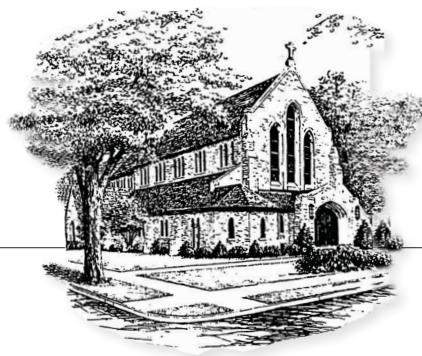


Christ Church   
Episcopal

95<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL MEETING  
Ministry Reports of 2025

FEBRUARY 1, 2026





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## RECTOR'S REPORT

We had a good year overall. Away on sabbatical and then a health crisis, you all pulled together to create new ministries and revive old ones. And you weathered big storms of all kinds.

### NEW AND REVITALIZED MINISTRIES

Christ Church continues to nurture an entrepreneurial culture where people who want to begin new projects and ministries are encouraged to pursue their passion. Sue Toman and Fr. Matt Phillips began an every-other-week Bible study on the gospel of Mark that often has 20 people. Pastor Mary Trainor and Sybil Bell began a quilting ministry which is building fellowship, attracting newcomers and producing concrete signs of God's love and care. Bailey Steger, Julie Davis and Fr. Matt successfully brought back a mission trip to our youth program, the first since 2017. The youth program is thriving as a result of the trip and their efforts as a whole.

### NEW STAFF MEMBER AND RETURNING CLERGY

We welcomed Dan Cotrone as our new Facilities Manager/Sexton. Dan has been a gift to us, working on various projects that had long been deferred as well as managing the many ongoing needs of the facility. Also, Fr Oswald Bwechwa is back in the country after more than year in Tanzania. Oswald has exciting news about his own vocation which he will announce soon.

### WEATHERED STORMS

You all rallied together after the Great August Flood to clean up the church and renovate the nursery. Additionally, the day after I left for my sabbatical, Sendik's announced plans for a massive expansion. The wardens, Sara Frieder and Don Allen, spent much time and energy in negotiations to prevent the takeover of a significant portion of our property along Beaumont Ave. The vestry convened a special meeting and I know others offered counsel along the way.

### MY TIME AWAY

I had a great sabbatical. I read widely, spent time in the wilderness, had adventures with family and reconnected with old friends. I also studied preaching and story-telling. I learned I do not want to be a novelist just yet. At the same time, I truly missed parish ministry, in particular the privilege and joy of being a rector, and I came back grateful and ready to serve.

And then my life blew up with multiple hospital stays. I was deeply touched by the kindness and affection showered on me and my family. Such love was integral to my healing. The resilience of the human body is amazing; and spiritually and emotionally, the illness was a gift. I can't say thank you enough to all those who stepped up for those 4 months. To Fr. Matt for his pastoral and liturgical leadership; to the wardens for their crisis management; to Dcn Nancy for her steady, gentle presence and at both services as well as mid-week programming. And to all the lay staff who were so instrumental in keeping up the spiritual vibrancy of this place: Michael Batcho, Julie Davis, Dan Cotrone, Karol Rehm, Lori Sinclair, Bailey Steger, and Julie Thauer. Special thanks to The Rev. Drs. Mary and Jim Trainor for offering their gifts in my absence as well.

### ADDITIONAL THANKS:

To all those ministry leaders and volunteers who continue to labor in the small, humble acts of service that enable us to shine God's light in our little corner of the world.

To Patrick Foley, Paula Stone, Dolly Grimes-Johnson as they finish their term as vestry members.

Jeff Evans moved to San Diego mid-year. As always, I'm grateful for the careful attention paid to our finances by our Treasurer, David Short.

To St. Maggie of Shorewood, the CEO of my recovery and my life-long partner. We will celebrate 30 years of marriage this summer.

**We commended three parishioners to God in 2025.**

**The people below have joined the fellowship of saints.**

Elizabeth Stephens Hagerup

*August 14, 1937 - January 7, 2025*

James Ballard

*June 11, 1939 - June 11, 2025*

Robin Lynn Pedersen

*November 9, 1958 - November 29, 2025*

**A Note on the Remembrance Table:** *Christ Church creates a clear, labeled votive for all members who have died, and the 8am ushers light these candles outside the chapel every week. This is a symbolic representation that those whom we love but see no longer have passed into Christ's nearer presence. After a year, the candle is presented to the spouse or nearest descendent. In addition, parishioners (and their kids) are invited to light a small candle as a symbol of prayer for people in their lives or in the larger world.*

## FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR (2026)

We have built a warm, inclusive, culture over the last decade and a half. Given the bitterness and aggression in the culture as a whole, simply maintaining what we have built requires a great deal of energy and discipline. We do have some additional things to tackle this year.

The Centennial Building Group will continue to work on potential improvements to our worship space which has barely been touched in the last 70 years.

Building on the success of the new Safety Committee, led by Jean Maier, I think we should look at better preparing for the worst, including those who enter our space with an intent to do mass harm.

We will simply have to grin and bear the Sendik's construction for the first half of the year.

My energy and stamina are climbing, and 2026 will be a year of healing.

**The Rev. Seth Dietrich - February 1, 2026**

## ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

### **Wednesday Morning Contemplative Eucharist**

We continue to celebrate the Holy Eucharist every Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. with a contemporary liturgy. On average, about fifteen of us gather each week to offer our prayers and praise to God and to reflect on Holy Scripture. With a little bit of incense and supported by the magnificent musical talents of Tom Herbstreith, Mark Hilgendorf, and Greg Bell, this liturgy is a much-needed spiritual balm and source of nourishment in the middle of weeks that are increasingly becoming busier

and busier. On the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, we also offer healing prayer for attendees in the chapel.

After each service, we gather in the Good Shepherd Room for tea and discussion on the Old Testament and Gospel lessons for the upcoming Sunday. Our conversations dive deep into the text and the wells of our own experience, and the insights offered by this group never cease to amaze me. The leadership of the Reverend Doctors Mary and Jim Trainor and the Reverend Oswald Bwechwa has been a tremendous blessing to this group, both in worship and our discussions afterward.

#### ***Pastoral Care and Prayer Group***

Our prayer team is one of three groups that provide pastoral care to our parish. The team is currently comprised of seven parishioners who dedicate their time and energies to holding the cares and concerns of our community in loving prayer. Prayers are offered on behalf of parishioners, family members, friends, and neighbors alike. Recently, the team has also begun visiting members of the parish in need of additional pastoral care. If you would like to share a prayer request with this group or are in need of pastoral care, please contact any of our Christ Church clergy. If you are interested in joining this faithful prayer group, please contact Fr. Matt.

#### ***Baptism and Baptismal Preparation***

The sacrament of Holy Baptism is one of the most important ways in which we welcome new members into the household of God. In Baptism we are adopted as God's children, receive forgiveness of sins, and are raised to new life in Christ as we become united to him in his death and resurrection (BCP, 858). It is my privilege to prepare families who desire their children to be baptized here at Christ Church, and we joyfully baptized 15 children into the Church in 2025. If you would like to baptize your child or are interested in learning more about the baptismal process, please contact me at any time.

