

Christ Church Parish

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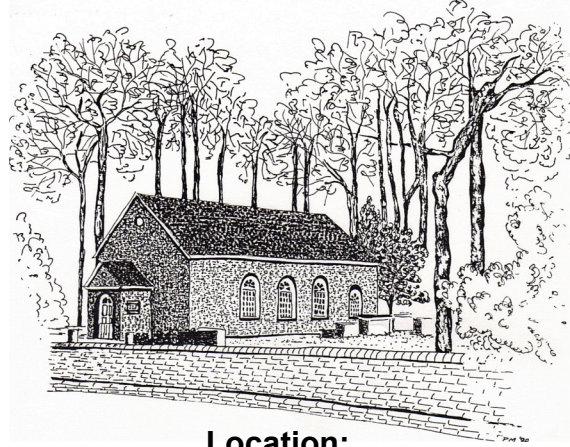
Post Office Box 476, Saluda, VA 23149



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
URBANNA, VA
PERMIT No. 6

December
2023

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

Christ Church Parish (Episcopal) Middlesex

Monthly Newsletter December 2023

Message From Our Rector



Last year Advent began on November 27th and ended on Christmas eve. It was the longest that Advent could last, 28 days. This year Advent will begin on December 3rd and of course, will end on December 24th which makes it the shortest number of days in Advent, 22 days. This is all determined by the four Sundays prior to Christmas Day. That, means that we have six less days in which to prepare for Christmas Day.

I've often heard people say, "You know, it will be here before you know it." That's very true of this year's Christmas Celebration.

Normally we don't see any Christmas greenery, wreaths, poinsettias, and Nativity set up until after Advent 4 in the church. If we followed that rule this year, it would mean that we would only have five hours to go from a stark Advent scene to all the festive finery that transforms the church in preparation for celebrating our Lord's birth. Therefore, we may have much of the greenery up before Advent 4 this year.

The suddenness of this year's Christmas eve service reminds us of the message of Advent. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. Keep awake ... what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

May you all have a blessed and meaningful Advent season as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth. – Fr. Stuart

THANK YOU

As I sit in my office on Thanksgiving morning, I would like to take this opportunity to thank some individuals in our parish for their generous contributions to our church and community. Some I will name and others wish to remain anonymous.

First, The Rev. Scott Krejci gave the church a page from "the Holie Bible – 1588" which is framed and hangs in my office and he also donated his sterling silver travel communion kit for the use of clergy in the parish. It consists of a small chalice, paten, pyx (bread box), spoon, two cruets, and an oil stock for anointing, all contained in a wooden travel box. This will be very useful if your future priests do not own their own set – and many do not.

Joyce and Howard Reisinger recently gave us ten new liquid candles to replace the wax candles in the wall sconces in the church. This will truly add beauty to any of our candlelight services,

especially Christmas eve. They will also be a lasting memorial to three special people in their lives: John T. and Mary Bristow Williams, and Mary Lawson Bristow.

One individual made a generous donation to the Rector's Discretionary fund with the expressed wish that it be used to help individuals in Middlesex County. This enabled me to make contributions to both the Cryer Center and to the Department of Social Services Special Needs Fund which will help with emergency rental and utility expenses.

Another individual gave a sizable gift to be used toward one of the major projects here in the parish not covered by our operating budget. Thank you.

And I would like to add my thanks to those who contributed toward the replacement of all the organ speakers. This will ensure that the organ will continue to support our worship services through music.

Many more of you give in very quiet ways through the work that you do around the church and parish hall, and in supporting the work of the Cryer Center and Habitat. All of us working together, utilizing our many gifts and resources, are truly making a difference. Thanks be to God. – Fr. Stuart



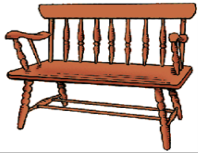
Mid-week Eucharist

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 is celebrated in the Chapel in the Parish Hall.

