



Christ Episcopal Church Kensington

Advent & Christmas Magazine

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From the Rector

Advent

Good news; but if you ask me what it is, I know not; It is a track of feet in the snow, It is a lantern showing a path, It is a door set open.

G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936)

Advent is odd and wonderful. Completely and utterly counter-cultural, it is a marvelous gift the church offers us. Precisely at the time of year when the pace of life speeds up for so many of us, Advent is a lantern showing a path, a door set open for us to walk through. A time to quiet our minds and ready our hearts for the birth of the Christ child.

We need this time more than I think we recognize. We need to slow down, so that we might be present and available for one another. We need to find time to be still so that we might hear God's quiet voice whispering to us. And at least I need a way to counteract the daily mountain of news to digest and the consumer madness that Christmas has become.

Join me in putting advent in or on our calendars! Light a candle and sit quietly for five minutes in the morning. Stop and soak in the beauty of a child's face. Try a few of the creative ideas in the Advent guide for all ages that is available at the church, or come to the Wednesday 6:30pm service for a time of quiet reflection. It is my hope that in the midst of this busy season, you might walk through that door set open and discover the calm and peace that is waiting there.

Blessings and love to each,

Emily

P.S. What a joy it was to welcome Henry Wallace into the family of God at his baptism this fall!



Advent & Christmas Schedule

Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
9:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
11:15 AM	Sunday School & Pageant Rehearsal
11:15 AM	Youth Group
11:15 AM	Advent Wreath Event & Cookie Swap
4:00 PM	Bible Study
5:00 PM	Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 6

6:00 PM	St. Nicholas Dinner with decorating the Children's Christmas Tree
6:30 PM	Holy Eucharist
7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, December 9

10:00 AM	Parents' Morning Out for Children 3-10 and Youth Volunteers - Undercroft, lunch provided
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Sunday, December 10 – Second Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
9:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
11:15 AM	Sunday School & Pageant Rehearsal -
11:15 AM	Youth Group
4:00 PM	Bible Study
5:00 PM	Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 13

7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal
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Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
9:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM	Children's Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist
11:15 AM	Festive Christmas Brunch
4:00 PM	Bible Study
5:00 PM	Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 20

7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal
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Thursday, December 21

7:30 PM	Christmas Choir Rehearsal
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Saturday, December 23rd

10:00 AM	Christmas Choir Rehearsal
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Sunday, December 24th

10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist, (Advent IV)
5:00 PM	Family Festival Eucharist
9:30 PM	Christmas Music
10:00 PM	Traditional Christmas Eucharist

(note new time)

Monday, December 25th

10:00 AM	Christmas Day Holy Eucharist
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Offices are closed during Christmas Week

Sunday, December 31

10:00 AM	Christmas Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist
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Wednesday, January 3

7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal
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Sunday, January 7 - Feast of the Epiphany

8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
9:00 AM	Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
11:15 AM	Sunday School
11:15 AM	Youth Group
4:00 PM	Bible Study
5:00 PM	Feast of Lights Service
6:00 PM	12th Night Party

Children's Ministry



Christmas Pageant with Holy Eucharist 10 o'clock Service Third Sunday of Advent December 17, 2017

An Advent Gift from Our Children: Look towards Bethlehem with Joy

Our children understand that "Advent is a time to wait...not quite time to celebrate." Their joy, though, in the anticipation of Jesus' Birthday, finds a beautiful expression this year on December 17th, the Third Sunday of Advent: the Children's Christmas Pageant at the 10 o'clock Service. This is the Sunday of the rose-colored Advent candle. The candle's color represents a lightening of our spirits as we take a respite from the traditionally more somber and introspective modes of Advent worship to remember and celebrate the joy of Mary's "Yes!" to God's plan. What a beautiful gift from the children—to the Christ Child and our congregation.

Who better to lift our spirits and help us enter the mystery of Christmas than our children? The Pageant is a wonderful coming-together of children of all ages, their parents, Chapel leaders and Sunday School teachers. We welcome newcomers and visitors to participate in the pageant: there is plenty of room at this inn! We have costumes to outfit angels, shepherds, Blessed animals, and assorted magi who happen to be en route even as the Holy Family shelters in Bethlehem. There is no performance anxiety at our pageant. At the Liturgy of the Word, the younger, costumed children form silent tableaux as fourth- and fifth-graders read from Holy Scripture. Together, the children lead the congregation in singing a familiar Christmas hymn. This special Liturgy of the Word invites each of us to pause and look towards Bethlehem with joy.