#### ***Gatherings for Guys***

The Gathering for Guys is one of two men's groups here at Christ Church. On the second Tuesday evening of each month during the program year, the Guys meet in the Good Shepherd Room to share food, fellowship, and group discussions. The group also periodically takes on service projects in the parish and broader community, from serving at the St. Vincent De Paul dinner ministry at All People's Church to helping build homes with Habitat for Humanity. This group is convened by Andrew Jetton with discussions facilitated by Fr. Matt.

#### ***Theology by the Pint***

One Thursday each month, people of all ages gather at church for lively discussions on various topics in theology and Christian ethics: from the presence of Christ in the Eucharist to gender diversity in scripture. Light snacks, beer, and non-alcoholic beverages are provided at each discussion. Average attendance at this event has ballooned over the last year, growing from seven to fifteen participants, and we are always thrilled to welcome new people. If you would like to learn more about this group or would like to be included in our email list, please contact Fr. Matt.

***Faithfully submitted by the Rev. Matt Phillips***

## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

As I reflect on this past year serving as Senior Warden, I am filled with deep gratitude. I learned about the day-to-day workings of our church but, more importantly, gained immense appreciation for our clergy, staff and dedicated members. This is truly a special place.

This year brought both extraordinary challenges and meaningful moments of growth. We incurred building damage from what was described as a 1,000-year flood, we advocated for our church in a significant Sendik's redevelopment plan that directly impacted our property, and we kept the church afloat as Fr. Seth took a well-deserved sabbatical. Through it all, Christ Church's commitment, resilience and care were on full display.

We were all knocked back when Fr. Seth, after returning from that much deserved sabbatical, faced a serious health challenge. In the midst of that difficult time I witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of love, prayers, and support from this community. Cards, meals, messages, and countless prayers surrounded the entire Dietrich family. This collective response was a powerful reflection of the bonds within our congregation and a testament to how deeply Fr. Seth is loved and valued. As Senior Warden during this volatile time, I was moved to tears as I witnessed your compassion and faith. I am profoundly grateful that as I write this, Seth is in good health and is growing stronger each day.

Ah, yes, that 1,000 year flood. Overall, the damage was manageable, thanks to a small group of staff and members who showed up (without being asked) and worked tirelessly to clean it up. It was smelly, dirty work and they powered through. In fact, their generosity and hands-on support significantly offset the remediation costs. Out of the flood damage came an unexpected gift: the creation of a new, welcoming nursery space that will serve our youngest members and their families for years to come. Even the long-troubled Good Shepherd Room coat closet finally found resolution. Thank you to Randy Dean, Greg Bell and Dan Controne for their careful attention to our building issues.

Speaking of our buildings - in June we welcomed Dan Controne as our new Facilities Manager. Dan has already made a positive impact, and we are grateful for his expertise, warmth, and care for our beloved spaces. He joins a very strong staff who works tirelessly on the Church's behalf: Lori, Julie, Julie, Bailey, Michael, and Karol. Thank you for all you do.

Community and fellowship remained central to our life together. Our various church ministries are vibrant and strong.

One example to celebrate is the return of a Youth Mission Trip that was offered this past summer. It has long been a priority of the church to offer an immersive experience for our youth, and Lay Ministers Bailey Steger and Julie Davis made it happen. It was a very successful trip for all and I am pleased that this tradition will continue in years to come.

August required a special meeting of the Vestry as we learned more about the potential impacts from Sendik's redevelopment proposal. While not all of our suggestions were ultimately incorporated, the Vestry worked diligently and faithfully to represent what we believed was best for the church. I'm reminded that while the Sendik's redevelopment will change the views out our windows, parking and traffic patterns - it will not change what happens inside our walls.



On that note, this year a new committee was created to assess our building and look for improvements. This Long-Term Facilities Planning Committee has been hard at work, preparing for the future as we look ahead to our centennial in just a few years. Thank you to this committee for its dedication.

I also want to extend my thanks to Jean Maier for her leadership in creation of the new Safety Planning Committee. Thank you to all the members of this committee who are working to ensure that our church remains a safe and welcoming place for all.

I hit the jackpot this year with this Vestry. This powerful combination of diverse people and perspectives led to informed decision making. I especially thank those who are completing their service: Patrick Foley, Dolly Grimes-Johnson, and Paula Stone. I welcome to the Vestry a few more superstars: Our new Jr. Warden Alex Rikkers, and our four new Vestry members: Kelly Riley, Diane Holzman, Mike McDonogh and Luke Sinclair.

What a gift David Short is to us all! I am in awe of his ability to manage the complexities of our finances. He is patient, kind and the always calmest voice in the room. I thank you, David, for your incredible leadership and expertise. Also, thank you to Em Schley. Your ability to take comprehensive notes at each meeting as we bounce around from issue to issue is impressive.

Don Allen, your new Senior Warden, and I were strangers when the year began. In our initial meeting I asked Don if he would be willing to partner with me as equals and leave the “Junior” and “Senior” labels behind. I am so grateful he agreed, as Don and I were each other’s right hands throughout the year. Don is incredibly smart, funny, and thoughtful. I am grateful for his partnership and leave this year with a new friend. You are in good hands with Don!

I will miss my monthly meetings with the Vestry, as we always managed to find a few laughs in the midst of doing the Church’s work.

I confess that I started my term as Senior Warden feeling a bit uneasy. Would there be time for this while managing my full-time job as a teacher? Was I up for the challenge of this role while emotionally preparing to adjust to having my oldest child away at college? Could I carry the torch of the impressive and undaunted Senior Wardens that came before me? As many of us find to be the case, given the benefit of hindsight, my unease probably wasn’t warranted. With the help of those mentioned above, and the support and faith of all of you, I leave my role as Senior Warden filled with optimism and enthusiasm about Christ Church’s future.

*Submitted by Sara Frieder - Senior Warden*

## **ALTAR GUILD REPORT**

Altar Guild activities continued to support the clergy, which includes preparation for the Eucharistic services, care of the linens, silver and brass communion pieces and altar and acolyte candles.

Altar Guild is comprised of four teams, each team works one Sunday a month.



Pat Algiers and Luanna Schiff joined us this year. We are proactively recruiting new members. We welcome any interested congregants, especially couples, to reach out to any Altar Guild member.

Altar Guild would like to give a very hearty thanks to Karen Watson for making additional pottery for the Wednesday and summer services. Thanks Karen!

As a group, we are grateful for the opportunity to support the clergy in their work and to contribute to our worship community.

*Submitted by Bridget Elliott*

## AUDIO-VIDEO TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY REPORT

2024 has provided successful Sunday streams. We have 3 young men training and running our Streams and Lectures, but we NEED MORE HELP!!! Utilizing the Great Hall camera, we Stream every Forum that we have in the Great Hall along with other events that have taken place. Funerals have been a growing part of our streaming at Christ church along with Weddings as an added bonus to those who marry in our church.

We have also added some new Choir Mics above the Choir to enhance the quality of the music on our Streams. These will become permanent in 2025 and hang almost invisible above the choir. We have already had compliments about how much better the Choir sounds in our stream.

For 2025 I am investigating a remote multi scene-controlled light to replace the stationary light for the Sermon and Children's Sermon, so we don't have to grab a ladder 5 min before the service or forget we moved the light and then it's in the wrong spot for the service and forget to turn it on to help provide better lighting for our Stream.

We made a choice on a new camera for the Outdoor Garden service; a Sony 4k VC so we now have the ability to have a 2-camera shot for the Garden service. The new focus for the Garden is HELP! We need help in set up tear down and running the system.

