

Christ Church Parish (Episcopal) Middlesex



Monthly Newsletter February 2024

Message From Our Rector



Rector's Report to the 2024 Annual Meeting
January 14, 2024

Whenever I sit down to write one of these reports, I become aware of how blessed I have been over the past year to serve as your priest and rector. Many of you know that when I began my ministry here at Christ Church Parish, it was going to be for a year at most as the Search Committee carried on their work of identifying your new Rector. Eight and a third years later, I am still here because by the grace of God, the Bishop, and the Vestry I journeyed from Interim, to Priest in Charge, to being Rector. During that time, I have celebrated nine Christmases with you and at the end of March, my ninth Easter with you, though during the pandemic some of those celebrations had to be online.

This past year we have celebrated 104 Sunday services with an average attendance of 66. We also celebrated 57 weekday services with the majority of those in the chapel and the others at Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury. The private home communions, that is, those done in homes and the hospital, don't always get recorded as they should be, so that number is low and is 6.

We had one wedding in June and the church was used for a second marriage later in the year when Susie Hutchens was married.

The most difficult part of my ministry are the funerals and this past year there were 7 funerals conducted in the church graveyard. Three of those were well-known, well-

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loved active members of the church; Dave Wilcox, Don Stebbins, and Jim Ray. Others included Sandra Lackey, Bettie Simmons, Augusta Bunting, and Belle Bronner. It was Belle Bronner's daughter Beatrice that had just been married back on June 16th.

2023 began a year of change for both you all and myself when I announced my intention to retire at the end of June 2024. It really started to hit home with me when I realized at the Blessing of the Animals service at the beginning of October that it might be the last time that I get to officiate at one of those. I believe that my very first service here in the church was the Blessing of the Animals which was postponed for a week so that I could officiate.

What would I say to someone looking at your parish? I would say that though we may lose active dedicated members to illness which may restrict their involvement, moving away to long-term care facilities, simply moving from the area, or death; that it has been rarely because they are angry or unhappy. We are blessed with new people all the time who are welcomed and often become quite involved in parish matters and ministries.

In the prior year, in June of 2022, we saw the retirement of our long-time organist, Debbie Davis, but Thanks Be To God, Libby Boyer came to us and we barely experienced a transition and we have been blessed by her ministry this past year. For many congregations that is not the case, where the search for a new organist can take many months.

I am always grateful for the work of our altar and flowers guilds, our choir, our committees, our ushers, acolytes, eucharistic ministers, lectors, and verger, for our tech team that streams our services, Jeff who does our newsletter, Ellen for all her unseen work in the kitchen, Peg our Deacon, our Vestry, and our Wardens. Look around you – you are the church and your commitment to one or more of these ministries keeps us going and does the work of the Lord.

We have been very blessed with a hard-working, knowledgeable, parish administrator in the person of Tonya Spears who will also be leaving us later this Spring. Please pray that God sends you an individual that is as gifted as she is.

I'm not sure what else to say other than thank you, thank you, thank you for making

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these last eight plus years of ministry the most rewarding of my close to 36 years of ordained service to the Lord and to the Church. You are a strong, faithful, and healthy parish. The surrounding community should only **know just how** blessed they are to have you in their midst. As the gospel for today says, they would know it if they would only, "Come and See."

God bless each and every one of you.

UPCOMING BISHOP'S VISIT



The Rt. Rev. Mark Stevenson, our Diocesan Bishop, will be making his first Episcopal visit to Christ Church Parish on Sunday, March 10th. Please mark your calendars indicating that there will be only one joint service at 10:00 a.m. that morning.

This is the opportunity for those of you coming from other denominations to be Confirmed or Received into the Episcopal Church. For those who have never been Confirmed, this is your opportunity to do that. If any of you wish to re-affirm your commitment to Christ to the bishop this is also your opportunity to do that. A bishop only visits the parish every other year, otherwise, you would need to attend a Confirmation service in a neighboring parish or make arrangements to be Confirmed or Received at the Diocesan headquarters in Richmond.

Many or most of us were baptized as infants and this is the opportunity for you to make an adult affirmation of your faith.

If you have any questions or would like to do this, please let Fr. Stuart know as soon as possible.

Thank you.



FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

Playing A Variety of Music Requires Different Instruments

The apostle Paul defines three categories of song: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs.

Psalms are obvious. They are the hymns of the Old Testament and really should be sung. (We will be working on that soon.)

Hymns form a wide genre including chant (O Come, Emmanuel), German chorales (A Mighty Fortress), Issac Watts' Psalm Hymn (O God Our Help in Ages Past), Gospel Songs (Blessed Assurance), and many other types.