A Service of Lessons and Carols Presented at Christchurch School – December 17th

Christ Church Parish will be providing refreshments at the Lessons and Carols Service at Christchurch School. We are asking the congregation to put on their baking hats again so we can provide refreshments for this wonderful event.

There will be two performances—the first at 3:30 to 4:00 pm, and the second at 7:15 to 7:45 pm. We are asking for cookies of all types. We will be happy to package them for you. Please deliver to CCP kitchen no later than Noon on Saturday, December 16th. If you wish to bring your cookies early just put them in the freezer, and label them for the Lessons and Carols Service. We realize this is a very busy time of year but appreciate your help. All of Christ Church Parish is welcome to attend the Service.



From the Deacon's Bench

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that you are now ready to enjoy the season of Advent. Yes, it is a busy time of year. Last month I, along with others, attended our Annual Diocesan Convention. It was a very informative event, and you will find a nice report in this newsletter, which was compiled by Ann de Peyster.

Please continue to collect and donate books for Middlesex Social Services. They will be given to those they serve, and all types of books are appreciated.... fiction, nonfiction, books for children, cookbooks, etc. They may be placed by my desk, and we will collect them through the middle of December.

In January, we will attempt to restart the ACTS Ministry (**A**cting and **C**aring as **T**abitha **S**erved). This ministry will involve "adopting" someone in a nursing home who needs to have a little TLC. There are many who have no one to visit them. We will try to serve them by visiting, sending a card, taking them a flower, etc. If you are interested in this type of ministry, please be on the lookout for an information meeting in January.

Also in January, I will announce a meeting for a Fine Arts Camp Staff meeting. We will begin planning Camp 2024. There is a great need for volunteers to help with this special event which will take place in June. So, if you love the arts and enjoy working with children, please consider helping us. More information to follow.

Peace, Peg+



from the Junior Warden's Workbench

Many thanks to all the people who have helped accomplish multiple projects this year!

In the coming month, we are looking for volunteers to help us pick up leaves on the outside of the brick wall that borders the cemetery and churchyard. Jimmy Bristow will be removing leaves inside the wall of the cemetery. We really could use your help to make our grounds look good for Christmas.

We are planning to clean the attic in the Parish Hall by organizing and removing documents that are no longer needed. If you would like to participate in this task, please contact me. One job we would also like to accomplish before Christmas is the painting of the hallway in the Parish Hall.

Scott Holt
(804) 814-8126



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



In order to decorate our lovely Colonial Church with Christmas Poinsettia and other flowers and to remember and honor loved ones, you may make a suggested donation of \$20 payable to Christ Church Parish. Please include the completed form by Monday, December 18, either dropped off at the church office, included in the Sunday Alms Basin, or mailed to:

Christ Church Parish
PO Box 476
Saluda, VA 23149-0476

Important – Please Designate:

Given in Memory of:

OR

Given in Honor of:

Given By:

DEADLINE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

◀ November	December 2023					January ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 YOGA 10:00 am and 3:30 pm	2
3 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	4	5 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	6 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am Advent Dinner and Program 5:30 pm	7 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Scout Troop 7:00	8 YOGA 10:00 am and 3:30 pm Live Nativity 5:00 pm—7:00 pm	9
10 Brotherhood Breakfast 9:00am Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	11	12 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	13 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am Advent Dinner and Program 5:30 pm	14 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Office closed Scout Troop 7:00	15 YOGA 10:00 am and 3:30 pm	16
17 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am Healing Service	18 Elephant Committee 12:00 noon	19 Finance Committee 9:30 am Tech Team 11:30 am AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Vestry 1:30 pm	20 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30 am Advent Dinner and Program 5:30 pm	21 Fellowship Committee 9:30 am AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Office closed Scout Troop 7:00	22 YOGA 10:00 am	23
24 Holy Eucharist Joint Service 10:00 am Caroling 4:30pm Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm	25 Christmas Day Service 10:00 am	26 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Office closed	27	28 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Scout Troop 7:00	29 YOGA 10:00 am	30
31 Holy Eucharist Service 8:00 am Morning Prayer 10:30 am						