Our Streaming service uses OBS and YouTube Studio. YouTube gives us some very useful information. In 2024 we had an average of 75-100 views per Sunday service, and our YouTube channel had a total of 10,340 views, 1600+ hours viewed overall. We had viewers from the USA, UK, Brazil, Denmark. We can even see spikes for our High Sunday services. We also noticed high activity for older videos such as our Virtual Choir anthems.

We are always looking for help in learning about our AV production. Currently, **Lawton Strickroot, Victor Strickroot, Jack McMahon, Steven Heltsley, and James Hinchey**—serve as our livestream tech crew. They help run the services and Lectures and a huge thanks for our Associate Priest Matt for taking control of the weekly schedule. I have had discussion over possibly having an AV class to teach and learn about all the facets of our system. So if you are interested in learning about Sound or Video Production please reach out to me for more information. We Need HELP!

*Submitted by Todd Gaulke*

## BIBLE STUDY GROUP - THE GOSPEL OF MARK

A Bible study on the gospel of Mark began during Advent to look more closely at Jesus' life and walk with him in a way to Good Friday and Easter. Between 8 and 14 people regularly attend. Here are some of their observations—

- The group welcomes thought, discussion, and discernment. No matter if you are new to Bible study or have been doing it for decades, the meetings are meaningful.
- We are encouraged to find how the verses speak to us personally. How is God alive in the Scriptures and in our lives?
- I appreciate this group because it's a slow look at scripture in an open and searching way. It's not saccharine/churchy in the way one might presuppose about Bible study.
- Everyone feels free to share views out of their own lived experiences.
- I see/understand things I'd never have gotten solo.
- This is food for the soul. A true study of the Word is completely different than a discussion group.
- And, all this food for the soul includes a little food for the body. Great snacks! In the words of Jesus, come and see anytime.

*Submitted by Sue Toman*

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS

### *Overview of Accomplishments*

1. Soon after joining the Christ Church team, the nursery flooded due to heavy rain and downspout extensions having been removed and not replaced after the church lawn was cut. Shared leadership and volunteers worked together on cleanup and restoration of the damaged nursery. AJ Development, a Whitefish Bay remediation company, was engaged, new flooring was installed, and necessary drywall/plastering was completed by a Brookfield company in 2 locations of the nursery area. Recently, newly plastered areas were repainted. Deep cleaning took place. A long FEMA and insurance company interview was held.
2. After the nursery flood issues were under control, an elevator flood was discovered by Otis Elevator during a routine service visit. Another round of phone calls, plumbers, and time was dedicated to cleaning up the water-oil mixture in the elevator shaft and to cleaning out the sump pump crotch and oil-crusting pump that had become nonfunctional.
3. Damaged a year earlier by a burst water pipe, the Great Hall closet was repaired. New drywall was installed, matching tile was located and installed, the entire area was repainted, and the baseboard and moldings were stripped, sanded, stained, and varnished in Dan's Shop and then re-installed.
4. Randy Dean worked with another contractor to replace about 18 ceiling tiles in the Great Hall.
5. Lost or misplaced boiler and elevator licenses had put our church out of compliance with the North Shore Fire Department for the last year. The kitchen stove hood also was out of compliance due to not having been cleaned and inspected. Many phone calls were productive;

inspections were conducted and licenses were reinstated, though this information still needs to be entered into the fire department's computer system.

6. The North Shore Fire Department requirement for a wall posting of seating capacity in the Nave, Great Hall, and Chapel is soon to be complete.
7. The up position wood surfaces of every kneeler in the Nave were hand washed with the help of Lori Sinclair. Also cleaned were all the window sills and heat register surfaces as well as other Nave surfaces. Every pew was gifted with a fresh, full box of Kleenex.
8. The Narthex walls and ceiling, heavy with cobwebs and dead insects, were cleaned and the slate floor, damaged by deep scratches from movement of furniture, was restored using WD-40 and then hand scrubbed twice all the way down the slate stairway to the nursery in the basement.
9. Many ceiling tiles were replaced and a low stairway hand-rail was mounted, stained, and newly varnished in Dan's Shop for preschool children with help from Ted Durant.
10. Several pew ends in the Nave have been restored with a new fresh look. More to follow.
11. All lower Chapel windows were washed with the generous help of Lori Sinclair. The upper Chapel windows are on my to-do list for a long awaited cleaning.
12. Paint on half of the outside molding surrounding the main church entrance doors had completely deteriorated. All molding was scraped, sanded, caulked, primed, and painted twice.
13. Downspout extensions were permanently attached around the building to maximize moving roof water away from the foundation of our building. Ice dam intervention with the use of a roof rake was implemented recently after our snow storm. The wild weed area behind the church was cut down twice during the summer. All lower gutters around the building were cleaned.
14. With the help of Greg Bell and Randy Dean, an extensive search was conducted to locate basement water turn-off valves to prevent water pipes from freezing in the winter. We were not successful. The building remains vulnerable to frozen winter pipes.
15. A new lawn mowing provider and a new snow removal provider were engaged for the coming year after a long search and many phone calls. Finding reasonably-priced lawn cutting and snow removal services was challenging.
16. A new floor extension was built and installed next to the organ to provide more space for guest musicians to perform.
17. Many repairs and hours included repairing kitchen cupboard door hinges, the dishwasher, and 2 clogged disposals, replacing lost refrigerator clips, shopping for a kitchen sink faucet, defrosting GS refrigerator, taking apart and cleaning hallway public water fountain, repairing toilets, changing light bulbs, adding hooks in the tech closet, installing a wall cupboard in the nursery, and cleaning 2 heavily paint-coated janitor sinks.
18. Much time was spent searching for restoration companies to address the flood and dialoging with Otis Elevator and with Total Mechanical for heating/AC/plumbing services. A skilled, yet reasonable tile and drywalling contractor was identified and engaged.
19. An informal connection has been made with the facility manager of United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay to share ideas and solutions.

### ***Exterior Repairs / Maintenance Recommendations***

1. Install underground electricity between outside church and church sign. In process.
2. Several inside basement valves for turning off the outside water supply have not been located. A plumbing contractor should be consulted and prevention should be implemented with installed basement water turn-off valves, to prevent our building from being vulnerable in winter to frozen pipes and flooding. My understanding is that the water supply to the outside faucets has not been turned off for several years. We have escaped frozen pipes so far.
3. Increase soil height around the entire building for increased rainwater run-off away from the building.
4. The church driveway needs signage to prohibit cars from parking there. Parked cars prevent snow clearing and interfere with preschool students/parents' passage to and from school.
5. Although all outside windows of the Good Shepherd Room were washed last summer, all church building windows, inside and out, should be washed annually. This includes the school area where I have washed 2 windows at their request.
6. The very top of the Nave entrance should have permanent weatherstripping.
7. Outside caulking around several church office area windows has separated from the window frames. Windows are thus vulnerable to water seeping into the building and rotting the wood frames. Nests of insects also enter the building this way. Several areas of outside wood trim are very much in need of replacement or at least scraping, priming, and painting. Locations include under the church gutters and the entrance area/east gutter area of the office wing.
8. Fall gutter cleaning is regularly needed. The office wing gutter had not been cleaned for several years, as evidenced by the growing plants in the decomposed leaves in this gutter.
9. The Tudor style boards above the outside Chapel entrance appear to be deteriorating and/or rotting.