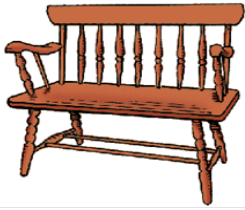
Spiritual Songs are direct quotations from Scripture (Seek Ye First). Each of these styles requires a different type of accompaniment. While traditional organ stops support many of these songs, there is a lot of music performed for worship which is not intended for the organ at all.

On Christmas Eve, Clayton lead us with his guitar for Silent Night. Just a whim? No, it was written for guitar. And some pieces just don't work on the organ. That is why sometimes you will find me playing a hymn at the piano.

Who knows, maybe we will do Amazing Grace with bagpipes one day.

Libby Boyer
Music Director

◀ January	February 2024					March ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	2	3 Vestry Retreat
4 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	5	6 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	7 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30am In the Chapel	8 Worship Ministry 9:30am AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	9 Fellowship Committee "Sweets for the Sweet" Potluck 5:30 p.m.	10 Choir Rehearsal 10:00am to 12:00 noon
11 Scout Sunday Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am Brotherhood Pancake Planning 9:00am	12	13 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner 5:00—7:00pm	14 Ash Wednesday Outreach Committee 10:15 pm Ash Wednesday Service 12:30 pm	15 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	16	17
18 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am Brotherhood Ladies Breakfast 9:00 am	19	20 Tech Team 11:30 am AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	21 Holy Eucharist Service In the Chapel 9:30am Lenten Dinner 5:30 pm	22 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	23	24
25 Holy Eucharist Services 8:00 am 10:30 am	26 Elephant Committee 10:00 am	27 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm	28 Holy Eucharist Service 9:30am In the Chapel Lenten Dinner 5:30 pm	29 AA Group Noon -1:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm		



From the Deacon's Bench

"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." Colossians 3:12

I have seen the following posted several times on the internet. It has been attributed to Charles Schulz. However, that has been disputed. Whoever wrote it made a good point.... some "food for thought"

So, during these cold days that are keeping us inside, let's take a little test. Just think about your answers.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America pageant.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

How did you do?

The point is, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday.

These are no second-rate achievers.

They are the best in their fields.

But the applause dies.

Awards tarnish ...

Achievements are forgotten.

Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.

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3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Easier?

The lesson:

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most.

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” Hebrews 13:16

Peace, Peg+



A small but very productive meeting was held on January 10th.

We approved the budget and appointed chairwomen, so we are ready to proceed. I am looking forward to working with all the women at Christ church.

Next meeting is April 17th at 10:15 am. Have a warm and safe winter.

Ginger Hellems gingerhellems@gmail.com

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Fellowship Committee Welcomes the Light of the New Year

Holding true to our mantra, " We play where we pray". The Fellowship Committee ignited Epiphany with a roaring bonfire on Friday evening, January 12th in our Christ Church field near the garden. Inclement weather on the January 6th had mandated the postponement until the 12th. Spirits were anything but dampened! See the pictures that are on the next page.

A large mound of Christmas trees, wreaths and garlands were piled high in anticipation of torches to ignite the greenery. Two small fire trucks from the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department (Saluda) were on hand to control the burn if needed. Father Stuart delivered a brief Epiphany Service and the parishioners sang a hearty round of "Joy to the World" followed by the bonfire, hot apple cider and cookies served al fresco on the lawn. Mother Nature joined the celebration at the end and sent a most welcome rain to extinguish any rogue cinders.

The entire Fellowship committee gratefully acknowledges and thanks Senior Warden Scott Holt and Bill Budd for their multiple trips to White Stone, VA to pick up dried trees and greens for the bonfire. In addition, they helped prepare the burn area and assisted in the clean-up.

If you missed this year's event, come, and join us next year on the actual date of January 6th!

Although we are still in the planning phases for our annual events, you may want, however, to pencil in the dates below that have been selected:

"Sweets for the Sweet": February 9th, 6:30 pm: Tempting sweet and savory items, Chocolate fondue/Chocolate fountain, champagne, wine, and coffee.

Lenten Dinners: February 21st, and March 6th, 13th, and 20th.

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Marine Corps Run to Church:

October date TBD.

Author Heath Lee:

November 10th, Presentation on Viet Nam and the book, League of Wives (Open to the Public)

Veterans Luncheon:

November 11th

Advent Dinners:

December 4th, 11th, and 18th. Dinners will be themed and feature countries and traditions.

Epiphany Bonfire:

January 6th, 2025

The Fellowship Committee needs members. We promise you hard work, fun, great camaraderie and rewarding times spent together in praise and execution of God's mission for us. See Bev Hart or Mary Lynn Landgraf for more details! We welcome you!