We do need to practice, though, and so invite all interested to join us on December 3rd and December 10 when, immediately following the 10 AM Holy Eucharist, we will practice readings, tableaux and song. To sign up your child, volunteer, or ask a question, please email Children's Minister Ann Enkiri at sundayschool@ccpk.org.



Youth Group: Seasons of Love

You may not know this, but our youth group has some serious musical theater fanatics in its midst. Thus, it should come as no surprise that we measure our year, all 525,600 minutes of it, in "seasons of love". 2017, for all its ups and downs, brought boundless love for the youth of Christ Church.

Over the course of the year, we came to understand and recognize God's love each Sunday through Lenten challenges, lessons about preserving God's creation, and Confirmation class. All the while, that love worked in and through us to give us the courage to make the world a little brighter.

We felt the love and support of the whole congregation as we raised funds for our mission trip. On that trip, we saw love and experienced the power of community as we served the people of Rutland. That week also highlighted the sense of love that connects our group, as we engaged deeply with what it means to live as Jesus taught us.

As 2018 begins, the youth will be going on a retreat to the Claggett Center, just south of Frederick. With the mountains as our backdrop, and 2017 fresh in our minds, we will center ourselves for the New Year and ask: what can we do to bring God's love and light to others?

The song "Seasons of Love" reminds us: "The story never ends. Let's celebrate - remember a year in the life of friends." This Advent, the youth and I invite you all to remember the celebrations, friendships, and love that 2017 brought. May we look forward to writing more of our never-ending story in 2018.



Music Notes: A German Christmas



This year's Christmas Eve Choir Concert (9:30 p.m., preceding the 10:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist) features Christmas music from Germany (sung in English, though originally composed in German).

Included will be two short cantatas, "For Unto Us a Child is Born" by Johann Kuhnau (1660-1722), Johann Sebastian Bach's immediate predecessor as Kantor at the St. Thomas Church and School in Leipzig, and "The Little Newborn Jesus Child" ("Das Neugeborne Kindelein") by Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707), an important composer who strongly influenced Bach (1685-1750), along with two German congregational carols from our own hymnal ("Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming," and "Good Christian friends, rejoice.")

During the service the choir will sing "O Beloved Shepherds" by Andreas Hammerschmidt (1611/12-1675), a German composer and organist of Bohemian birth, probably the most representative composer of mid-17th century German church music, of which he was a prolific and extremely popular exponent (even counting Heinrich Schutz (1585-1672) among his friends), as well as modern arrangements of two other German Christmas carols, "Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine," and "How Great Our Joy."

Mark your calendars now to be with us for this lovely celebration of German Christmas music!

-Teddy

Parents' Morning Out

This year, the time to prepare for Christmas seems unusually short! School began later—after Labor Day for most of our families. Fall activities have kept everyone especially busy. And now, Advent is abbreviated: the Fourth Sunday of Advent doubles as Christmas Eve! The Children's Ministry at Christ Episcopal Church Kensington offers the gift of time to parents.



Please enjoy a morning out while we provide Advent fun and service opportunities for children aged 3-10. We will enjoy Christmas stories, games, baking and crafts. We will choose some small ways to serve our church community and our extended neighborhood. A simple lunch will be served.

We invite the middle school and high school youth of our parish to volunteer. The younger kids so enjoy activities with you. (Service Learning Hours are available.)

To sign-up your child(ren) or to volunteer to help, please email Children's Minister Ann Enkiri before December 6th at 10 PM: sundayschool@ccpk.org. Be sure to include your child's age and your cell phone number in your email. Thank you!

-Ann Enkiri

Stewardship: What do the numbers tell us?

There is a lot to celebrate after this year's stewardship Campaign. So far we have raised \$416,444 from 120 pledging households. This is more than Christ Church has raised at this point in the stewardship process EVER.

What we have to celebrate:

- We have 9 new pledging households.
- Our average pledge increased by \$500.00 over last year.
- 55 people increased their pledge. This is awesome!
- We reached 95% of our goal by the end of our campaign. While of course we would love for everyone to pledge by the mid-November deadline, we realize this is not realistic.

What we need to work on:

More participation in pledging. While we have 120 Pledging households, inviting more folks into the life of Christ Church is really important.