### ***Interior Repairs / Maintenance Recommendations***

1. Building floors, including the kitchen floors, are not washed by our cleaning service. They are not clean. The floors are free of loose dust and dirt but they are only dry-mopped. The Good Shepherd Room entrance is wet-mopped. Wall base-moldings and doors are dusty. The Narthex entrance slate floor, tracked with shoes from a rainy day and from winter snow, should be washed regularly.
2. The kitchen dishwasher requires Teflon replacement. In process.
3. Replacement of a long nonfunctional battery-operated kitchen faucet is needed beside the coffee urns.
4. The boiler room partially flooded this summer from a clogged floor drain. Drainage should be monitored.
5. All sump pumps should be tested regularly. The nursery sump pump is not operational but is very heavily rusted. At least one or two extra sump pumps should be purchased and available for emergencies should sump pumps fail in an emergency.

6. The blue seats of the chairs in the Great Room/Good Shepherd Room need cleaning. The carpet needs spot cleaning attention.
7. The Good Shepherd Room west wall and other walls in that area are in need of patching and painting.
8. Several additional door mechanisms/locks of the building should be serviced with graphite. Several were serviced.
9. Several aisle/ends of pews have been restored with a fresh finish, but others still need attention. The lower chapel windows have been washed, inside and out, with help from Lori Sinclair. The upper windows are very much in need of being cleaned and are on my “to do” list.
10. The circuit breaker box for the Good Shepherd Room should be located in order to replace a nonfunctional wall lighting switch.
11. The entrance doors to the Chapel, Nave, and Good Shepherd Room have been found to be left open, unlocked, and 12 inches ajar--all night with all interior lights also left on throughout the night. Safeguards and guidelines for locking the building at night should be reviewed.

### **Idea**

Would a strategically located suggestion box be helpful to our church community to not only request repairs, but to raise concerns and provide ideas and input to our facility management?

### **Reflections**

Over the past 6 months, I was abundantly blessed and gifted by the generous help and support from Fr. Seth, Randy Dean, and Greg Bell, as I tackled a countless array of demands and duties both large and small, complex and straightforward. Sara Frieder and Don Allen also have been incredibly responsive and willing to share constructive guidance, suggestions, and ideas. Many others have pitched in with kind, warm, and loving spirits. I very much appreciate the positive feedback and “kudos” from many corners of Christ Church and feel privileged serving as part of the team and being part of the church community.

*Submitted by Dan Cotrone - Facilities Manager*

## **CENTENNIAL BUILDING GROUP**

In looking forward to Christ Church's Centennial in 2031, an ad hoc committee met multiple times in 2025 to begin to identify, research, consider, and evaluate potential needs in and enhancements to our building, its infrastructure, and its capability to welcome and support all members in their spiritual journeys. We are grateful for Christ Church's leadership in the Diocese of Wisconsin and endeavor to establish a vitality and sustainability into our second century. This process will continue in 2026 with forthcoming communication to inform, engage, and inspire us all. Members of the committee are: Pat Algiers, Beth Durant, Bill Foote, Katie Hermann, Meredie Scrivner, Tom Scrivner, Lyn Slater, and Randy Dean.

*Submitted by Randy Dean*

## CENTERING PRAYER

“The Christ Church Centering Prayer group meets weekly on Fridays at 11:15 a.m. in the JT room. The group consists of those who attend regularly and those who attend occasionally. During this 20-minute silent prayer we rest in God’s love as we gently consent to God’s presence and action within us. It is based on the teachings of Fr. Thomas Keating, and has deep roots in the practices of the early Church Desert Mothers and Fathers.

Everyone is welcome to attend. There are no pre-prerequisites and it is not possible to get it wrong! If you would like to hear more about Centering Prayer prior to attending, please reach out to Helen Benton or Janis Blean-Kachigan.”

*Submitted by Janis Blean-Kachigan, Helen Benton*

## CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH MINISTRY

### **Sacramental Formation**

The Explorers class (3K-1st) averages 9 students per Sunday. The Seekers class (2nd-5th) averages 8 students per Sunday. There are 48 children registered for Sunday school.

Prayer is our theme for the 2025-2026 school year and we are using *Sing, Wrestle, Spin: Prayers for Active Kids* by Jennifer Grant and *What Every Child Should Know about Prayer* by Nancy Guthrie to guide our class room time. Students have been trying out ways to spend time with God in prayer in each class. This fall, in partnership with the Outreach team, we packed a record number of winterwear items and in January we decorated boards for Habitat for Humanity.

### **Nursery**

The nursery continues to serve an average of 4 students per Sunday year-round with a dedicated team of paid workers. During the summer, the nursery flooded, damaging most of the toys and furniture. The congregation raised over \$1000 in funds and donated gently-used and new items. Parishioners and children’s staff helped to clean and put together a beautiful nursery space.

### **High School & Middle School Youth Group**

The primary youth programming is a twice-monthly youth group. We come together on Sunday evenings for a meal, games, and compline, and split into middle and high school cohorts for age-specific religious education.

This year the middle school group had 11 regular members. We have been exploring big questions - questions about who we are and who God is, what it means to be part of a church family, and ultimately asking what impact we can have on the world. This January and February we are pausing to explore the Exodus story and God’s pattern of rescue, transformation, and new life repeated throughout the Bible. Throughout the year we have served our community packing snack bags and baking cookies. We also wrote Christmas letters to members of our Christ Church community living at St. Johns and in January we decorated boards for Habitat for Humanity.

The high school youth group has 19 regular attendees, 18 of which are participating in the confirmation track. Each confirmand is matched with their own adult mentor. In addition to our Sunday evening programming, youth decorated holiday cookies for the St. Vincent de Paul meal program, volunteered at the parish pancake breakfast, and ran the annual All Saints Day children’s fair.



### ***Immersive & Collaborative Youth Experiences***

This year we partnered with several different organizations to deliver meaningful, immersive experiences for youth. Our biggest endeavor was a 5 day summer mission trip to Kenosha, WI through Group Mission Trips, where we volunteered at an assisted living and memory care facility. Fourteen individuals attended—1 high schooler, 9 middle schoolers, and four adult chaperones. In March 5 middle schoolers and 1 adult leader undertook a mini mission trip with the MKE Youth Collab. We stayed overnight at City on a Hill and served at their monthly health clinic.

To kick off our 2025-2026 youth programming year, we hosted a Saturday retreat at the Catholic Ecology Center in Neosho, WI, which included team-building games, a prayerful nature walk, and times for spiritual reflection and learning. This year, we committed to supporting the MKE Youth Collab, an Episcopal youth group made up of several different churches in the area. We attended a couple of their events, including a trip to Holy Hill and a food service project supporting a local ministry for the unhoused.

*With gratitude to our dedicated volunteers & families,  
Bailey Steger (Lay Minister for Families & High School Youth)  
& Julie Davis (Lay Minister for Sunday School and Middle School Youth)*

### **CHRIST CHURCH LADIES' CONNECTIONS (CCLC)**



CCLC started in 2018 when a group of women who had been tutoring together at Our Next Generation decided to keep meeting weekly to stay connected after the school year had ended. Since then, the group has grown and continues to meet every Thursday for Happy Hour, previously at a neighborhood restaurant in Shorewood, and now at Lyn Slater's home. It has proven to be a great way to meet and get to know one another socially, and the group is different each week. We celebrate joyous events like birthdays, graduations, and births and offer comfort to those who have lost loved ones or who have sick family members.

