



CHRIST AND THE EPIPHANY

VOLUME 29

December 2025



The Christmas Story: A Timeless Tale of Migration and Hope

Rev. Charles Kamano, PIC

As Advent unfolds and Christmas approaches, we find ourselves reflecting on our advent topics of hope, peace, joy, and love. These cherished themes, however, are often juxtaposed with the stark reality of the ongoing immigration crisis affecting many communities and cities across the United States.

This year, I am moved to share my thoughts on this issue, especially as someone who immigrated to the US in 2010. Since becoming a naturalized US citizen in 2016, I have experienced countless blessings. Yet, I am troubled by harsh ICE raids, sometimes targeting legal residents, and saddened by the negative portrayal of immigrants that has fostered fear and anxiety regarding profiling and enforcement practices.

This Christmas, as your Priest-in-charge, I humbly invite you to view the struggles of

migrants and refugees through the lens of the Nativity. The story of Jesus' birth is at heart a narrative of a vulnerable family on a journey: Mary and Joseph, traveling to Bethlehem for the census while Mary was pregnant, faced rejection at the inn and found shelter only in a humble stable (*Luke 2:1-7*). Soon after, they became refugees, fleeing to Egypt to escape King Herod's violent decree (*Matthew 2:13-15*).

Much like the Holy Family, countless migrants arriving in our nation are fleeing poverty, violence, and despair, hoping to secure safety and a brighter future for their children. Their journeys are marked by uncertainty and sorrow, relying on God's guidance and the generosity of strangers, echoing the journey of Mary and Joseph.

Our Christian faith calls us to welcome the stranger. Scripture consistently urges compassion and hospitality toward foreigners in our midst. Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25:31-46 reminds us that our treatment of the "least of these", the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned, reflects how we treat Him.

During Advent, as we prepare our hearts for Christ's coming, we are also called to prepare

Worship Services

Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m.,
in-person and via Zoom

Christmas Eve, Wednesday Dec
24, 4:00 p.m. in-person and via
Zoom

Lessons & Carols, Sunday Dec
28, 9:00 a.m. Ugly Sweater Day

Events

Ecumenical Advent Bible
Study, Wednesdays Dec 3, 10,
17, 12:15 p.m. [see schedule
for locations]

Christmas Fair, Saturday,
December 6, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00
p.m.

Annual Parish Meeting, Sunday
January 25, after 9:00 a.m.
worship service

*(Zoom connection information
at the end of newsletter.)*

our communities to embrace those in need. This call rises above political arguments and leads us back to core Christian values: honoring the dignity of every person and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

How might we respond in Hope and Love? At Christ and The Epiphany church, we can embody the Advent message of hope and joy by lifting others in prayer. Throughout this holy season, please remember in your prayers: migrant and

refugee families who are separated or held in detention camps; children enduring trauma and uncertainty in unfamiliar places; the organizations and volunteers who provide aid and legal support at the border and in our cities; and our national leaders, that they may pursue compassionate and just immigration reforms that protect families.

This Christmas, let us recall that the Light of the World entered as a vulnerable child, born to a displaced family in a foreign land. May our response to today's "immigration crisis" reflect God's boundless love and welcoming embrace.

Christmas Fair

Make sure to tell your friends about our Annual Fair on **Sat Dec 6th** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Set-up for the fair will be on Dec 5th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. There are signs to make and hang, baked goods to be packaged, etc. Everything must be completed by end of day on Friday.

We are still accepting scratch lottery tickets, local gift certificates and bake table items - cookies, breads, etc.

SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!

Lessons and Carols

As we did last year, our annual Lessons and Carols service on **December 28** will also be an "Ugly Christmas Sweater" day. Wear your holiday outfit with pride.

Around the Church

Harvest Altar



Rev. Jose Martinez



EH Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service



Street sign



Advent Devotions

The Ecumenical Advent Bible Study group continues to meet on Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m.

- * Dec 3 - Old Stone, *Matthew 3:1-12*
- * Dec 10 - Old Stone, *Matthew 11:2-11*
- * Dec 17 - St. Vincent, *Matthew 1:18-25*

And we still have our *Living Well Through Advent* devotional booklets available on the stair landings and in the Narthex. This year's theme is practicing generosity with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. The booklet is also available in digital format and as a PDF document at livingcompass.org/Advent.

November Vestry Meeting

Next Meeting - The next Vestry meeting will be Sunday, December 21st after the 9:00 a.m. service in the library and via Zoom.