If you would like to make a pledge of financial support for 2018, it's not too late! Please contact Kurt Ellison in the office for more details about how you can support the life of Christ Church.



Christmas Cookie Exchange

For the past several years, the Women's Fellowship Group have assembled and delivered cookie platters to homebound church members. This year we welcome all to help us on Sunday, December 3rd after the 10am service, please take your cookies to the undercroft and stay to help assemble trays for swapping. Want to take Christmas Cookies to folks who need them? We also need folks to deliver the platters, names and addresses will be available.

Make an Advent Wreath

Advent Wreath and Ornament Making event! Join us on Sunday, December 3rd after the 10:00 am service in the Undercroft. Come and enjoy this fun event by making a beautiful Advent wreath, and/or an ornament for your home. All supplies provided. For questions or information, please contact Sarah Leung or Suzanne Lawrence (suzlaw1@comcast.net).

St. Nicholas Dinner

Wednesday, December 6th, at 6pm: Come and join in a simply festive meal to celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas as we begin our Advent journey together. Supper, with child-friendly options, is being prepared for us all to enjoy. Everyone is invited to help decorate our parish tree as well. St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, may pass through with some traditional treats. So, just come as you are and bring your appetite for good food and fellowship! RSVP's to the office (administrator@ccpk.org) are appreciated but, more importantly, your presence will be celebrated.

Prime Timers

The Prime Timers will meet in the church under-croft on Thursday, December 7th from 11:30 - 1:30 for social time, lunch, and to enjoy a speaker. The cost of the lunch is \$10.00. Please RSVP to Nora Buckley at nora-bee@live.com or 301-564-0689 by Monday, December 4th and let her know you are coming and if you wish to order a lunch.

"This and My Heart Beside: A Visit with Emily Dickinson" written by Candace Ridington, who plays the part of Emily. You will share in the poet's thoughts and feelings, joys and sorrows, learn about her family, and hear her recite some poems, all with warmth, wit and humor. Please note that the Prime Timers will not meet in January and February.

Advent Quiet Day

Advent Quiet Day Diocesan Retreat Committee (DRC) is co-sponsoring an Advent Quiet Morning with Christ Church, Georgetown on Saturday, December 16, 2017 from 9 am - 12 noon. The Reverend Susan Thon, retired Rector of the Church of the Redeemer in Bethesda, will be our leader. Please e-mail Cynthia E Fird (cynthiaefird@earthlink.net) before December 14 if you plan to attend. Christ Church, Georgetown is located at 31st and O Streets, NW. Washington, DC.

Gifts for Life Catalogue

The Episcopal Relief and Development Gifts for Life catalogs are available on the outreach table. Please take one and consider how you can honor friends and family with gifts that matter for those who are in need in underdeveloped regions. The catalog is also available on-line at episcopalrelief.org.

Check out our Libraries

The Libraries at Christ Church are wonderful places to spend quiet time during Advent. Advent books are on display in both the Children's/Youth Library and in the Library/Parlor. Christmas books will be on display by Sunday, December 17. Books can also be checked out to enjoy at home.

Arcola Kids Wish List

To ensure the JOY of the season visits our Arcola families we provide gifts for kids in the Linkages for Learning program (and sometimes their siblings). Parish folks 'adopted' more than half of the 61 Wish List stockings from the Outreach display - there are some still available if you would like to donate a gift or two to the child listed on the back of the stocking (see list on back). Donations should be UNWRAPPED and in a gift bag if available. All must be donated by Sunday December 17th for Monday delivery to Arcola. Please place all donations in Classroom 3 at end of hall near Music room. Many thanks to all! contact: Virginia Sheard boots3303@aol.com

Grocery Staples for Arcola Families

When schools close for winter break many kids don't have access to the 2 daily meals schools provide. Outreach fills grocery bags with staples to help families stretch their budgets. If you would like to help with this effort - list of desired food items (and sizes) can be picked up at the Outreach display. Donations can be placed in the labeled bins in the Outreach area (by Sunday December 17th please) contact: Virginia Sheard boots3303@aol.com

CPR Re-Certification Course

A CPR/AED Refresher Course will be offered at Christ Church on Saturday, December 9, from 12:00 - 4:00 pm. Two years ago, 29 members of Christ Church were certified for CPR/AED and First Aid by the American Safety and Health Institute. Our certifications are about to expire. We have arranged for a RECERTIFICATION course to be offered here at Christ Church on Saturday, December 9, from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. The cost of this class is \$40.00/person. If you are certified and would like to participate in this class, please call the Church Office, (301-942-4673) or send e-mail to administrator@ccpk.org. Participation is limited to about 16 people.