Open to all Christ Church women. We meet every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. – no need to RSVP; just come if you can. If you would like to be added to the CCLC group email, or if you have questions, please contact Kathy Stanford.

*Submitted by Kathy Stanford*

### **ENDOWMENT REPORT**

The Christ Church Endowment Trust was established to provide parishioners and others with a means for donating to the church in a way that provides lasting support. The Endowment contains four specific Funds: General Programs, Capital and Maintenance, Outreach, and Music. Distributions from these trust funds must be spent in accordance with the terms of the Endowment Trust Agreement. Contributions can be made to a specific fund or can be made to the Endowment Trust to be allocated by the Vestry. The Endowment Board consists of a group of eight parishioners appointed by the Vestry to oversee management of and distributions from the Trust. Total distributions from the endowment trust funds to the respective Church accounts totaled \$43,113.29 in 2025.



The value of the Endowment at the end of 2024 was \$1,079.025, up 13.8% from the end of 2023.

Distributions to each account are received at approximately the same date each quarter. The Investment Policy Statement may be viewed in a tab on the Endowment page under the Give dropdown menu on the church website. There are “clicks” available on both the Endowment page and the Online Giving page to make gifting easy and user friendly. Please see Lori Sinclair, Father Seth, or Andy Hobbs for information on how to donate securities to the Endowment. The Board will continue to explore ways to inform/educate parishioners about the Endowment and to grow the endowment, particularly in the area of planned giving.

The Vestry voted in 2023 to approve the Endowment Board’s selection of the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) as the investment manager for the fund. This year, we finally completed the removal of US Bank as the Trustee and Investment Manager and began working with ECF.

Current members of the Endowment Trust Board are Robert Draper (Chair), Andy Hobbs (Vice Chair), Maureen McCabe, Tom Scrivner, Rick Cudahy, Paula Hogan, Ed Inderrieden, and Seth Flanders. Maureen McCabe and Robert Draper have terms ending this month, and we are grateful to them for their service. Andy Hobbs will assume the role of Endowment Board Chair in 2026. If you have an interest in serving on the Endowment Board, please contact Andy Hobbs or Father Seth.

*Submitted by Rob Draper*

## **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS REPORT**

LEM’s (Lay Eucharistic Ministers) at Christ Episcopal Church are licensed by the bishop to administer the consecrated elements of the Eucharist and participate in one of the sacred rites of the Christian religion. Our primary responsibility is to assist the clergy in serving communion. Our ministry is blessed to have dedicated people who are trained to allow our parishioners to receive the blood of Christ in a loving, caring, and correct manner. In addition to serving at regular services, LEM’s also serve at special services during the year. Our current methods of administering the wine are small cups offered at two stations, the chalice at the altar, and intinction by a LEM at the altar.

We thank those serving in this ministry - Clergy: Seth, Matt, and Nancy in addition to Lay Ministers: Eric Ayala, Penny Cruse, Maggie Dietrich, Lee Dreyfus, Tim McMahon and Sue Toman.

*Submitted by Sarah Gottlieb*

## **FLOWER GUILD REPORT**

Flower Guild once again enjoyed volunteering to create weekly altar floral arrangements. In 2025, we created 42 weeks of sponsored altar memorials for Sunday worship. There are currently 3 weeks of the liturgical year open for new sponsored floral memorials (excluding Lent and Advent, except Rose Sundays). Please get in touch with the Church Office or Joy Mast if interested in sponsoring one of these open weeks. In addition to creating weekly floral arrangements throughout the year, the Guild decorated the Church for Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Easter. A special thanks to Sally and Chip Kubly for leading the Greening of the Church for Christmas.

In 2025, the Flower Guild leadership transitioned to the co-leadership of Dorothy Kerr, Willette Knopp, and Joy Mast. Thank you to all Guild members for volunteering your time and talents:

Week 1: Joy Mast, Diane Holzman, and Janet Gebhardt

Week 2: Willette Knopp, Sally Kubly, and Kitty Sturrock

Week 3: Mary Kay Anderson, Bob Newby, and Cindy Amini

Weeks 4 (and 5): Dorothy Kerr, Paulie McCown, and Sandy Mueller

Anyone interested in joining the Flower Guild is most welcome, as we are always delighted to train and welcome new members throughout the year. The Flower Guild provides training to anyone interested in helping. Typically, Guild members arrange altar flowers once every 3-4 months, and help with the greening of the Church at Christmas and with Easter flowers as availability allows.

*Submitted by Willette Knopp, Joy Mast and Dorothy Kerr*

## FOOD FOR THE SOUL

*Food for the soul* is a ministry that links parishioners with those in the parish who need meals after coming home from surgery or the hospital or those with a new baby. We have also provided meals for the newly bereaved. Volunteers are always welcome. Email [annecdavis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:annecdavis@sbcglobal.net).

*Submitted by Anne Davis*

## THE FORUM COMMITTEE



The Sunday Forum presented 16 programs in 2025. Topics were varied, with an emphasis on community needs, environmental issues, spiritual exploration, and outreach opportunities.

Attendance was generally 30 to 40 people in person, with additional people watching online.

The Forum Committee tried hard to present provocative and thoughtful presentations, while avoiding political discourse and topics of great controversy.

The Forum Committee bid a fond and grateful farewell to Bob Pavlik and to Mary and Jim Trainor for their years of service on the committee. New members Steve Bruemmer, Nancy Eaton, Nancy Hills, and Joan and Mike McDonough have joined Donna Recht, Tom and Meredie Scrivner and Fr. Seth Dietrich to continue the efforts to provide interesting Sunday morning programs for the parish. If you have suggestions for a Forum topic, please feel free to contact any member of the committee.

*Submitted by Meredie Scrivner*

## CHURCH GARDENS MINISTRY

The beautiful gardens at Christ Church are a blessing for all of us and the care of them is very important as they are enjoyed not just by our parishioners but the entire community. Susan Dreyfus and Betsy Head assumed responsibility for co-chairing this ministry in 2023 and spent time planning and creating clear policies for how we would provide stewardship of the gardens with the help of parishioners.

We had a spring clean up day in May 2025 and had many volunteers of all ages who came and took on a specific task clearing and preparing the gardens for perennials, bushes, trees and our ongoing work to address invasive species in the gardens, specifically Bishop Weed which if not addressed could become very serious. Also we had a pachysandra fungus that needed some attention. 2025 was a banner year for rabbits and they were very hungry. The gardens suffered a lot of damage so we are requesting a coyote to be put on staff this spring(joke). But seriously, we will continue to try various methods of limiting their destructive appetites and hope you will assist by walking your dogs through the area to discourage Peter Rabbit from camping out there. We supplied the sandwiches and volunteers brought chips, veggies and desserts. It was a very enjoyable time and we all came to know one another better as we worked side by side!