Senior Warden - Attended ECCT's Annual Convention with Astrid S., and Fr. Charles. It was very nice but nothing significant to report. Also attended a digital workshop from the Episcopal Parish Network, "From Sanctuary to Security: Practical Tools for Faith-Based Safety Planning"

Worship - Worked with East Haven United to plan the Ecumenical Thanksgiving service. C&E will also host one of the Ecumenical Advent Bible Study sessions and Barbara Coulombe will lead.

Building & Grounds - We have a new AA group meeting on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the North Lounge. Our lawn person will do a final leaf cleanup the day before the Fair. The wedding reception, baby shower and Berner's post-burial reception events all went well.

The St. Pauly shed has been removed as we could not ethically sign their agreement saying we would never take anything out nor put anything into the shed. The Veterans will take clothes away but we could still use a place to take incoming donations. Barbara P, Brad C. and Ken D. will see if it is possible to build a partition into the garage.

Treasurer - The 2024 audit is complete and will be sent to the Diocese on Monday Nov 17 which will bring us back into good standing. The report is available if anyone wants to see it - ask Susan Shultz.

Stewardship Commitment Sunday will be Nov 30. The Stewardship letter will be sent out on Tuesday Nov 18.

EOY Pledge reminders showing any outstanding 2025 pledge contributions will be sent out the first week of December.

Thrift Store - The Thrift Store could use some extra help on Saturdays. It also has a surplus of very nice winter coats so if you know of a coat drive or need please tell Barbara Parsons or Astrid Swanson.



Dec 1 - Conor Reynolds
Dec 14 - Brad Conant
Dec 15 - Gail Beck
Dec 16 - Astrid Swanson
Dec 20 - Susan Shultz
Dec 25 - Joan Shaffner
Dec 27 - Mary Claire Peach-Keys
Dec 29 - Rene Nacca-Visser
Dec 30 - Terry Osmun
Dec 31 - Gail Schappa



New Bishop of Western MA

The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts has elected their tenth bishop - ECCT's Very Rev. Miguelina Howell. Rev. Howell has been serving as Dean of Christ Church Cathedral since 2016. ECCT has been blessed by her gifts of ministry as she is a dynamic leader of liturgies and is always extending a deep welcome and place of belonging for her parishioners, our diocese, and the city of Hartford. Our congratulations are with her, her family and the people of Western MA.



December 26 - Ron & Janice Blevins

Ask Audrey! Audrey Sundwall

This month's question - ***Where does the Lessons & Carols service come from?***

The Festival of Lessons and Carols was first held on Christmas Eve in 1918 in Great Britain, and it has been a favorite service worldwide during the Twelve Days of Christmas ever since.

The service originally had nine Lessons, but now churches adapt the service to their own settings and use a variety of lessons, music, and sometimes, poetry to tell the story of God's love for us.



Baby Shower for the Holy Family

The deacons of ECCT invite you to join us for a diocesan-wide *Baby Shower for the Holy Family* this Advent Season. In CT, one in two families struggle to afford diapers to keep their babies clean, dry, and healthy. Diapers can cost up to \$100 per month and are not covered by SNAP or WIC assistance programs. Lack of clean diapers is one of the top reasons babies under the age of one go to the emergency room.

We encourage you to bring an open or closed package of diapers to your parish during Advent. The diapers will be donated to The Diaper Bank of CT in early 2026.

Encouraging Words

Audrey Sundwall

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.

--*Isaiah 7:14*

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

--*Micah 5:2*

Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him.

--*Psalms 72:9*

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near - a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the foreheads of Moab, and the heads of all the Shethites.

--*Numbers 24:17*

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.

--*Psalms 73:10-11*

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

--*Isaiah 9:6*



I'M SORRY GUY, I KNOW THAT YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEALTH PLAN AND YOU GIVE OUT FREE GIFTS AND ALL, BUT JESUS REALLY DOES HAVE A MUCH BETTER PLAN

Let the Stable Still Astonish Leslie Fields

Let the stable still astonish:
Straw-dirt floor, dull eyes,
Dusty flanks of donkeys, oxen;
Crumbling, crooked walls;
No bed to carry that pain,
And then, the child,
Rag-wrapped, laid to cry
In a trough.

Who would have chosen this?
Who would have said: "Yes,
Let the God of all the heavens
and earth
Be born here, in this place?"
Who but the same God
Who stands in the darker,
fouler rooms
of our hearts
and says, "Yes,
let the God of Heaven and
Earth
be born here--
in this place.



Intercessory Prayers

Aiden & the Guida Family,
Alexis, Amanda, Amy, Andrew,
Barbuschak Family, Beth Flynn,
Brandon, Carol Ude, Charlie &
Kris Langlan, David & Irene,
Diana, Diane Link, Debbie,
Debbie Potrepka, Donna Hodge
& Family, Dot Logan, Doug, Ed,
Elaine, Ellen McDonald, Erick
Villano, Family in Ukraine,
Francesca, Gail, Gail & Marnie,
Geneva O'Donnell, Hal Levi,
Holly Chickos, Holly, Jan
McDonald, Jim R. & Family,
Joan Shaffner, Judy C., Kathy,
Kathy Guida, Kira, Korey
Mollor, Kris, Larry L., Lauren,
Lucas Sundwall, Rev. Lucy,
Matt R., Maureen McPherson,
Mike, Michael M., Mila,
Minogue Family, Nicole C., Pat
Walters, Rachael, Regina
Schwall, Richard Testa, Sallie
Alexander, Sam W., Susan
Diaz, Tricia Clearwater,
Turiano Family

To submit names for the Intercessory Prayers list please call or email the church office. Names will be kept on the list for three months unless longer time is requested.

Next Issue The deadline for the January issue is Dec 23rd. Send submissions to newsletters.christandtheepiphany@gmail.com. For an update to the Intercessory Prayers, Birthday or Anniversary lists, please call the church office at 203-467-2310 or email christandtheepiphany@gmail.com.



Ecumenical Vatican Prayer Service

Isadora Wilkenfeld

On October 23, an historic ecumenical Midday Prayer service was held in the lofty setting of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City. King Charles III, Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and his wife Queen Camilla were the guests of honor, participating in the service led by Pope Leo XIV along with the Anglican Archbishop of York and Primate of England, Stephen Cottrell. The service, conducted in English and Latin, marked the first time the heads of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have prayed together in 500 years, since the schism that marked England's dramatic break with Rome under King Henry VIII. The Gospel reading was taken from the King James version of the Bible, one of the most enduring literary legacies of the Protestant Reformation and a sure sign of increased dialogue between the two denominations.

As members of The Episcopal Church, we are also part of the Anglican Communion alongside the Church of England. Many of the members of Christ and the Epiphany began their religious lives as Roman Catholics, as well. To see this truly historic prayer service take place, centuries on from the divisions, religious wars, and cultural tensions that indelibly marked Europe in the intervening 500 years, reminds us that reuniting community and communion are indeed possible and that our own spiritual growth is an important factor in doing so. At a time when division is rife in so many aspects of our lives, how marvelous to witness the relationship between these sister churches growing in friendship and understanding: not dissolving differences, but learning to love and respect one another in all our divine diversity.

Advent Calendar

He will come like last leaf's fall.
One night when the November wind
has flayed the trees to the bone, and earth
wakes choking on the mould,
the soft shroud's folding.
He will come like frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net
of alien, sword-set beauty.
He will come like dark.
One evening when the bursting red
December sun draws up the sheet
and penny-masks its eye to yield
the star-snowed fields of sky.
He will come, will come,
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, like breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free.
He will come like child.



Season of Advent



HOPE

PEACE

JOY

LOVE



-- Rowan Williams
former Archbishop of Canterbury

ECCT 2025-2026 Prayer Cycle



EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT
PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S MISSION

December 7	<p>Parishes: Christ Church, Bethany; St. Thomas', Bethel; Old St. Andrew's, Bloomfield Additionally: Ministries for the unhoused, for parishes that offer temporary or permanent shelter. For Chapel on the Green, New Haven & Church by the Pond, Hartford. For the Homelessness & Housing Ministry Network Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of Bangladesh</p>
December 14	<p>Parishes: St. Stephen's, Bloomfield; St. George's, Bolton; Trinity, Branford Additionally: Those who advocate at the local, state, national, or global level for the poor, the lonely & the oppressed. For Swords to Plowshares Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil</p>
December 21	<p>Parishes Calvary St. George's, Bridgeport; St. Luke/St. Paul, Bridgeport; St. John's, Bridgeport Additionally: The children of the world & all ECCT ministries for children at risk Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Anglican Church of Burundi</p>
December 28	<p>Parishes: St. Mark's, Bridgeport; St. Mark's, Bridgewater; St. Paul's, Brookfield Additionally: Soup kitchens, food pantries, Food Ministry Network & all ministries that feed those who are food insecure Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Anglican Church of Canada</p>