Outreach News



Advent is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. It is meant to be a time of reflection and a time set aside to renew our connection to Christ. But it is also a time to remember those less fortunate than us and how can we make a difference in their lives, as Christ has made in ours.

At Arcola Elementary School in Wheaton, over 70% of the children are fed during the school day through the FARM (Free and Reduced Meals) program. But what happens when they are not in school for several days? Who feeds them?

That's where our church family makes a difference.

Thanksgiving Season: It took less than 30 minutes for our church family to volunteer to sponsor all 43 "Turkey Day Food Bags" for Arcola Elementary families who do not have the means to provide nourishing meals to their families during the Thanksgiving break. Even as we were preparing for our

own family Thanksgiving gatherings, we were making a difference!

This Advent season, Christ Church will again make a difference and reach out to Arcola families and share our bounty through providing "Angel" gifts to 61 needy students and 31 pantry bags of food items to extend family budgets during the time the schools are closed and meal resources are not available.

But our church family knows no bounds...

- Two of our church families will be providing sandwiches to the homeless as part of our Bethesda Cares Sandwich Brigade that works tirelessly throughout the year.
 - We will be making our third delivery of donated socks for the homeless to help them through the winter season.
- And that doesn't include all the gifts and talent each and every one of us shares during the season, whether it be making a donation to your favorite charity, baking cookies for our first responders or making meals for friends.

As we reflect and give great thanks to the Lord for His blessings that with families and friends, we also look to great promise to come at Christmas time.

Mark your calendars for the Feast of Lights followed by 12th Night!

On Sunday January 7th at our 5:00 service, Christ Church will celebrate our much beloved Feast of Lights service. This service of candlelight begins in the dark and progresses with a candle lighting ceremony as the history of Christ's light is retold during this season of light in Epiphany. We will experience a very visible and moving journey through time as we are reminded that we are bearers of Christ's Light in the world today.

We will take our lights out into the world and to the undercroft where we will celebrate our TWELFTH NIGHT PARTY with a feast, carols and the crowning of our Epiphany kings and queens as determined by the coins found in our treasured King Cake.



This is a great way to celebrate the end of Christmas and the New Year as a parish family!

Adopt your Arcola Stocking Today!



Bishop Mariann Budde: Prayer 201



*Posted on the Bishop's Blog "Gathering Up the Fragments" October 19, 2017 by
The Right Rev. Mariann Budde, Bishop of Washington*

*What follows are excerpts from a sermon preached at St. Alban's Church, Washington DC on
October 15, 2017.*

One of the more challenging aspects of prayer is how to pray for other people and what we hope or imagine will happen as a result of our prayer. A lay leader from the diocese wrote me: "The great area of struggle for me is the petitionary aspect of prayer. I understand its necessity as an element of the relationship you describe, but, taken literally, it does suggest that God's mind can be changed by our requests and that God is ready to perform particular acts for our benefit in response to those requests. That, for me, is the rub, because we know that so many pious and innocent people suffer so greatly when their prayers go unanswered."

Haven't you struggled with that very issue? It's impossible to witness great suffering and not question what is possible through prayer. But there's another aspect of prayer, equally challenging, that I'd like to address first, which is the danger of prayer. I learned first hand of this danger at a young age, as I learn most things—the hard way.

The summer before my freshman year in high school, I was hired by one of my father's business associates to care for her young children at their cabin in the mountains. I had a lot of anxiety, typical enough for a 15 year old girl: Would I be accepted in my new high school and able to make friends? Was I pretty enough to ever have a boyfriend? Did I have the right clothes to fit in?

That fateful summer, I would walk into town in the evenings, enter a particular store, and try clothes on that I could never afford. One night I slipped something I had tried on into my purse and walked out. The next night I did it again. And the next. And the next.

I knew what I was doing was wrong and I felt guilty. For penance, I would read a chapter from the Bible every night and pray for forgiveness. That pattern continued for some time: I would steal during the day and pray for forgiveness at night. I felt, if not invincible, somehow invisible, as if those prayers shielded me. I had no awareness that people were watching, biding their time.