"We are coming to the end of the year, and I can only reflect on how fortunate we are to have wonderful women in this Parish who have enabled the success of many of the ECW functions this year. All our ministries are intertwined, so it is difficult to commend our members for not just this group, but all the other ministries and committees in which they are involved. Examples include the combined efforts of the Brotherhood and ECW for the Oyster Festival. Special thanks to Evie Wilton (bake sale, and Judy Quilter (ham biscuits). Then there is the Veterans luncheon, led by the Fellowship Committee but supported both financially and physically by ECW members (Special thank you, Mary Lynn Landgraf). This year we have been involved in many other activities including Wings, Wheels, and Keels Bake Sale (Special Thank You to Susie Loustaunau and Jean Holt), United Thanks Offering (Special Thank you to Ginger Hellems), presenting the Bessie French Scholarship Award (Thank you Anne Wilcox). The ECW makes a true contribution by being part of so many activities (Creation Garden, Summer Camp, Funeral Service Receptions, Coffee Hour, Thanksgiving/Christmas Meals). It is impossible to thank everyone involved, as there exist so many unsung heroes in our church who do so much behind the scenes.

I would also like to express our appreciation to a true unsung hero to the ECW. Virginia Miller has been our treasurer for many years and keeps our finances in order, which is essential to conducting our mission.

As 2024 is just around the corner, the ECW will be voting on a new slate of officers in December. This is always an opportunity for innovative ideas and fresh energy for the year ahead. I look forward to our continued success in supporting the mission of Christ Church Parish.

Karen



Did Ya Know?

Your Christ Church Parish Endowment Board has updated its brochure entitled "Final Plans". It now reads "What Your Family Should Know" and is reorganized to be much more user-friendly.

Be up to date with your plans. Get a copy from the bins along the Fellowship Hall hallway or ask our administrator or ask an Endowment Board Member.

Fr Stuart, Garry Clay, Jack Hellems, Grace Parker, Jeanette Adkins,
Jim Knupp

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Fellowship Committee Expresses Gratitude for Successful

Veterans Luncheon and

Adds a Twist to the Advent Dinners

On 10 November 2023, the Fellowship Committee listed 104 registrants for our annual Veterans Day luncheon, and we had to turn away 5 more that morning trying to make late reservations! If smiles were votes of approval, then we would have scored a 100% approval rating. Good food donated by Portside Grill, lively patriotic music, and a compelling presentation by Reuben Waller on Vietnam and Laos rounded out the presentation.

Many hands and glad hearts contributed to the success of the event. We wish to recognize Barbara Shaw for her role as reservationist for the luncheon, Judy Quilter for her computer skills for our logo and printed materials and Chef Jeff McClelland assisted by Ellen Johnson and Bob Guillotte for overseeing the preparations and serving of the meal. Gratitude also to Dave South for heading the parking operations and to the many men and women who helped set up, serve, and break down after the luncheon.

As we move into Advent, we wanted to offer our Wednesday Advent dinner guests some nuggets of information to gladden the heart. We have decided to couple the Advent scriptures each week with a particular country, serve and share their cuisine, and explore unique ways in which these cultures celebrate the Advent season.

Our first Advent dinner takes place on 6 December and will highlight Poland. The second dinner on 13 December will zoom in on Greece and our third dinner on 20 December highlights Mexico. Come explore what and how other countries celebrate in anticipation of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sign-up sheets are on the Bulletin Board in the Parish Hall.

Lastly on 6 January the winter sky will appear brighter as we will celebrate Epiphany (the 12th day of Christmas) with a bonfire on the front lawn of the church. Bring your Christmas Trees and dried branches etc., to throw on the bonfire as we say welcome to a new year of life and promise.