Treasurer Report

Susan Shultz

	OCT	(UNDER)/OVER BUDGET	YTD	(UNDER)/OVER YTD BUDGET
INCOME	\$ 9,109.16	\$ 1,365.33	\$ 104,002.16	\$ 7,288.86
EXPENSES	\$ 9,732.45	\$ 1,265.98	\$ 110,980.47	(\$ 1,602.53)
NET	(\$ 623.29)	\$ 99.35	(\$ 6,978.31)	\$ 8,891.39

Notes: Overall we had another month that was very close to budget. The bottom line was a savings of \$100 from budgeted expectations. Year-to-date we have cut our budgeted deficit in more than half from around \$16,000 in the red to just \$7,000 in the red. Big thanks have to go to the Thrift Store which is up \$3,500 so far for the year. It still looks like this might be the first year in awhile we end with a deficit.

SAFE CHURCH TRAINING SCHEDULE (DEC)

Safe Church Certification is a requirement of The Episcopal Church for all persons serving in these roles/areas: Acolyte, Altar Guild, Bible Study, Communications, Crucifer, Fund Raising, Hospitality, Lay Reader, Music, Officiant, Pastoral Visitor, Property Management, Technology, Thrift Store, Treasurer, Usher, Warden, or Worship Committee. Comprehensive trainings take about five hours to complete and are done once. Recertification training is done every three years after the comprehensive training is completed.

December 4, 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. - Comprehensive via Zoom

December 16, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. - Recertification via Zoom

Register online at www.episcopalct.org

Worship Schedule 9:00 a.m. (unless otherwise noted)

	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 24 Christmas Eve 4pm	December 28
Service	Morning Prayer	Eucharist	Eucharist	Eucharist	Lessons & Carols
Presider/ Officiant	Wendy Bellmore	Rev. Stephen Nagy	Rev. Charles Kamano	Rev. Charles Kamano	George Coulombe
Crucifer		Kristina Langlan	George Coulombe	George Coulombe	
Acolyte		George Coulombe	Audrey Sundwall	George Coulombe	
Lay Reader	Kristina Langlan	Evelyn Conant	Judy Herzman	Audrey Sundwall	Wendy Bellmore Brad Conant Terry Osmun Barbara Parsons Anthony Reckart Susan Shultz
Usher	George Coulombe	Audrey Sundwall	Kristina Langlan	Wendy Bellmore	Ken Dougherty Kathy Dougherty
Zoom Tech	Susan Shultz	Susan Shultz	Susan Shultz	Susan Shultz	Susan Shultz
Lead Counter	George Coulombe	Susan Shultz	George Coulombe		Astrid Swanson
Asst Counter	Melanie Miller	Evelyn Conant	Barbara Coulombe		Judy Herzman

Clergy, Vestry and Staff

Priest-in-charge	Rev. Charles L. Kamano
Senior Warden	Diane Villano
Junior Warden	Barbara Parsons (& Outreach)
Treasurer	Susan Shultz (& Technology)
Clerk	Kristina Langlan
Vestry Member	Ray Clearwater
Vestry Member	Carol Link-Ude (& Altar Guild; Feast & Festivities)
Vestry Member	Astrid Swanson
Vestry Member	Pat Walters
Vestry Member	Brad Conant
Music Director	Barbara Coulombe
Parish Administrator	Diane Rowley

To connect by computer, enter: <https://tinyurl.com/3kbvnb4>, or click on the link on our webpage:

www.ChristandTheEpiphany.org

To join by phone call: 929-436-2866, Meeting ID = 763 909 4733, Password = 39

Weekly bulletins are emailed out on Fridays. Zoom is opened around 8:45 a.m. on Sunday.

If you are not receiving the email bulletin, please contact Diane Rowley in the office at 203-467-2310 or christandtheepiphany@gmail.com. If you want or need any help getting connected on Zoom please reach out any time to Susan Shultz at 203-589-1142 or sbshultz@gmail.com.

Christ and The Epiphany Church

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Email: christandtheepiphany@gmail.com

Website: www.christandtheepiphany.org

Worship Schedule

Sunday 9:00 a.m. In-Person & Online Zoom Worship