Until one night the local sheriff came knocking at my host family's door, accompanied by the store owner. As I stood before them, the heat of shame coursed through me. I was really scared. Later that night when I lay alone in my bedroom, I saw the Bible on my night table, and I felt exposed and ashamed before God.

Suffice to say that I paid for the clothes I had stolen and did further restitution to pay my debt to the community. It was a long, humiliating, yet also liberating process. Imagine what might have happened to me if I hadn't been caught.

Though I didn't yet have the language to describe it, I learned something important about prayer: God is not easily fooled and cannot be manipulated. There's a line in Psalm 50 that sums up how I felt God speaking to me in that moment: "These things you have done, and I kept still and you thought I am like you."

Years later I would encounter the same truth expressed in prophetic literature. Hear these words, spoken by God through the prophet Amos: "I hate, I despise your festivals and take no delight in your solemn assemblies." He's talking about our worship. "Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Take away for me the noise of your songs. I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:21-24)

Jesus was also clear that God is not one to be toyed with. God is not an extension of our whims and preference, and certainly cannot be contained in the boxes of our self deception. And if we persist in our self deceptions long enough, our worlds will come crashing down. The consequences are not what God wants for us, but nor will we be spared them

I wish I could say I learned my lesson once and for all as a teenager, but sadly, whenever and wherever in my life I am not yet able to face the truth, I pray within the confines of my self imposed blindness. God knows that, and while God has compassion, the process of answered prayer in those situations will always be painful before it is liberating. The truth will set us free, but first it will cut like a knife through the bubbles we've created to maintain the illusions we're not ready to relinquish.

In some areas of our common life we are seeing the consequences of our collective determination to remain in our sin. We pray to be spared the consequences, and for others to be spared, but we are not yet ready to change our behavior.

We cannot blithely pray to be spared the consequences of our sin while we keep on sinning. For God is always on the side of truth, wherever truth lies. We must seek the truth even when it hurts. And when the walls of our illusions come crashing down, God is there, working among those who offer comfort, consolation, mercy. God is with us in our suffering, even at our own hand. But God will not collude with us in self deception and self imposed blindnesses. God cannot spare us when we deliberately close our eyes and refuse to see, but God will be there to pick up the pieces. Which leads me to the ways we pray with and for one another.

Let me begin with an affirmation of faith: God is at work in the world, and at work in and through human beings. In the words of theologian Marjorie Suchocki, God is always at work in the world to bring about good within the context of the world's own power, which is revealed to us through careful observation and study of science, mathematics, and more.

Gifts of Stock

Many gifts to Christ Church come in the form of cash or check, but can the church accept a gift of appreciated stock? The answer is yes. Several parishioners have paid their annual pledge or other gifts with stock market securities that they have owned for more than 12 months (long-term investment). Consult with your tax advisor regarding your specific tax situation to understand the benefits you may receive from this type of transaction. Consult with our Christ Church Administrator, Kurt Ellison, on the process to make a gift of appreciated stock to Christ Church so that we transfer it correctly and you receive the proper paperwork for your tax records.

Note: If you plan on gifting appreciated stock to Christ Church for this tax year, please begin the process now because it usually takes a few weeks for the funds to transfer and settle.

-Ted Seale, Assistant Treasurer

Celebrations - December & January



Birthdays

Ethan Clausen 12/01
Prescott Bullard 12/04
Aime Keith 12/05
Susan Atkinson 12/09
Carl Keith 12/12
Charlie Flynn 12/13
Emily Barry 12/14
Ian Salow 12/16
Sarah W. Leung 12/17
Ellen Woodward 12/21
Doug Slotten 12/22
Kathryn McKay 12/24
Thomas McKay 12/24
Robert Quinn 12/24
Allan Wallace 12/25
Helen Urquhart 12/31

John Holbrooke 01/01
Madison Waechter 01/01
Leslie Everheart 01/05
John Ward 01/05
George Edler Jr. 01/08
Ann Gagarin 01/08
Anne Meyers 01/11
Graham Eckert 01/12
Caroline Albright 01/16
Claire Atkinson 01/17
Gabrielle Robbins 01/17
Catherine Grant 01/21

Robert Durbin 01/24
Drew Clausen 01/31
Anna Jenny 01/31
Annie Seale 01/31

Anniversaries

Jan & Bill Croke 12/03
Frank & Suzanne Shaw 12/20
George Edler Jr. & Joan Edler 12/22
Steve & Corry Hoffeditz 12/23
Ryan Jenny & Maria Martinez 01/01