Wishing you holiday cheer and the peace of the season,

Bev Hart and Mary Lynn Landgraf

Report on the 2023 Virginia Diocesan Convention from Bob Prichard, Peg Moncure and Ann de Peyster

The 229th Annual Diocesan Convention was held in Fredericksburg on November 2-3. Ann was the lay delegate from CCP elected by the vestry, and Peg and Bob participated as clergy of the diocese. Fr. Stuart would have been there as well if he had not been sick. This experience provided a rare opportunity to meet all of our new diocesan clergy leaders in one place; learn about priorities for the diocese; celebrate Eucharist with many friends and acquaintances from around the diocese; and participate in conducting some of the business of the diocese.

This was the first convention with our new Bishop the Rt. Reverend Mark Stevenson and others he has appointed. The overall theme was “Closing the Gap Between Religion and Life.” Bishop Stevenson’s address on Friday morning focused on two main pillars as initial priorities: racial justice and healing, and discipleship. The Rt. Reverend Gayle Harris, the second African American woman to serve as a bishop in the Episcopal Church and now Assistant Bishop of Virginia, delivered a powerful sermon that also addressed these priorities. The assembly also heard from the renowned Dr. Catherine Meeks, founding Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing. Dr. Meeks addressed the Convention virtually via Zoom, speaking on racial justice and taking questions from the audience.

Like bishops of the diocese before him, Bishop Stevenson brought his perspective to the worship of the convention. Thursday night’s worship—a celebration of Evensong for which clergy of the diocese were expected to vest in cassock and surplice and process—was a first for the diocese. The same was true of one of the bishop’s choices of his vesture. He may have been the first Bishop of Virginia to wear a purple zucchetto at a diocesan convention. This is the skull cap commonly worn by Roman Catholic bishops but less often by Episcopal bishops.

Bob attended a workshop titled “Best Practices in Church Accounting and Bookkeeping” led by diocesan Treasurer Ted Smith. It included references to several helpful resources; the PowerPoint used with the talk is posted at PowerPoint Presentation (episcopalvirginia.org) Peg attended a workshop on “Video Storytelling – Start to Finish Video Production.” Attendees were given a lot of good information about recording the stories of people in our parishes. Peg thinks it would be especially nice to record some of our people who have been at CCP for a long time and thus document our history. This might be worth pursuing in the future. The only issue with the workshop was too much information in a short time. Ann chose “The Work of Reparations – Why and How?” Participants agreed that “repair” is probably a better choice of words than “reparations” when expressing the Diocese’s actual intent now – reparations are often limited (at least in the public’s mind) to monetary compensation for injustices of the past. The current focus is instead on identifying attitudes and

behaviors indicative of racial bias that can be very subtle, overlooked, and allowed to propagate.

Resolutions were passed related to the printed Book of Common Prayer; the process of transfer of Bishops and Deacons; endorsing affordable housing development on church property; and Diocesan actions related to the war between Israel and Hamas. Related to that last resolution, when speaking in favor of this resolution a young college-age delegate reminded the assembly that young people are more apt to become interested in participating in religions that demonstrate active involvement in world affairs, thus “bridging the gap between life and religion.” For more details, readers may consult the Convention website (<https://www.episcopalvirginia.org/who-we-are/governance/annual-convention/229th-annual-convention-2023/>) or the authors of this report.

Worship Committee—Christian Education

Your Worship Committee has long wrestled with a practical way to offer Christian Education without overburdening our clergy or our Sunday schedule. In January, we are going to start offering a series of videos from the Great Courses. These are 30-minute videos and will be followed by a discussion. So, following the Wednesday morning chapel service, we will retire to the Great Hall and try this approach. Father Stuart and Deacon Peg have other duties at that time, so this will be led by lay folk, starting with the Verger, or anyone else interested. There are SO many choices for our subjects, but here is a sampling of what we already own, each with a DVD and course guide.