Bev Hart and Mary Lynn Landgraf



OUTREACH MINISTRIES

The Outreach Ministry, chaired by Susie Loustaunau and Pam McClelland, met on Wednesday, January 10. We discussed our many projects in 2023, including:

- Working with the Cryer Center to provide healthy goody bags for clients during their food pick-up on Valentine's Day
- Assisting with the Fine Arts Camp
- Assisting with the Creation Care Garden
- Providing snacks for Teacher Appreciation Week for Middlesex County elementary, middle, and high school, as well as Christchurch School.
- School supply collection in August
- Assistance with the One Community Under Good service in the fall
- Assistance with Thanksgiving and Christmas meal delivery
- Providing snacks for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Live Nativity in December
- Christmas presents for a family recommended by Social Services
- Providing a meal for an Advent Dinner

This year, we will continue working with Habitat for Humanity, the Veterans Day Luncheon, the Oyster Festival, and Visitation Singers.

Our mission is to “offer assistance to those in need collaborating with the clergy and others in our congregation, striving to love God and our neighbors as ourselves through service to our community.”

Our Ministry meets on the second Wednesday of each month after the Wednesday morning service. Our next meeting is on February 14 at 10:15 in the Vestry Room.

Please join us if you are interested in working with us on our worthwhile projects. Or you can contact Susie (207-801-1282) or Pam (804-832-4234).

Faithfully,

Susie Loustaunau
Pam McClelland

TECH TEAM

BUILD A ROBOT DAY



Our Junior Warden on January 15 with two of 11 enthusiastic girls and boys assembling robot cars during the Tech Team's Build-a-Robot Day. See other photos posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

WORSHIP MINISTRIES



Our grandparents used to say that time goes faster the older you get. That didn't make a lot of sense to me at the time; however, didn't we JUST pack up Christmas decorations? How could we be looking at Lent so soon? Well, we are.

A former priest of mine used to say that Easter is the only holiday that either comes early or late, never on time.

I don't exactly know what on time means in this context, but my calendar shows that February 14th is Ash Wednesday.

Keep watch for any changes caused by Father Stuart's commitments at Christchurch School, but as of this writing, we will have our Ash Wednesday service with the imposition of ashes at 12:30 pm.

Many thanks to those who responded to my invitation to join our guild of servers. There are more opportunities, especially for that time when some leave us to seek warmer climes.

I'll be here, and I'd like the company!

VR Grace



FROM THE JUNIOR WARDEN'S WORK BENCH



As we reported at the church-wide meeting in January, plans are moving forward for the Creation Garden for this spring. Seeds are being purchased and planting designs are underway. Please reach out to me if you would like to be a part of this meaningful and rewarding ministry. We need your help! It's only 6 weeks to warmer weather, so get your rakes and shovels ready!

Please mark your calendars for Spring Clean Up. It will be March 16th and a rain date of March 23rd. We will add mulch to our flower beds this year and make the grounds beautiful for Easter on March 31st.

Scott Holt
804-814-8126

Special February Celebrations

Anniversaries



15 Harold Johnson & Diane Martin

18 Henry & Peg Moncure

25 Dixon Cole & Ginny Gale

Birthdays

3 Chip Holt

5 Joyce Reisinger

6 Gari Sullivan

7 Ann Harris

Thyra Harris

16 Virginia Miller

21 Sharon Colston

Vel Gray

22 Nancy Campbell

24 Anne Evans

27 Ellen Johnson



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 2024 are:

<u>Month Published</u>	<u>Submission Deadline is before 5:00 pm on:</u>
March	February 23, 2024
April	March 22, 2024
May	April 22, 2024
June	May 24, 2024
July	June 21, 2024
August	July 22, 2024
September	August 23, 2024
October	September 20, 2024
November	October 25, 2024
December	November 22, 2024
January 2025	December 23, 2024

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.



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.

Christ Church Parish

Electronic Service Requested

Post Office Box 476, Saluda, VA 23149



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

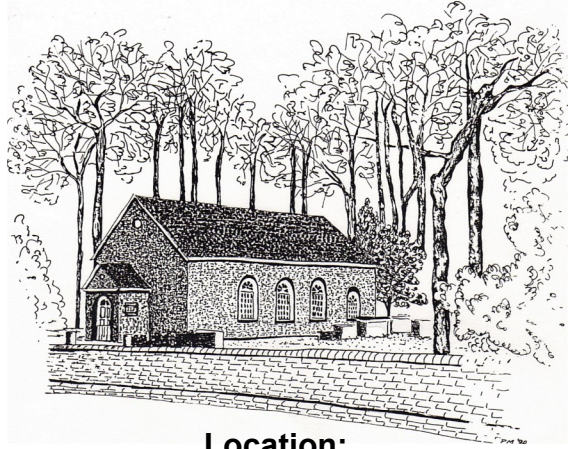
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February
2024

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