Prayer 201 Continued

God is at work within us, within the context of our own freedom and capacities. We are free to align our creative power with God's and we are free to resist. But as Suchocki writes, we cannot eliminate God. We cannot defeat God, nor can we rid ourselves of divine presence. As St. Paul audaciously declared from his prison cell: nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ. (Romans 8:39)

In our sin, we often distort God's creative power. Alternatively, inspired by grace, we can open ourselves to God, become co-laborers with God, and experience our capacity for love amplified by God's creative presence. When we do, we give God more to work with.

That's why God wants us to pray for ourselves and one another—not because God needs to be flattered or appeased, nor because God needs reminding of what needs to be done or can be moved to change His mind. I think we're the ones who change. Then the possibilities for God change when we choose to join our energies with divine love in order to bring a preferred future into being.

We change the equations of possibility when we pray for one another. There is more creative possibility as a result of our prayers. But along with prayer must come a willingness to act upon what we receive in prayer, whatever that may be. So our most fruitful prayers, in terms of actions, are prayers that are combined with a willingness to be proximate.

When we pray from a distance, the distance has an impact both on our knowledge of the complexities of the situation and what needs to be done, and our ability to engage as a result of our prayer. Thus one of the most important decisions we make in praying for others is our positioning as we pray. And the choices we make when we're not praying affect the efficacy of our prayers.

And so I encourage you to pray, with and for one another. Remember the power of prayer; be mindful of the dangers of prayer. Pray aloud, pray in the silence of your heart, pray sometimes, as Rabbi Abraham Heschel described his prayer while walking with Dr. King on the road to Selma, with your feet. Remember that God always wants more for you than God asks from you, that God loves you and is deeply moved whenever you respond with love in return.

Church Humor

John the Baptist shares his Advent greetings: (Luke 3:7)



Finance Update



• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

As 2017 comes to an end, two important financial developments in the church year are taking place simultaneously: the parish is closing out its budget for 2017, and building the budget for 2018, the upcoming fiscal year. Both of these efforts are being overseen by a group of parishioners that includes the CCPK Treasurer Bonnie Douglas, Assistant Treasurer Ted Seale, the Budget and Finance Committee headed by Vestry member Robin Atkinson, as well as Emily Guthrie and Kurt Ellison. In addition, groups such as the Stewardship Committee and those involved in managing our financial books on a daily basis all make a significant contribution to this endeavor. What follows is a brief update on where we stand with our 2017 budget, and what the future seems to hold for 2018.

Our 2017 budget, approved by the Vestry, contains a \$14K deficit. So far, as of the end of October, we are in a position to likely better that financial goal. Collection of pledges has been at a higher rate than we had projected for this year, and that, along with careful spending on our parish ministries, has put us in a position to finish the year under our bottom line. In addition, CCPK usually takes in extra income in the holiday season, which makes us guardedly optimistic that we may come in under budget. However, with data for both November and December not yet available, for now we will keep our fingers crossed, and pray that our expectations for the 2017 budget are met.

While it has been monitoring the close of this fiscal year, the Budget and Finance Committee has been meeting regularly to build a budget for the 2018 fiscal year. The early stages of this work involves gathering requests from the various church ministries, using partial returns from the Stewardship Campaign, and basing 2018 income and spending projections for the year on historical data. As we meet over the months of August – December, the data and the estimates become clearer and clearer. The Committee has to account for such things as the cost of our personnel (salaries, health care, pension, etc.), the cost of maintaining our building and grounds (to include utility costs, landscaping, repair work, etc.), and to fund parish life activities, worship, and the costs of church administration. We then must make sure that funds will be available (primarily from pledge income, along with various gifts) to ensure that our proposed spending and income for the year are in harmony. The Budget and Finance Committee has worked hard to help us meet this goal. Our plan is to present our 2018 Budget to the Vestry for approval on December 14.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding the parish's financial picture.

