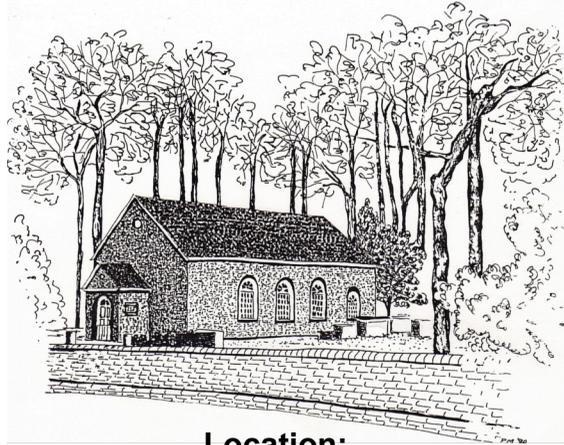




NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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URBANNA, VA  
PERMIT No. 6

January  
2022

Join us for our Sunday On-Line Facebook Service  
<http://christchurchmiddlesex.thediocese.net/default.asp>



**Location:**

Routes 33 & 638  
Christchurch,  
Middlesex County, Virginia

**Mailing:**

PO Box 476; Saluda, Virginia 23149

**Telephone:**

804-758-2006

**E-Mail:**

CCParish1666@gmail.com

**Website:**

christchurchmiddlesex.com

**Services:**

Wednesday Eucharist 9:00 AM  
Sunday Services: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM  
The Rev. Stuart Wood, Rector  
The Rev. Bob Pritchard, Ph.D.,  
Priest Associate  
The Rev. Deacon Peggy Moncure

# Christ Church Parish (Episcopal) Middlesex

## Monthly Newsletter

### January 2022

### From Our Rector



Merry Christmas and a blessed Epiphany. Yes, it's still appropriate to wish people Merry Christmas through January 5<sup>th</sup>, which is the twelfth day of Christmas, and then we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany when we remember the visit of the wise men drawn to Bethlehem by the guiding of a star.

The first Sunday after Christmas day the gospel was the prologue of John 1:1-18 and it speaks of light, the true light, which has come into the world. "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Matthew 5:16 encourages us to, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (RSV)

Despite all the complications caused by COVID, I am so thankful for all the ways that Christ Church Parish's family has been able to let our light shine to the community and beyond. The first great effort was creating our on-line presence with our worship services. Before Palm Sunday, these were pre-recorded services, but since then people have been able to participate from home in real time as we worship together in the church. This past summer we offered an arts camp to youth in the county with the help of many of you giving your time each day for a week thanks to the organizational skills of our Deacon Peg. We continue to be a shining presence at the Cryer Center with the food pantry. Thanks to the talents of some of our men folk, a wonderful stable was constructed to remind people of the humble birth of our savior. Then a faithful group of people stood in the rain to offer a living nativity to the community, with others singing, and our Scout troop helping with traffic.

*continued on next page*

The Celtic Christmas Concert, which was a joint venture with Saluda Baptist Church, raised \$600.00 that was sent to the American Red Cross to help with tornado relief, and the Rector's Discretionary Fund then sent a generous donation to Episcopal Relief to also help with tornado relief. The Outreach ministry adopted a family for Christmas and Judy Quilter, Pam McClelland, and Susie Loustaunau went shopping to fulfill the wishes of three children and their parents. The AA group continues to grow on Tuesdays and Thursday and hardly a meeting doesn't happen that someone stops at my office door to thank us for providing a place for them to meet.

As we look to this new year of 2022, let us look for ways to let Christ's light shine in the world. There are still many who live in darkness and need that light. The needs in our community are out there and all we need to do is open our eyes to see it and then find ways to address it. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

Happy New Year. Stay well and stay faithful.