Understanding the Old Testament

Understanding the New Testament

The Apocryphal Jesus

How Jesus Became God

Lost Christianity: Christian Scriptures and the Battles Over Authentication

The History and Archaeology of the Bible

The History of Christianity II From the Reformation to the Modern Megachurch

Comparative Religion

The Great Churches of the World

Please let me know if you are interested in this offering for Christian Education, and what topic(s) interest you most. I’m excited that we can make this another enriching part of our Christ Church lives. VR,

Grace Parker, Verger

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Live Nativity - Final Update: We hope everyone has marked their calendars for 5-7 pm, Friday, December 8th (rain date December 15th). The nativity stable and large sign have reappeared in front of the church. As reported in last month's newsletter, new this year is the much-anticipated addition of Earl the donkey to the sheep, actors, and carolers. Also new will be hot cider and cookies offered to visitors who linger to engage with us. We would appreciate everyone's assistance with getting the word out to others among your circles of friends and relatives. If you are willing to help us by posting flyers around the community please email Ann Padgett, at padgett@va.metrocast.net.

Visitation Singers have resumed performing in local nursing facilities after a Covid-related hiatus. On the morning of November 13, CCP Outreach members helped to bring old favorite tunes to appreciative residents at Dockside in Locust Hill and Riverside in Saluda. The next visit is scheduled for December 11 when everyone is welcome to join in singing well-known Christmas music. Make yourself known to the Outreach Ministry if this wonderful opportunity to guarantee the brightening of someone's day appeals to you.

Refreshments for Christchurch School at Lessons and Carols You will have received an email about this but we also wanted to share this from an email from Mark Parsons at CCS: "The wonderful folks at Christ Church Parish have graciously offered to serve cookies and hot cider on the lawn outside the Chapel, before the first Lessons & Carols service (3:30 - 4:00) and again after the second service at 7:15 – 7:45." The date is December 17th and CCP is also welcome to attend. We will need lots of cookies! Any kind is fine. The email you received explained our need for our wonderful cookie-baking parishioners to make sure we have these by noon on December 16th. Our Outreach Ministry liaison to CCS is Jeannette Adkins so you may contact her about this if you need more information.

Toys for Tots You should have noticed an email and newsletter item concerning this but in case you missed both. Toys for Tots delivers hope to children at Christmastime and beyond. Through the gift of a new toy or book, this Marine Corps program brings the joy of Christmas and sends a message of hope to American disadvantaged children. Please support this organization by purchasing a toy or book. A box is in the Parish Hall to receive your unwrapped gifts. This year's deadline is December 18th.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes The Outreach Ministry continues to be open to new opportunities to support the needs of our local youth. CCP and other churches were asked recently about supporting the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at St. Clare Walker Middle School. Founded in 1954, the FCA is described as "a community working to see the world transformed by Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes."

Continued on next page

This year sixty middle schoolers chose the FCA from among many optional extracurricular clubs offered at SCW. Outreach has offered an initial commitment of a month's worth of healthy snacks for club meetings.

Last but hardly least! We also gratefully and enthusiastically acknowledge the generous volunteer time and energy offered to our community by individual parishioners, whether you choose to be members of our Outreach Ministry. We know you do a whole lot to respond to the needs of our community. Please let us know if you have ideas for other initiatives we might undertake in the future. Thank you all for your wonderful community outreach efforts over this past year!

CATECHISM



CORNER

The Christian tradition of Advent, dating back to the 4th century, involves a period of anticipation and preparation for the birth of our Christ at Christmas. While not initially associated with meals, the practice evolved over time. In medieval Europe, the "Advent fast" gradually transformed into a season marked by communal meals, emphasizing fellowship and spiritual reflection. The Advent wreath, a symbol with candles representing the weeks leading to Christmas, further became a centerpiece for these gatherings. Today, Advent meals continue as a cherished practice, fostering community and contemplation amid the holiday season....Merry Christ Mass

...if you have gained any value from my trials to evoke fresh understandings of our catechism and are interested in occasionally publishing your thoughts in a more or less monthly "Catechism corner " section of our bulletin...please let me know as Sharon & I will be moving shortly....I can always help you....in faith and knowledge...miles.