Robin Atkinson Atkinsonrw@aol.com

2017 Mission and Ministry Grants from the Endowment Fund

The Christ Church Endowment Fund received its first funds about 17 years ago as gifts were made for the building of the new education wing. For several years, the fund was about \$32,000.00 and generated little return for any distribution. Now, the Endowment is invested with the Diocesan Investment Fund and a description of their investment is on www.edow.org, the Diocesan website. As of December 31, 2016, the fund amount was \$589,919. That amount, known as the principal, is invested. We only use a small percentage, 5% or less, annually for grants. In 2017, \$26,000 was available for Endowment Grants.

The Endowment Committee awarded these Mission and Ministry Grants for Fall 2017:

Property – Parking Lot - \$5,400.00 awarded for a capital improvement project to fund the patching of cracks and asphalt sealing of the parking lot. The lot will also be re-stripped for parking spaces. Frank Shaw is the project coordinator. Frank will coordinate work so as to have the least disruption for users of the parking lot.

Property – Rectory Gutters - \$2,000.00 awarded for a capital improvement project to replace gutters on our rectory that will help correct water drainage problems. Frank Shaw is the project coordinator.

Communications – New Website - \$6,050 awarded for a capital improvement project to update our website with new photographs and content. Ken Amaditz and Kurt Ellison are the project coordinators.

Admin-New Computers - \$2,050 awarded for a capital improvement project to repeal and replace the 8-year old computer of our administrator and to purchase a new laptop computer for our Children's Ministry leader. Emily Guthrie and Kurt Ellison are the project coordinators.

Parish Life – Monthly Dinners - \$3,000 awarded for a special one-time project to provide a monthly dinner on Wednesday evenings for congregants to gather and build community. Emily Guthrie and Lauren Robinson are the project coordinators with help from Gail Marks, Parish Life.



Looking Back on 10 Years: an Interview with Kurt Ellison

Christ Church Parish News: What is the role of Parish Administrator?

Kurt Ellison: The role of Parish Administrator is a unique one in the whole realm of church personnel. Here, the Parish Administrator is not (and never was) *just* an office manager, but is an active supporter of the ministry of the church. In that sense, I would call this role "The ministry that enables ministry". The Parish Administrator also handles issues related to property, communications, stewardship, finance, and on and on! There's never a dull moment!

CCPN: From your point of view, how has Christ Church changed over the past ten years?

KE: So many ways! I would say that we are a much more resilient parish than we were ten years ago. By that I mean that I see us as more adaptable, and more accepting of change - which is an important skill for a parish to develop because the church is a dynamic and changing institution.

We've also let some of our joy out for the world to see! When I first came, I could tell there was this joy about the whole place that needed to come out - and it has!

CCPN: Looking back, is there a story that still makes you laugh out loud?

KE: Yes, many stories still crack me up! The one that makes me laugh the loudest I call, "The fire alarm and the dusty nipple" It's the story of how a tiny piece of pipe (called a "nipple") in our air compressor became clogged and *almost* shut down the church. Long story short, a piece of dust in the boiler room had clogged a small piece of pipe in the compressor of the sprinkler system - at 3am, setting off a sprinkler and alerting the fire department (and yours truly). The fire department came, shut us down, put us on "fire watch" (when someone has to be in the building 24/7) and canceled all public events (including church on Sunday) until the sprinkler system was back in operation. Our usual repair crew came and spent three hours disassembling the entire sprinkler system, and couldn't find the problem. I called a second company for another opinion. In 10 minutes the second company was in the office holding a small piece of pipe and said, "Sir, it's your nipple - it was clogged with dust!" to which I replied, "I beg your pardon!" All was fixed, church happened on Sunday, and I had a tale to tell at the next vestry meeting.

CCPN: What has been the most challenging part of your ten years?

KE: The personnel changes and transitions were definitely the most challenging. Even though those were really hard decisions, I knew the leadership team worked especially hard for the good of the church.

CCPN: You've worn many hats over the years - both at Christ Church and in the wider church. Say more about that.

KE: Yes indeed. I've been active at the parish of my youth, St. John's in Chevy Chase, where I have served on vestry, chaired the stewardship campaign, chaired the personnel committee, served on altar guild, choir member, etc, etc. Right now I am just glad to be a "civilian" at St. John's!

I also serve as an At Large member of Diocesan Council which is the "vestry" of the Diocese. As part of Council, I have traveled to 18 different parishes, having conversations with their leadership about their aspirations, goals, and financial viability. What an adventure! We have an incredibly diverse diocese!



Do you feel called to leadership?