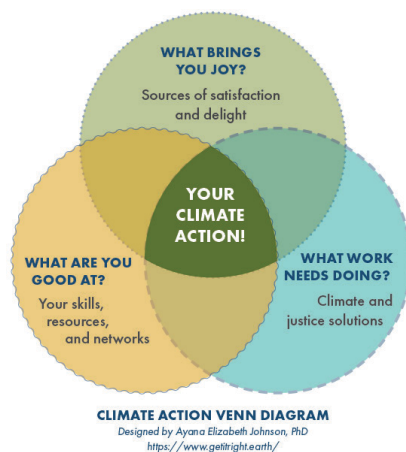
In addition to our regular maintenance needs, new projects last summer included planting more perennials in the new Memorial Garden. A new pollinator garden was planted along the driveway on Beaumont which we hope will come back and spread this year. We will continue to clear overgrown plants in this area to make room for more plants so our bees and butterflies can flourish!

The flower pots at the church entrances are managed by Susan. If you are interested in helping with the pots, please contact her: [sndreyfus@gmail.com](mailto:sndreyfus@gmail.com)

Looking forward to 2026, we have two additional projects. We will be adding ground cover in the area near the main church doors where the scaffolding damaged our ground cover and bushes. Also near the office door where a new tree was planted last summer. A replacement tree is under consideration where we lost one of our japanese lilacs last year.

*Submitted by Betsy Head and Susan Dreyfus*

## GREEN TEAM FOCUS



### PURPOSE:

Support and enhance God's creation by engaging Christ Church parishioners in sustainable living, so that we might be ambassadors in dialogue with the larger community.

### WHAT WE DO:

- Green Team focus: to emphasize the importance of climate change and our role caring for God's creation

### 2025 EFFORTS

- Broadcast Weekly Posts – to educate and offer hope for our future. Please read them weekly.
- See the Green Team input on the Christ Church web page for information.
- Assisted in the Creation Sunday service: 'How I Can Care for God's Creation, developed by Bob Pavlilk and sandwich board display.
- Continue collaborating with the church school to incorporate Creation Care in their curriculum.

- Sue Toman was the liaison with Interfaith Green Team, electronics recycling event, earning \$400 for participating.
- Betsy Head initiated the changeover from non-compostable coffee cups to washable ones, new carts & cup holders for the dishwasher & organized volunteer washers. Thank you for everyone's participation.
- New Bulletin board shared with outreach - for long standing information
- We work with Episcopal Diocese of Wisconsin Creation Care Commission in all Wisconsin Episcopal Churches whenever possible.
- Distribution of the Green Team Budget on your behalf:
  - Milwaukee School Playground Enrichment - Greening school grounds. \$350.00
  - Donate a tree and &/or garden tools for the Christ Church Habitat house. \$320.00
  - Faith in Place - an active resource Christ Church and for WI congregations \$50.00
  - Green Team & Outreach bulletin board \$69.99
- If you and your household have any way you are caring for God's creation, please share it with anyone on the team and we will include your efforts in our Thursday Weekly Broadcast e-Newsletter posts.

The Green Team membership is open to all ages/generations and welcomes suggestions for further efforts.

***Members: Ira Leidel, Lyn Slater, Tom Content, Betsy Head, Joy Mast, Sue Toman, Sally Kubly, Nancy Appleby, Bob Pavlick***

## **HOSPITALITY AND SERVICE MINISTRY REPORT**

Leaders Elizabeth Casey(set-up) and Susan Dreyfus ( service and clean-up) have worked behind the scenes with committee volunteers to keep coffee hour going and ensure its success..

2025 was a year of big change! Together with the Green Team, we implemented the use of ceramic mugs in the fall. We were able to cut the cost of this project by requesting donated mugs, and we got plenty! By November, all the bumps in the new procedures seemed to be ironed out and the whole process was running smoothly. We were also able to recruit some new volunteers for both the set-up and the clean up elements of this Ministry, which is always welcome.

Efforts continue to be made to ensure the hospitality parishioners and guests experience at coffee hour is enjoyable. We look forward to serving the church by providing Coffee Hour in the coming year.

***Submitted by Elizabeth Casey and Susan Dreyfus***

## **MEN'S BOOK GROUP**

Our Men's Group meets on Mondays on Zoom (at 9 a.m.) to share topics of spirituality and growth in our faith. We also meet on Thursdays (at 9.a.m.) in person at church to discuss a book we've agreed to read. Watch the Weekly Broadcast to get the Zoom link for Mondays and to see our most recent book. All men are welcome.

***Submitted by Greg Bell***

## MUSIC & MEDITATION

We are well into our second year and we usually have 13-15 people come. What is encouraging? Is that half of the attendees are not members of Christchurch. My goal originally was to have an experience at our church that would attract new people from the larger community and that is happening. The meditation half hour includes music from Tom and Greg and myself and others reading poetry or scripture or sharing a prayer. Encouraging has been the fact that people stay after the meditation and meaningful fellowship has developed. People seeking silence and a time listen to music should be encouraged to come. Mark

*Submitted by Mark Hilgendorf*

## MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

2025 was a good year for the music program. Having been at Christ Church for a couple years, I am much more comfortable now. Things have settled a bit and we've been able to improve and grow.

### ***The full Music Staff includes:***

Michael J Batcho, Organist/Choirmaster  
 Karol Rehm, Bell Choir Director  
 Erin Hutchins, Alto Choir section leader  
 James Sampson, Bass Choir section leader  
 Cameron Wilkins, Tenor Section leader

Our parish choir is the centerpiece of the music program. At present there are 17 members. The choir sings almost every Sunday from the week after Labor Day until Memorial Day. Each week they provide an Offertory Anthem, and lead the chanting of the psalm and other hymns and service music. Periodically they provide special music during communion. In addition to Sunday worship, the choir is present for festive holiday liturgies such as Christmas Eve and HolyWeek. Our hard work has been paying off as this ensemble continues to develop and grow.

After being the soprano section leader for many years, Emily Bensen decided to step down. Since we have a number of strong sopranos, I replaced Emily with alto Erin Hutchins. The other two section leaders are James Sampson, bass, and Cameron Wilkins, tenor, provide musical leadership within the choir, lead the singing when the choir is not present, and occasionally perform various solos, often during communion time.

One new initiative is Family Choir. This is an effort to involve children of the parish and their parents in the music program. They come together for one Wednesday evening rehearsal then join the parish choir on the first Sunday of the month - Handing Down the Faith Sunday. Participants may sing as often as they want or their schedules allow.

Instrumentalists, both church members and paid professionals, are occasionally incorporated into Sunday worship. Last Easter Sunday we again had a brass quartet and timpani for the service. At the Christmas Choral Eucharist we had oboe and harp. Throughout the regular Sunday services we also have had violin, a Native American flute, guitar, clarinet, baritone saxophone and let's not forget the Dixieland jazz band on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. All of these have played preludes, voluntaries, communion meditations, and choral and hymn accompaniments.

Bell Choir ringers, led by Karol Rehm, play approximately every 6 weeks, most often during communion time or for the prelude. There are 3 octaves of bells.

Lastly, there is a group of various singers and instrumentalists who provide musical leadership for the summer season outdoor liturgies.

I'm happy to report that we are now compliant with copyright licensing. In order to reprint music in the bulletin and, more importantly, to livestream our services, we need to have a license. The parish is licensed through OneLicense, a Chicago-based company, which allows us to reprint and broadcast music from over 300 publishers.