Fr. Stuart

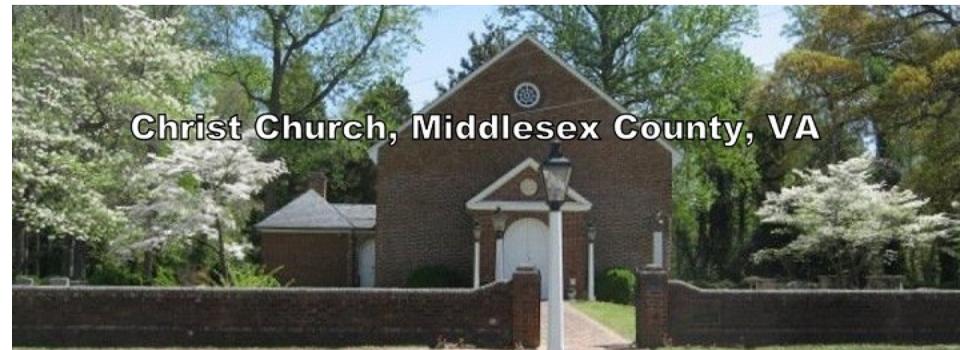


**"We are a family of faith, growing in Christ through worship, learning and service, who strive to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves."**

Happy New Year!

Although January is often a quiet month as we relax from all the Christmas activities and wait for signs of Spring, it is also a time for planning new projects and making lists of new goals. The Vestry will be having the same sort of transition. We will elect new Senior and Junior wardens and welcome three new members to the Vestry. They will undoubtedly bring to us new perspectives and ways to continue our mission of supporting our Rector and the church congregation. I certainly enjoyed my year as Senior Warden, and I look forward to continuing to serve on the 2022 Vestry. Best wishes to all Christ Church members for a happy and healthy new year. God bless.

Lydia



### **Mid-week Eucharist**

Please remember that we have a mid-week Eucharist here at Christ Church. The service is at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday mornings and will be celebrated in the Chapel in the Parish Hall.



### **... from the Junior Warden's Workbench**

Thanks to all who helped me throughout the year. A special thanks to our previous Jr. Warden, Jeff Loustaunau, and our Buildings and Grounds Committee. Because of you and your efforts many seen and unseen projects were accomplished this year.

Best wishes to all in the New Year!!!

John Quilter



## From the Deacon's Bench

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Our ministry to those in our parish community and beyond who need our love and care is moving along. Team members are busy taking the required online courses for Safe Church Training. Also, on January 16<sup>th</sup>, a representative from Middlesex DSS is going to offer a short training session onsite in between our church services. There is still time to sign up if you feel called to this important ministry. We plan to begin our visits in late January.

As we move from our seasons of Advent and Christmas and into Epiphany, there are other ways in which you can minister to others. Even if you feel you are not called to a regular ongoing ministry with our above-mentioned team, there are many ways to "Share the Love" with others. As we look to the light of Epiphany, occasionally reach out and share that light with someone you know. Send a card, make a phone call, visit someone. Something that may only take you a few minutes may mean the world to someone. The light you share will brighten their day.

These past few weeks have been especially wonderful for me. My first Advent and Christmas as clergy has been exciting and very rewarding. The Advent programs provided by Fr Stuart were magnificent. He made them so interesting and informative. We were very blessed by his tremendous leadership. We also had some special fellowship with our delicious, shared meals. The Christmas services were beautiful and filled with special moments. Thank you all for welcoming me and Henry into this loving church family. I wish you a Magnificent and Happy New Year!

Peg+

◀ December	January 2022						February ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
						1	
2 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	3	4 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	5 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am In the Chapel  Connecting Threads 1:00 pm	6 Epiphany  GEEK Committee 9:00 am  Fellowship Committee 11:15 am  AA Group Noon -1:00 pm  Boy Scouts 6:30 pm	7	8	
9 Holy Eucharist Services 10:00 am  Congregational Meeting 11:00 am	10	11 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	12 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am In the Chapel	13 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm  Boy Scouts 6:30 pm	14	15	
16 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	17	18 Finance Committee 9:00 am  AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	19 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am In the Chapel	20 Outreach Ministry 9:30 am  AA Group Noon -1:00 pm  Boy Scouts 6:30 pm	21	22	
23 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	24	25 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	26 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am In the Chapel	27 Worship Committee 9:30 am  AA Group Noon -1:00 pm  Boy Scouts 6:30 pm	28	29	
30 Morning Prayer 8:00 am 10:30 am	31						



