



Community of Christ

**Bethel Congregation
Midlands Mission Center
Welcoming the online community
Kansas City, KS
December 7, 2025 10:30AM CDT**

The Promise of Peace

Presiding Priest Sandra Billings

Carols of the Season

“Silvery Star, Precious Star” **CCS #419**
“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” **CCS #415**

Welcome & Announcements

Scripture Reading The Peaceful Kingdom (see insert)

***Advent Hymn** “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” **CCS #437**

***Invocation**

***Response**

Advent Focus Joyce Shipley

Advent Responsive Prayer

Leader: God, we lift this Advent prayer to you:

All: That we might wait in your peace,

Leader: Hear our prayer, O Lord. (pause for a moment of silence)

All: That we might find peace as our home,

Leader: Hear our prayer, O Lord. (pause for a moment of silence)

All: That we might nurture peace within,

Leader: Hear our prayer, O Lord. (pause for a moment of silence)

All: That we might bear your peace to others,

Leader: Hear our prayer, O Lord. (pause for a moment of silence)

All: That we may live in the light of your peace,

Leader: Hear our prayer, O Lord. (pause for a moment) Amen.

Advent Peacemakers’ Hymn “Peace Child” **CCS #402**

Advent Communion Message Elder Kristine Shipley

Hymn of Peace “O Day of Peace” **CCS #380**

Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

Invitation to Communion

All are welcome at Christ’s table. The Lord’s Supper, or Communion, is a sacrament in which we remember the life, death, resurrection, and continuing presence of Jesus Christ. In Community of Christ, we also experience Communion as an opportunity to renew our baptismal covenant and to be formed as disciples who live Christ’s mission. Others might have different or added understandings within their faith traditions. We invite all who participate in the Lord’s Supper to do so in the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

****Blessing and Serving of the Bread and Wine**

Focus Moment

Sandra Billings

Disciples’ Generous Response

<https://bit.ly/BethelGift>

Sharing the peace of Jesus Christ involves generously and compassionately offering witness, ministry, sacraments, and community life that reconciles and restores people to right or righteous relationships with God, themselves, others, and creation. This holistic approach to proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel is faithful to our best understanding of God’s will...

***Closing Hymn** “Blessed Be the God of Israel” **CCS #396**

***Benediction/Prayer for Peace by Barbara Howard**

God of all the Earth and all the Earth’s peoples move in us to pray for peace.

May the spirit of reconciliation like floodwaters fill the places of political power.

May the healing waters of God’s love baptize the hearts of warring people.

May God use us to shatter walls of fear and prejudice.

May we build, rather than destroy.

Let God be our source of strength rather than relying on arms.

May we arm ourselves with confidence in God’s creative power to move us from terror to trust.

May we be God’s peacemakers. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

***Sung Response** “Wait for the Lord” **CCS #399** (three times)

***Sending Forth**

Go, bring Peace, live Peace, share Peace, and be Peace

***Congregation invited to stand**

****Congregation invited to kneel**

Take Note

Online Ministry & Priesthood Classes *Center for Innovation in Ministry and Mission (CIMM)*

To enroll or for more information on these classes and the certificate programs, visit graceland.edu/CIMM. Cost is \$25 unless noted.

October 20 – December 14, 2025

- **Introduction to Scripture** – Daniel Nowiski
- **Ministry of the Deacon** – I. David Lloyd
- **RCYW Core Training** – I. David Lloyd

January 5 - March 1, 2026

- **Introduction to PASTOR Ministry** (ends Feb. 15)
- **Ministry of the Disciple**
- Christian Ministry Cert. **Spiritual Formation** – Kris Judd (\$100)

CIMM Sessions are short seminars on topics of theology, culture, and Community of Christ Identity, Mission, Message, Beliefs and practices.

These free sessions are broadcast live on **Zoom at 7:00pm most Wednesdays**. To register, visit www.graceland.edu/cimmsessions.