The parish instruments continue to be in good shape. The organ, built in 1998 by the Holtkamp Company of Cleveland, OH, is the primary instrument providing musical leadership for liturgy. It is a beautiful instrument that, thankfully, has been well maintained over the years. It is tuned and maintained by John Miller. Our pianos include the nave/church heritage Steinway graciously donated by the Roger Senn family, and the choir rehearsal room Howard grand, donated by Scott Riedel. The Great Hall piano is a Samick studio model. The pianos are tuned and maintained by Patty Stevensen. Additionally an electronic piano is available for the outdoor summer service.

I'm thankful for the choir singers, bell ringers, soloists, and instrumentalists. All these musicians give untold hours in group and private rehearsal each week. It's a joy to work with them to provide music for the glory of God and edification of His people.

***Music Ministry Expenses include:***

Organist/Choir Master salary

Bell Choir Director salary

Alto choir section leader

Bass choir section leader

Various instrumentalists and soloists

Organ Tuning/Maintenance

Piano Tuning/Maintenance

Hand Bell Maintenance

Sheet Music purchase

"Back-up" Musicians for emergency/illness substitution

Please contact me either after a service or by email if you have any questions.

***Submitted by, Michael J. Batcho, Organist and Choir Master***

## **NEWCOMER COMMITTEE REPORT**

Forty new families or individuals showed an interest in Christ Church during 2025 and are currently receiving the CC Weekly Broadcast. The Newcomer Committee has a weekly rotation of Newcomer Hosts after the 9:30a.m. Sunday service; monthly name tag Sundays; visitor cards in every pew and biannual Newcomer Brunches. Greeting new people in the pews and introducing them to other CC members has resulted in many people getting involved in one or more ministries as well as joining CC.



The Newcomer Committee has 2 new members which makes us a total of 10 members. We welcome anyone who is interested in becoming a part of the Committee to get in touch with us.

*Submitted by Lynne J. Schley and Kathy Stanford*

## **OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT**

In 2025, Outreach continued to develop its “long and deep” approach to support several organizations not only with financial support but also direct involvement of parishioners in outreach projects and activities, in line with our commitment to three pillars: meeting the immediate needs of the community, developing deep, long-term partnerships, and involving members of the parish in hands-on service. The Outreach Committee was blessed with tremendous generosity from the parish this year, which enabled the committee to allocate nearly \$100,000 from both operating funds and supplemental donations to various Outreach programs, events and direct financial support. This level of Outreach support is only possible due to the countless number of volunteers and hours people dedicate to this important ministry.

### ***All Peoples Church:***

Christ Church has partnered with this Harambee neighborhood Lutheran church for over ten years. Outreach has continued to supply the APC food pantry with weekly food collections in the red wagon and periodic special food drives. APC has a weekly wish list that is shared with our parishioners through the weekly Broadcast which has helped keep a more consistent level of inventory in the pantry. We also provided 50 Thanksgiving and 30 Christmas food bags for their pantry guests. We also have 4-6 CC members that volunteer at the pantry every Wednesday. This summer, a school supplies/backpack drive was held to benefit students in kindergarten through high school. In addition we collected 150 coats, hats and gloves for children of all ages.

Christ Church also helped All Peoples secure a \$3,000 diocesan grant which was used by All Peoples to obtain an AED device for their parish and to support APC’s music program.

### ***Sojourner Family Peace Center:***

In 2023, the Outreach Committee began our work to be in deeper partnership with Sojourner so we could find more ways to support their mission and engage parishioners. Together with Sojourner we developed a plan and have regular conversations with Sojourner leadership and staff and are pleased with our progress to date. In addition to monetary support in 2025, we have cooked and served 6 Peace Meals for Sojourner guests and staff, assembled and delivered 100 staff appreciation cookie boxes for Christmas, donated a 3-month supply of laundry detergent, and sponsored and attended with other parishioners Sojourner’s 50th Anniversary fundraising event.

### ***The Gathering:***

In addition to providing funds, Christ Church partners with the Gathering to provide in-person volunteers for meal service six times per year. .

### ***St Vincent de Paul Meal Program:***

Outreach continued its monthly commitment of preparing and serving food on the 3rd Monday of each month out of the Harambee Kitchen in All Peoples Church. There are 6-12 Christ Church member volunteers on a monthly basis.



**Haiti Partnership:** Outreach continues to sponsor St. Marc's Episcopal Church and School in Jeanette, Haiti, through its ongoing relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee.

**Tanzania:**

Outreach continued its support of St. John's parish in the Diocese of Lweru, and supported many of Fr. Oswald's ministry efforts during his time back in the country during 2025. In particular we helped to establish a new satellite parish about 20 miles from St. John's. We have also created a separate, permanent Tanzania fund that will hold donations designated for Tanzania ministries until new needs are identified and serve as an emergency reserve for the parish of St. John's.

**Habitat for Humanity:**

In 2025, Christ Church renewed its partnership with Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity. In addition to financial support, groups of Christ Church parishioners volunteered on 2 Saturdays during the year to work on homes currently under construction. In addition, the Outreach Committee ran a Welcome Home donation drive in June to collect essential household items to support two new Habitat homeowners.

**Gifts of Hope:**

Our annual holiday alternative giving fair returned this year after taking last year off, and it was again a great success. Fifteen non-profit organizations from many different charitable missions participated, with a total of almost \$9300 raised and distributed to these groups.

**Children and Family Engagement:**

Special Grants: This year, Outreach made special donations to Hunger Task Force during the fall when food insecurity reached a peak level of concern due to expiring SNAP benefits, and to Nicolet High School's Black Student Union to enable one student to participate in a tour of historically black colleges and universities planned by Nicolet for 2026.

Additional monetary grants were made to The Hospitality Center (Racine), the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, and HIR Wellness.

The Outreach committee during 2025 consisted of Elizabeth Draper, Susan Dreyfus, Beth Durant, Dolly Grimes-Johnson, Betsy Head, Ira Leidel, Jean Maier, Lynne Schley, Meredie Scrivner, Andrew Jetton, Pat Delmenhorst, and Sandy Kashou. The committee is grateful to all the Christ Church members whose time and money go to support our efforts. We hope in 2026 to continue our support of the needs of the community and increase service opportunities for parishioners, especially children and families.

*Submitted by Andrew Jetton*

## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

This new pastoral care outreach ministry is purposed to provide tangible prayer shawls handmade by Christ Church craftspeople (knitters, crocheters, quilters) and started in fall 2025. We pray for the recipient while stitching. Promotional messaging was sent in the weekly Broadcast. The group's inaugural meeting was early November with a commitment to monthly meetings on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2:00pm in the Mission Conference Room. Some also gather at this same time on other weeks of the month to stitch and learn. Twenty people are on our email list and

more are invited – you do not need to attend the monthly meetings to be included! Participants vary in number from 10-15 at meetings, bringing shawls and prayer squares they've made and sharing their skills in quilting, knitting, crocheting. December brought two new members and an abundance of donated yarn and several patterns as most of us use donated yarn. Please do bring your unused yarn to us at Christ Church, as we will put it to good use. Our meetings open and close with prayer and we share, teach each other, and then a priest blesses the completed shawls/squares and all add their personal blessings. In just two months, fifteen prayer shawls and lap blankets, as well as twelve prayer pocket squares, have been gifted to Christ Church and to All Peoples Church clergy to distribute on pastoral calls, as appropriate. On each handmade item is pinned a card (with a prayer from Christ Church, designed by Julie Thauer) with a small cross. The participants of this new ministry come with inspired energy to create items of comfort and warmth to reach out in a tangible way to others. And it's contagious – we have several teachers who have already taught us new skills! All are welcome to become part of this ministry by informing clergy of folks who would appreciate a prayer shawl, by making handmade shawls (any skill level is welcome, or if you have no skill and just want to learn to crochet, knit or quilt), through prayer at home, or by donating yarn or fabric. What a difference this group of prayerful talented folks has already made, both at Christ Church and at All Peoples Church!

