offerings

Easter Sunday is a special time when we honor, remember, or give thanks for someone or a blessing in our lives by donating flowers or requesting hymns to adorn our worship spaces as we celebrate our risen Lord. You can present gifts to support our Easter flowers and music here; be sure to place the dedication name(s) in the *MEMO* line. If you wish to give a general Easter Offering, you can do so here. For those wishing to submit a check, you can drop your donation in the plate on Sunday or at the Church Office during the week; please include the same dedication information on the memo line of your check. Whichever way you choose, we thank you for helping support the beautiful Easter services at Christ Church.

Centering Prayer - Mondays

Centering Prayer is a special evening prayer gathering that can help lead to a more intimate union with God, a gathering that takes place every Monday. This active presence heals, transforms, and offers freedom and peace. Be with us in Old Brick or online via Zoom at 7 p.m. on Monday evenings. You can also ask for more information by speaking with Kathy Lyon at church or by emailing centering@christchurchcolumbia.org.

Archdeacon Denise Schiavone Leads the Final WELS - March 25

Each year, the Wednesday Evening Lenten Supper Series is one of the most enriching experiences of the season. Next Wednesday, we are pleased to have our beloved Christ Church Deacon – now Archdeacon – Denise Schiavone present her perspective on our 2026 Spiritual Life Theme, ***Building Relationships through LOVE***, with the meal being provided by the Christ Church Spiritual Life Commission. We begin at 6:30 p.m. with a communal supper in the Great Hall, followed by our guest presenter. The evening then concludes with a brief, informal Eucharist. There's no other series like this at Christ Church throughout the year, and we highly encourage you to gather with us for this unique discussion and fellowship.

Lenten Healing Eucharist - Thursdays

Each Thursday during Lent, Christ Church offers a midday Healing Eucharist in Old Brick. Our clergy leads this service of readings, prayers, a litany for healing, and the Holy Eucharist. Parishioners and community members are

all welcome to join in a prayerful time in the presence of God, and to share in the wonderful mystery of God's love whilst we seek healing for ourselves and our loved ones. Please come in to reflect, pray, and participate in a service held in our beautiful, historic chapel.

Christ Church Choir - Thursdays

C'mon, all you singers and music lovers! Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings in New Brick, and everyone is welcome to take part. Whether you read music or not, whether you have previous experience or not, and whether you are ready to commit or not, there's a place for you in our Vocal or Handbell Choirs. Go from "singing in the shower" to "singing in the sanctuary!" If you're interested or want to learn more, please speak with Larissa or any choir member.

Family Night Out! – This Friday, March 27

Gather the crew and lace up those bowling shoes - it's time for a night of fellowship, strikes, and spares! Whether you're a pro or just here for the snacks, we want to see you there on Friday, March 27, at 7:00 p.m. Bring your family! Bring your friends! Just bring yourself! Everyone is welcome. Meet us at Lucky Strike Columbia - 7100 Carved Stone Rd. Columbia, MD 21045. Let us know by emailing MOCC@christchurchcolumbia.org, or speak with Duane at church, so he can reserve the right amount of bowling space.

WOCC Upcoming Events – Begins Saturday, March 28

The WOCC has a ton of upcoming events and gatherings, so be sure to join us for as many as you wish!

- March 28 at 11:00 a.m. – Labyrinth Walk at St. John's Episcopal Church & lunch at Touche Touchet Café
- March 29 at 6:00 p.m. – Lumen Christi at the Meditations on the Passion service, Palm Sunday
- April 6 at 6:30 p.m. – WOCC dinner meeting at [the Corner Stable restaurant](#)

If you have any questions, please speak with Shahra, Jan, Emily, Amanda, Carol, or any WOCC member. You can also email WOCC@ChristChurchColumbia.org, and they will get back to you.

Palm Sunday and Meditations on the Passion – Next Sunday, March 29

Palm Sunday has three worship services - the 8:00 worship takes place in Old Brick. Then, the 9:00 service will begin by gathering in the Great Hall (lower level) of New Brick and process up to the Sanctuary from there. Our final morning service at 10:30 a.m. will meet and begin worship in Old Brick, then collectively process across the campus during the service (if the weather is inclement, we will begin in the Great Hall).

And on that Sunday evening, Christ Church will host Meditations on the Passion, a special service of poems, readings, dance (with our [Lumen Christi liturgical dance ministry](#)), song, and prayer. Join us at 6:00 p.m. in the New Brick Sanctuary as we contemplate the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in a way that makes us realize the immense love He has for each of us, a love capable of suffering and death to free us from our sins.

No Sunday School for the Next Two Weeks

Sunday School is taking place today but will take a break during the next two Sundays - Palm Sunday (March 29) and Easter Sunday (April 5). Classes will resume on Sunday, April 12th. If you have any questions, please email info@christchurchcolumbia.org.



Christ Episcopal Church

6800 Oakland Mills Road

Columbia, MD 21045

(410) 381-9365

www.christchurchcolumbia.org

office@christchurchcolumbia.org

The Rev. Emmanuel Ato Mercer, *Rector*
 The Rev. Marcia Davenport, *Associate Rector for Children and Family Ministries*

The Rev. Richard Ginnever, *Rector Emeritus*

The Rev. Yehinuel Odidi, *Seminarian Associate*

Larissa Sanders, *Director of Music Ministry*

Ola Oladipupo, *Assistant Organist*

Yetti Lipede, *Parish Administrator & Ministry Coordinator*

Diya Jackson, *Office & Youth Ministry Coordinator*

Christopher Pouch, *Communications Administrator*

Amanda Kirkpatrick, *Nursery Care Coordinator*

Shereen Benka-Coker, *Nursery Assistant*

John Prempeh Sencherey, *Sexton*

Vestry

- Denisa Abdallah (*Senior Warden*) • Greg Schuckman (*Junior Warden*) • Andrew Eaton (*Treasurer*)
- Ron Couch (*Registrar*) • Shreya Chrzanowski (*Youth Liaison*) • Diane Phillips-LaGuerre • Ronald Baran
- George Toth • Sara Kirkpatrick • Ed Chrzanowski • Kathy Simms • Jay Abbott • David James
- Katie Adams • Jim Berkson