- Dec 3 – **Ministry to the Unhoused** – Gleen Johnson
- Dec 10 – **Jesus as an Untouchable** – Joshua Bennett
- Dec 17 – **God with Us: Reclaiming the Truth of the Nativity: Unveiling the Theological Power Behind a Familiar Story** – Dave Anderson

Central Mission Center Temple School Courses

- **Intro to Scripture:** 6:30 – 8:30 pm Mondays 1/5 to 2/9 @ Stone Church

More information and registration instructions can be found at centralmission.org/temple-school/.



Midlands Mission Center

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ONLINE RESOURCES

The USA Mission Field has a new website! cofchristusa.org

eNews website: cofchrist.org/news/new-gathering-resources-website

Worship resources are in a new location on the “Gathering Resources” gathering.cofchrist.org/ Scroll down to “Lectionary Calendar” under “Plan”, then use the arrows to navigate to the correct month and date.

CENTER FOR LIVING WATER

www.centerforlivingwater.org

Grounded in the contemplative tradition of Christian spirituality, the Center for Living Water encourages attendees to seek spiritual transformation and peaceful living through practice and action.

- **Sacred Flow: Mindful Community Yoga** – 8pm 1st Wednesdays
- **Conversation Café** – 7pm 1st & 3rd Thursdays
- **Soul Collage: Art & Soul** – 7pm 3rd Tuesdays
- **Sacred Pulse: Mindful Music** – 6pm Dec 20



Huixqui Sisters Holiday Concert

Under the Spiral Concert Series

7pm Saturday, December 13

Pronounced like “whiskey”, this vocal duet originally from Huixquilucan, Mexico, is accompanied by guitar and keys. The duo creates custom arrangements of their favorite songs, with a vocal blend only achieved by sisters and vocal precision. Tickets are \$20 each and can be reserved at bit.ly/SistersHolidayTix.

Autumn Lecture Series

Journey with us as we explore a number of fascinating individuals and topics from Community of Christ's past. More information and registration for each event can be found at bit.ly/AutumnLecture25.

- 7pm Tues, Dec 2 – “*The Peter and Mary Whitmer Family and Diversity in the 1830s Church of Christ*” with Mark Staker
 - 7pm Thurs, Dec 4 – “*Cecil Ettinger's Journey to Nigeria*” with David Ettinger
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EMERGE Online Youth Gathering

6pm Sunday, December 28

All youth ages 14–18 are invited to join this Zoom gathering to connect, make new friends, and share life together with others across the church. Everyone is welcome, and we’d love to see you there!

Zoom link: bit.ly/EmergeDec2025

Peace Colloquy: Houselessness & Community Action Ignites Sacred Action

This fall, Midlands and Central Mission Centers came together at the Community of Christ Temple for a transformative Peace Colloquy that invited disciples and seekers alike to embody faith as *liberation in action*.

The event, grounded in the theme “**Building Bridges, Amplifying Voices & Taking Action**,” offered more than conversation—it became a living testimony of what happens when we allow the Spirit to move among us with courage and compassion.

Participants heard stories of resilience and liberation: a trans musician whose honest sharing and song brought the sanctuary to tears; a woman courageously recounting her journey through houselessness after leaving an abusive marriage; and a group of young men, connected through *Artists Helping the Homeless*, whose compassion and service reflected Christ’s friendship that crosses every social line.

Attendees were not only inspired—they were *activated*. In keeping with the Colloquy’s call to “take action,” participants made tangible commitments to carry peace into their own communities. Since that weekend, members have registered as foster parents, attended city council meetings for the first time, and joined local efforts to support unhoused neighbors. Each pledge, large or small, has become a spark of divine liberation rekindled across our mission centers.

This year’s colloquy was more than an event—it was a movement of holy reawakening. A reminder that God’s Spirit still breathes through our collective action; that hope is not naïve, but grounded; that faith is not about perfection, but about showing up where love calls.

As one participant wrote afterward, “*I left the colloquy believing again that change is possible—and that I have a role in it.*”

May we continue to live unashamed of the gospel of liberating love. May our peace be active, our justice courageous, and our hope stubborn enough to transform the world. Ending Houselessness is possible.

Peace and Justice Specialist, Jess Pycior