*Submitted by Sybil Bell, Co-Chair and The Rev Mary S. Trainor, Co-Chair*

## **SAFETY TASK FORCE**

This new task force (limited term team) at Christ Church started in Fall of 2025. The goal of the team is to provide clear signage, guidelines, documentation and proposed training for any health, safety issues occurring on Christ Church grounds. This will include recommending:

- Who should take the lead,
- What actions should be taken,
- What documentation should be completed
- How to keep practices up to date (to include a recommendation for a permanent safety team).

Examples of areas to address are: AED training, safety protocols in case of various emergency and signage for location of fire extinguishers, emergency kits, AED (Emergency Dibrillator)

**Members:** Jean Maier, Bruce Dunn, Lori Sinclair, Fr. Matt Phillips,  
Fr. Seth Dietrich, Dr. Ken Redlin

*Submitted by Jean Maier*

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT



Each year that I have been involved with stewardship, there has been a time when I worried that life's challenges or an uncertain economy might impact the success of our stewardship campaign; however, time and time again the parish responds with such abundant generosity. The church has received pledges totaling \$798,000. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that there were 16 brand new pledges totaling \$26,900.

Our theme was centered around the words of St. Theresa of Avila, "We are the hands of Christ." Julie Thauer created a multi-colored handprint design which we used for our mailing, logo, and a banner for the Good Shepherd Room.

There were many hands involved in this year's Stewardship campaign. All members of the committee completed a variety of tasks from coordinating the mailing and banner to handing out envelopes on Stewardship Sunday. Members of our committee, and others helped address envelopes for our mailing, and Stewardship committee members and Vestry members called all parishioners to offer our thanks (or gentle reminders) for their support.

Our five-week stewardship campaign included four parishioner Stewardship Moments. We thank Jean Maier, Richard TenHoor, Diane and Jack Holzman, Andrea Frankenberry, Todd and Julie Gaulke, and Betsy Head for sharing how Christ Church is a significant presence in their lives. Links to the Stewardship Moments were included in The Broadcast, as these brief accounts from the hearts of parishioners are quite meaningful and appreciated by the parish.

This year's committee was made up of the following members: Seth Dietrich, Steve Bruemmer, Beth Durant, Laurie Hobbs, Joan King, and Debbie Roesner. We are always looking for new ideas and perspectives. If you are interested in being a part of the

Stewardship Committee, we would love to have you join us. Our work begins in the late summer and concludes by the end of November. Please let Beth Durant or Seth Dietrich know of your interest!

### **2026 Stewardship Campaign by the Numbers**

#### **Totals Raised:**

2026: \$798,000  
 2025: \$772,000  
 2024: \$731,000  
 2023: \$690,500  
 2022: \$624,200  
 2021: \$605,000  
 2020: \$623,000  
 2019: \$602,000  
 2018: \$618,030  
 2017: \$577,410

**Total Pledges for 2026: 188** (2025 Campaign also had 188 pledges)

16 brand new pledges for \$26,900

70 pledgers increased their pledges by \$41,300

20 pledgers decreased

7 revived pledges for \$5,700 (pledged before but not last year)

12 lost pledges (move, left parish, death)

**Submitted by Beth Durant**

## TEAM WELLNESS REPORT



Wellness is an intentional process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and abundant life. Wellness is more than the absence of diwellness is not an end in itself but is rather a foundation that enables us to better serve God and our neighbor.

### OUR HAPPENINGS

- Wellness Walks
- Meetings (as needed)
- Posts in the e-weekly Broadcast (weekly)
- Walk/Run Club (weekly-began 2021)

**Submitted by Betsy Head**

## USHER MINISTRY

Normally, the Greeters and Ushers are one of the very important first points of contact with Church attendees every Sunday morning. Being an usher at Christ Church is a great way to get to know a lot of people because you get to meet everyone coming through the front door.

The schedule is flexible, and you are only asked to volunteer about 8-10 Sundays a year. We are a friendly group of 22 volunteers. In 2025, we had four dedicated ushers who volunteered at the 8:00 a.m. service and 18 (17 adult and one youth) who volunteered at the 9:30 a.m. service. Each Sunday, one usher normally serves at the 8:00 a.m. service and three ushers serve at the 9:30 a.m. service. Additional ushers are added for our Christmas and Easter services, while only two ushers are needed for our outdoor services in the summer.

Ushers serve every four to six weeks (a bit more frequently at the 8:00 a.m. service) and the schedule is varied so you have the opportunity to get to know other ushers. If an usher is also a Lector, the usher can be scheduled on the same day as the reading if so desired.

Ushers do many behind the scenes tasks that make our worship service run smoothly. They come a little early and stay a little late, warmly greet parishioners, hand out bulletins, identify and assist newcomers, count attendance for communion and the Diocesan reports, and mark the aisles for communion. Ushers are also responsible for counting the collection, cleaning the pews and locking the church.

We are looking for additional ushers for 2026. Please let us know if you are interested.

**Steve Schley and Bruce Dunn**

## WOMEN'S MONDAY A.M. BOOK STUDY GROUP

On Monday mornings from 8:45-10: Christ Church women gather on zoom to discuss a book we've all voted on - to pray, share, discuss, and enrich our faith. Together we honestly, in confidence, wrestle with life's joys and difficulties, with Christ in the center of it all. In the process, we grow. We sometimes don't agree with the author, but we are always inspired by the wisdom shared by participants. We laugh, cry, pray, research, tell stories, and support/encourage one another. All viewpoints are acknowledged; there is space for everyone here.

This year we read four books (authors Diana Butler Bass, Kate Bowler, Madeleine L'Engle, Richard Rohr). Each week we read an agreed upon book section (usually 1 chapter). We catch up for the first 15 minutes, pray, and then discuss the chapter's contents and relevance to our lives. We also end with prayer. We meet in person at church over a potluck brunch quarterly at the same time, and Sue Toman is our host. The group has 18 people on the email list, and each week from 8-12 participate. New participants are welcome to join in at anytime - the link and book are provided in the Broadcast each week. Each Monday we have profoundly rich discussions, and are grateful for this community.

*Submitted by The Rev Mary S. Trainor, Facilitator*

## WOMEN'S MONDAY NIGHT BOOK STUDY GROUP

Every 1st and 3rd Monday evening at 6:30pm, a group of women gather to discuss a book. That sounds like a book club, doesn't it? Yes, it is but it's more than that! We gather to share faith stories and faith questions, to pray, and to deepen our understanding of one another as God's people. We typically read 1-2 chapters for each meeting which means the preparation is not time demanding. Our books have ranged from The Enneagram to books by theologians to those written by contemporary Christian authors. It is easy to join the group and women of all ages are most welcome! While we encourage reading the appropriate chapter(s) before the meeting, it is not imperative to do so and new make it easy to jump in --even part way through a particular book. This group is more about connecting as Christians and seekers than it is anything else. Please join us!

*Submitted by Penny Cruse*

CHRIST CHURCH EPISCOPAL

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