USHER MINISTRY

As many of you know, Sharon and Miles are in the process of moving to Florida full-time. It has been a pleasure to be involved for many years with CCP. The leadership of the Ushers Ministry will need your help. It is a straightforward, easy-to-manage ministry. It is a rewarding task interacting with the congregation and the first faces that greet our guests. Please consider taking on this ministry. Contact Father Stuart if you can do so. Sharon's last Sunday to manage is November 26th.

Sincerely, Sharon and Miles

OYSTER FESTIVAL



Once again Christ Church had its famous Clam Chowder for sale at the Urbanna Oyster Festival. This year was the 66th annual event. It is considered the Nation's oldest festival focused on oysters. While there are no official church records, there is no doubt that many of our members recall the many activities and efforts of making pots of the chowder, starting with the very first Festival in 1959. Many thanks to Don Harris.



Thanks to the ECW for providing and selling a variety of baked goods for the Oyster Festival.



It would not be an Oyster Festival without Ham Biscuits and Ham Oyster Biscuits! Much appreciated and thanks to all involved.

WINGS, WHEELS, AND KEELS



Another success and many thanks to all of those involved!



ENDOWMENT FUND

A Wine and Cheese Reception was hosted by the Endowment Fund Board. Attendees enjoyed canapes and wine while getting good legal advice from Alfie Butts. He reminded us of the many important financial issues that require constant attention.

Special December Celebrations

Anniversaries



22 Ray and Martha Stokes

29 Mark E. "Chip" and Jean T. Holt

31 Barbara and Jeffrey "Jeff" Shaw

George and Sandy Sturgill

Birthdays

3 Anne Donoff

Mary Anne Harris-White

4 Barbee Phipps

6 Jean T. Holt

Ellie Wilton

7 James "Jim" Hill

10 Jackie Gahan

Marilyn South

11 Susan Hilliard

12 Don Harris

15 Ann T. Padgett

19 Mary Lynn Landgraf

Joe Jones

24 Suzanne Berry

28 Bill Snider

29 Priscilla Johnson

31 John Gammel



From the Organ Bench

In late November, new organ speakers were installed in Christ Church. The thirty-year-old speakers were in pretty bad shape, as you can see in the photo.

As you can imagine, this project took a bit of work. A scissor lift was needed to get access to the attic space. Thanks to Scott Holt, Jeff Loustaunau, Tom Clarke, Henry Moncure, and Bryan Saddler for all of their help in getting the work done with our organ technician, Otto Pebworth. Also a special thanks to Susie Loustaunau for painting the ceiling grill frame and stitching the acoustic fabric for the frame. And a huge thanks to those who donated funds to cover the cost. You have made it possible for us to enjoy this fine organ for at least another decade.

And just in time for Christmas. Dec. 24 is on a Sunday this year. We will celebrate Advent 4 in the morning with one service at 10:00. We then meet again at 4:30 for the annual Carol Sing, followed by the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5:00. The following day, we will have a Christmas Day service (with carols) at 10:00. On Dec. 31 we will ring out the Old Year with a service of Lessons and Carols at the 10:30 service.

The Choir will have a special Christmas rehearsal on Dec 9 at 10:00 A.M. Please join us if you would like to sing Christmas Eve.

Libby Boyer, Music Director



NEWSLETTER ARTICLES WELCOMED!

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 2023 are:

Month Published

Submission Deadline is before 5:00 pm on:

January 2024

Friday December 22, 2023

All submissions are to be emailed as a **word document** to jeff.of.jamaica@outlook.com

Pictures may also be submitted and will be used on a "space available" basis.