Well 2021 didn't work out like I'd planned at all! I thought that COVID would be history and we would be going about our lives as usual. The joy of coming together on Palm Sunday, ending our exile from our church building seemed to be the punctuation mark on that plan. I've read that God laughs when he listens to our plans. OK...I got the message! But I'm stubborn and I still plan.

This year I plan to take more walks. Read more books. See more friends. Take joy in blooming flowers. Listen more closely to the word of God during services. I plan to seize the day and not postpone things that I should do immediately. There isn't always another time. This pandemic has taught us much about what is truly important.

And YOU, my wonderful church friends, are truly important. So as I write this on Christmas Day (cancelled in my little family due to COVID concerns), I wish you a joyful 2022 where we see each other often and celebrate the simple joy of living. That is my plan!

Grace Parker  
Verger



Thank You!! According to scripture, God created Earth for mankind. Thus, as Christians, stewardship is very important as one of the best ways of expressing our love and our gratitude to God and to foster our worship of him.

This is why it is important to recognize our community of faith for rising to the challenge. Your pledge generosity for 2022 has been exceptional and when combined with similarly generous supporting donations anticipated through the year, we expect to cover our 2022 budget. Isn't that a good feeling? Thank You!!

This wonderful outcome happens when we as a congregation come together to give of ourselves and our hearts for the benefit of our worship together.

Well done! Thank You!!

Stewardship Committee

Fr Stuart, Lydia Dudley, Jack Hellems, and Jim Knupp

## Catechism Corner

Mission: A small corner of faith, understanding and education



The Bread at the celebration of the Eucharist leavened or not?

From Christianity's earliest days, baptized Christians were understood to reaffirm their unity with each other and with Jesus Christ himself in the celebration of the Eucharist and the reception of the consecrated bread and wine. Without firm proof and recalling that the first celebration happened during Passover when leavening was prohibited by Jewish law, the Roman Catholic norm was unleavened bread.

By the end of the medieval period, the Reformations found critics of the traditional liturgy became more vocal, and western Christianity was divided into two major "camps": the traditional Catholics and a growing cluster of "reformed" church communities known generally as "Protestant" churches. Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 adopted the "reform" attitude, breaking with Rome allowing leavened bread.

Loaf bread once again became common in Episcopal churches after the 1979 prayer book was adopted, particularly in congregations big enough to support weekly bread baking.

With no instruction in the prayer book about what kind of bread to use, Episcopal clergy and congregations are free to make their own decisions!

Miles Libbey with wonderful guidance from Fr. Bob

# Outreach Ministry



It's been a difficult year for many in Middlesex County. The Outreach Ministry here at CCP with your help accomplished several its' goals in 2021. We assisted Hands Across Middlesex with a coat drive, donated items to Social Services to those that felt isolated during covid and gave gift baskets to four schools to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week. We participated in Lower Methodist Church Easter Egg drive by, created an Outreach video and brochure to highlight the many worthwhile projects CCP participates in. And as always, we were happy to lend a hand with Habitat for Humanity. We are grateful for the school supplies that were significant in filling 30 pack backs to our Middlesex students, and with the help of Father Stuart's discretionary fund we were able to provide Christmas gifts to three children.

Finally, after many years of talking about doing a "live" nativity, it finally happened. *(picture on next page)*. Even though the rain hampered our efforts. Our cast and chorus made it through the rain for over an hour. Many thanks to All who participated in any way in this first event, but most especially to our Chair, Ann Padgett. Ann's organizational skills can't be beat! We are truly grateful to Mike Kirk (engineer), Tom Clark, and John Quilter for all their hard work building our stable and manger, and Clayton Neal who led our chorus. Thanks to Deacon Peg and Henry for their contributions of the star atop the stable and a beautiful handout for the children. We can't forget the Boy Scouts who are always willing to lend a hand. It is our hope that this can be an annual tradition here at CCP going forward.

We made it through a difficult year but are praying for a Blessed and Happy New Year for us all!

Judy Quilter

*EDITORS NOTE: In 1224 St. Francis of Assisi created the first live Nativity as a portrayal to enhance his sermon on the miraculous event.*



Christ Church Parish (Episcopal) live Nativity



## THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRIST CHURCH PARISH (EPISCOPAL)

The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be on the second Sunday of January. Therefore, the Brotherhood meeting will slip to the third Sunday, January 16.

There will be a special joint meeting with the ECW in April. We are delighted that our speaker will be Sally and Robin Wells' daughter, Amy. Amy is a highly experienced financial advisor. She will speak to the tax benefits of charitable giving, and how to reduce taxable income when making charitable gifts. This will be a great opportunity to learn how to help yourself while helping others. It will also be a wonderful to have this as a joint meeting with the ECW.

Phil Brown

## The Elephant in the Room!

During this Christmas Season, I am totally amazed at the level of activity and the number of our parishioners involved in our church and outreach activities within our community. It is so inspiring to witness it and to be a small part of it. But as we go about contributing to our church, our activities often lead to discussions about issues we're all facing, or what is holding us back, or what are we really worried about in our church.

And this most often results in a statement from one or more people saying, "Our congregation is shrinking in numbers"! In discussing problems with balancing our budget, we all acknowledge that more members would provide the additional revenue that we sorely need. To maintain our facilities, there are very few of us that can (or should) be on a ladder or able to crawl into tight spaces to fix something. To participate in the Oyster Festival, we acknowledge that there are very few of us to work the many positions required for setting up the booth, cooking and selling the food, and then cleaning up afterward. And on Sunday mornings, at least at the 1030 service, it's quite lonely with only 30-some people in attendance, half of whom are supporting or taking part in the service. And the list could go on. This 'shrinking in numbers' is our "Elephant in the Room" that needs to be corralled as it is overshadowing all that we do.

On a positive note, I don't hear us laying blame on any person or activity or lack of activity. I think we are all aware that there are various reasons, some out of our control, that are contributing to this situation. They include the fact that many people have re-located away from the area, we are all aging so many can no longer attend regularly, and the pandemic has put a real damper on getting together with people. But even if these things are out of our control, we still need to grow our church community. And I have heard almost all of us express a desire to do something about this, but still nothing happens.

Recognizing this, the Vestry has asked me, but is really asking all of us, to form an Ad-Hoc Committee. Its purpose is to "corral this elephant" by studying this situation and developing strategies for our church that will promote growth in our parish. Since most of us are complaining about the situation, many of us are probably willing to help.

*continued on next page*

I suggest we start by exploring Diocesan resources for strategies, then meet soon to "brainstorm" strategies, identify our target markets, scrutinize our actions that may be alienating people, reinforce all those things we're doing right, and with the permission of the Vestry, commence executing the strategies.

I admit that this may be an over-simplification. But it is a starting point that I hope energizes many of us to want to participate. If you can help, and I know you can, please contact me by phone, text, or email now!

I look forward to hearing from you about your thoughts and ideas that we can follow up on right after the first of the year!!!

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Loustaunau  
207-469-8454  
pjlous71@gmail.com

### NEWSLETTER ARTICLES ACCEPTED!

This newsletter is for information and articles that are germane to Christ Church Parish. If you are a member of Christ Church Parish you may submit an article of interest for consideration to be published in the newsletter.

To ensure that the newsletter is published and distributed in a manner that all will receive it before the month it pertains to begins, the submission deadlines for 2022 are:

<u>Month Published</u>	<u>Submission Deadline</u>
February 2022	Monday January 24, 2022
March 2022	Monday February 21, 2022
April 2022	Monday March 28, 2022
May 2022	Monday April 25, 2022
June 2022	Friday May 27, 2022
July 2022	Monday June 27, 2022
August 2022	Monday July 25, 2022

All submissions are to be emailed as a **word document** to [jeff.of.jamaica@outlook.com](mailto:jeff.of.jamaica@outlook.com)  
Pictures may also be submitted and will be used on a "space available" basis.

## Videography Team Ministry Ready for New Members in 2022

**Do you want to make a huge contribution to our outreach mission?** Thereby also taking steps that have potential to expand our church membership? Learn new skills? Work with a wonderful group of talented, dedicated and best of all collegial Christ Church members? If any or all of the above, seriously consider joining the videography ministry component of the Communications team. Numerous churches are planning to continue their online services indefinitely. We believe we should also remain in that mainstream at least for the foreseeable future.

**Some have referred to some of us as "geeks."** I can assure you that I have zero geek genes, only a strong desire to support our online ministry effort. The proliferation of remote-control devices in our living alone is enough to intimidate me. Yes, I use a computer and "do" email and zoom, but I avoid all social media technologies insofar as possible. I have so admired and appreciated the expertise, dedication, and patience of my technology mentors within our group, namely Mike Floyd, Mike Gorin, Jack Fackler, and Greg Grictheier, as well as the able leadership of Jeff Loustaunau who keeps us on track.

**Our main goal over the past 9 months has been to establish a sustainable program of live streamed/recorded worship services.** In March of this year we submitted a successful Mustard Seed grant proposal to support additional state-of-the-art equipment. By Palm Sunday we were recording in-person services, relieving Fr. Stuart of the task of recording online services that he had so ably handled throughout the worst of the pandemic. Ensuring the online version conveys substantially what others see and hear in person has been an interesting and rewarding challenge. Enabling those who really can't physically make it to church for whatever reason to continue to connect regularly with Christ Church has been tremendously satisfying.

**We are about to embark on an exciting "Phase II"** now that new equipment acquisition and operating procedures have stabilized. This includes planning to train new recruits starting in early 2022. We are a very small team, and, unfortunately, anyone can suffer burnout or be unable to participate on any given Sunday. Unless we find others willing to join us we're a little concerned about the sustainability of this worthwhile effort. Interested candidates could also be parishioners' relatives or significant others or even friends willing to make the commitment. What you or they would learn would look great on a resume.

**To remedy our concern about backup videographers, we will be offering a training program starting early 2022 with start date TBD.** We understand that buttons, knobs and switches can appear intimidating to some but they can all be mastered with some practice. Your instructors would never expect anyone to simply "see one do one". We are all committed to helping anyone who wants to learn in an enjoyable, low stress way, and eventually feel comfortable and confident managing the camera and sound adjustments before a first solo flight.

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**How successful have we been so far with this online worship outreach ministry?** It takes time to accumulate and interpret enough data to be meaningful, but we also understand that some are increasingly curious. At this point responsible reporting still limits us to only the following:

The overall average viewers of recordings was 74 and the median was 75 from April 4 (Palm Sunday) to November 28 when basic statistics were first examined in any quantitative way. However, if one focuses on the most recent 20 weeks, about 70% of viewer numbers are higher than this. In fact, the recorded service on the day of Halloween-- the day before All Saints' Day -- shows an astonishing 202 viewers on Facebook. In a statistical sense that appears to be an outlier, but in fact that's what Facebook recorded. Who is taking advantage of our online offerings is harder to determine but we're working on that. We can know identities of viewers only if they email us or comment on Facebook. Examining a list of names of those who have posted comments since our recordings began confirms that we are indeed engaging others outside of our church membership.

Every single comment -- even an emoji-- contributes to an understanding of how viewers are reacting to our services. If you are simply watching and not commenting, please remember that comments help a whole lot to keep us energized and continuing to do our best.

A few representative comments from Facebook and emails:

-    (many of those)

- "I enjoyed another excellent service from Saluda yesterday, congratulations to the technical crew, the sound quality is amazing, and I loved seeing the things which have been donated to the church over the years, plus the beautiful aerial shots of the church in the autumn."

- "I have tuned in regularly to online services from many miles away and can hardly wait to rejoin everyone in person"

- "I love the live online service...The whole online thing has been wonderful through all of this...I will be returning to church..."

- "Thank you. I've been ill and unable to make it to church."

If anyone would like more information about basic skills we consider important or a quick demonstration of what you could learn please do not hesitate to contact any of us.

Mike Floyd, Mike.Floyd@va.metrocast.net

Mike Gorin, mkgorin@va.metrocast.net

Ann de Peyster, adepeyst@sdsu.edu

Jeff Loustaunau, pjlo71@gmail.com

Ann DePeyster

# Special January Celebrations



## Anniversaries

1 *Pete & Judy Mansfield*

3 *Garry & Micki Clay*

16 *Robin & Sally Wells*

## Birthdays

1 *Lurlene Samuel*

3 *Lee Davis*

5 *Bill Brown*

7 *Leigh Cros*

10 *Stuart Wood*

13 *Garry Clay*

*Jim Knupp*

16 *Donna Gates*

17 *Jerry May*

20 *Steve Richardson*

21 *John Hawkins*

*Page Wittkamp*

24 *Christopher Hamlett*

16 *Byron Parker*

28 *Charles Adkins*



## My Story; Our Story; The Story

Bishop G. Porter Taylor has been offering thought provoking zoom classes deeply enriched with personal experiences and reflections since he became Assisting Bishop in the Diocese of Virginia in 2020. In addition to a Master of Divinity, Bishop Taylor holds both a B.A. and an M.A. in English, and a Ph.D. in Theology and Literature. He was a visiting professor at Wake Forest University Divinity School before joining the Diocese of Virginia. It would be exceedingly difficult to find anyone more qualified to lead discussions on ***how fiction and poetry can take us deeper into our faith.*** He is offering two tracks for his latest course offering titled ***My Story; Our Story; The Story:*** A Clergy Track on Thursdays at 4 p.m., January 13 - February 24, and a Lay Track: Wednesdays, 3 p.m. January 12 - February 23 OR Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. January 13 - February 23. Each non-credit/no stress class is typically one hour. Reading the selections beforehand is important but usually minimal effort. If you wish to join these online small group discussions or have questions, email Anita Lisk, [alisk@thediocee.net](mailto:alisk@thediocee.net), and indicate if you are clergy or lay. Excerpts from this latest course description are in italics:

*“As human beings we make meaning through story. Stories are how we connect with one another. When you are introduced to a stranger, you begin with your story: ‘Where I am from; what I do; what are my passions’ and so on.... In addition, the deeper truth can often only be reached through story. We know this from reading the gospels. People asked Jesus a complicated question, and he answered with a story: ‘Once there was a man who had two sons...’*

This latest series of classes starting in January 2022 *“is intended to deepen our awareness and our reservoir of story and of image. We will read short stories and poems and use them as the way to go deeper into the Good News and how we encounter it in our lives.”*

Some newsletter readers may recall that the May and August 2021 issues included contributions from Sharon Colston and Ann de Peyster describing their experiences in another class offered by Bishop Taylor focusing on the writings of Christian mystics. Participants in his classes immediately sense his passion and infectious enthusiasm for literature and especially poetry. But he tells us that this upcoming class *“...is not an English class but a Theology class that uses fiction and poetry as the doorway into the mysteries of our faith. Plus, talking about fiction and poetry is fun. We will use two anthologies: one for poems and the other for short stories.... The poetry anthology is **Joy: 100 Poems**, Edited by Christian Wiman.”* Bishop Taylor says he is still deciding on the short story anthology but will decide soon.

Ann DePeyster