The Nominating Committee for vestry is accepting names for upcoming elections at our Annual Meeting on February 25 after the 10 am service. If you know someone who might be interested in serving on the vestry (board) of Christ Church, please contact Doug Smith, Senior Warden (dcsmith1942@verizon.net) or Sharon Bartram, Jr. Warden (psbartram@verizon.net).

What is the vestry and what does it do?

The vestry is a group of 12 parishioners who are elected for three year terms and are charged with leadership of the parish - both its spiritual direction AND its business affairs. The vestry meets once per month - but works continuously for the good of the church.

What kind of time commitment is involved?

While the vestry meets monthly, the work of the vestry is ongoing and may involve committee meetings and work on special projects as they arise.



Interview continued

CCPN: Don't you get enough church?

KE: I sure do, but then I remember that the Episcopal Church closes between 40 & 50 churches per year. That's a small diocese, every year. I have this theory that lay people are really going to be what saves the church. Everybody has a ministry and the churches that recognize and develop their lay ministers tend to do better than churches that leave it all to the clergy. Churches that grow people, tend to grow in *numbers* of people. In other words, *church should be a growth experience* - for everyone.

CCPN: So, what's kept you here?

KE: The people! Who couldn't help loving the people of this place? Christ Church can do anything it puts its mind to. As our bishop, Mariann Budde once said, "The local church is the light of the world." That is so true for this place and if I can help this place shine as the light of the world, that is a great privilege. I'm convinced that the Spirit blows thru this place - and I get to watch it in action.

CCPN: What do you wish for Christ Church?

KE: I'd love for us to keep developing our lay ministries and lay people. We have so much going for us at Christ Church. The more we can empower ourselves to do ministry, the more our light shines. I really hope we keep offering our joy to the world!

December 2017

Sun **Mon** **Tue** **Wed** **Thu** **Fri** **Sat**

3 ADVENT I 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour 11:15 AM Advent Wreath Making, Cookie Exchange 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	4 7:00 PM ACOA	5 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumbal 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	6 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM St. Nicholas Dinner with tree decoration 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	7 11:30 AM Prime Timers 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group	8 10:00 AM Parents' Morning Out 12:00 PM CPR & AED Refresher Course 1:00 PM Flower Guild	9 10:00 AM Parents' Morning Out 12:00 PM CPR & AED Refresher Course 1:00 PM Flower Guild
10 ADVENT II 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour & Pageant Rehearsal 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	11 7:00 PM ACOA	12 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumbal 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	13 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	14 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group 7:00 PM Vestry	15 9:30 AM Flower Guild	16 9:30 AM Flower Guild
17 ADVENT III 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist & Christmas Pageant 11:15 AM Pageant Reception 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	18 7:30 PM Outreach 7:00 PM ACOA	19 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumbal 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	20 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	21 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	22 9:30 AM Flower Guild 10:00 AM Choir Dress Rehearsal	23 9:30 AM Flower Guild 10:00 AM Choir Dress Rehearsal
24 ADVENT IV 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 PM Family Festival Eucharist 9:30 Christmas Music 10:00 PM Festival Eucharist	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	26 Offices Closed	27 Offices Closed	28 Offices Closed 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group	29 Offices Closed	30 9:30 AM Flower Guild
31 Christmas I 10:00 AM Christmas Lessons & Carols with Holy Eucharist						

January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Offices Closed	2 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumba! 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	3 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	4 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group	5	6 9:30 AM Flower Guild
7 FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Feast of Lights Service 6:00 PM 12th Night Party	8 7:00 PM ACOA	9 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumba! 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	10 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	11 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group	12	13 9:30 AM Flower Guild
14 II EPIPHANY 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	15 MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr. Offices Closed 7:00 PM ACOA 7:30 PM Outreach	16 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumba! 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	17 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	18 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group 7:30 PM Finance Committee 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	19	20 9:30 AM Flower Guild
21 III EPIPHANY 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	22 7:00 PM ACOA	23 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumba! 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	24 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	25 4:00 PM African Women's Prayer Group 7:00 PM Vestry	26	27 9:30 AM Flower Guild
28 IV EPIPHANY 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:15 AM Education Hour 4:00 PM Bible Study 5:00 PM Holy Eucharist	29 7:00 PM ACOA	30 9:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 10:30 AM Women's AI-Anon 11:15 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Women's AI-Anon 6:30 PM EFM 7:30 PM Zumba! 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	31 11:00 AM Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal			