

crossroads



CHRIST CHURCH
EASTON

The Newsletter of Christ Church, St. Peter's Parish



From The Desk of Patrick Collins, Interim Priest



Dear Christ Church Family,

It is hard to believe that Lent is almost here again and that I've been with you for almost a year now. The time has truly flown by.

Last year, I preached throughout Lent with the theme of "Repent and Return to the Lord" During those sermons we were challenged to think about being a bit more gentle with ourselves and each other by rephrasing the theme to "Get Up, Dust Off, Turn to God and Take Another Step". Every once in a while, you can still hear one of you say that phrase when a mistake is made.

This year, I want to take a different approach and work from the theme of "Longing for God". So often in our lives we know that we want someone or something and that desire isn't filled immediately... we long. Growing up, around Thanksgiving every year, we children longed for Christmas – somehow, I don't think that this has changed. So, what if, instead of reflecting on our sins or shortcomings, we instead focus on our desire to be closer to God by acknowledging that we aren't as close as we would like. And let's focus on how we might fulfill our longing by deepening our relationship with God and others.

As I have preached in the past, I see our love of God being deeply tied to our love of others. We can't love God and ignore others. And, we can't love others and not be connected with them. As most of you know, we are only about 9 blocks away from Trinity Cathedral. Here we have two congregations that are close to one another: I wonder what God might do, if we were to get to know each other a little better. How might we help each other to love God and our neighbors? To this end, The Very Rev. Greg Powell and the clergy from both congregations will be designing and building a shared Lenten experience for us in an effort to begin deepening relationships between Christ Church and Trinity Cathedral. We are looking at sharing some liturgical services as the first steps of getting to know each other.

The details of this shared Lenten experience are still being worked out. But, we do know that we will be inviting the members of Trinity Cathedral to come to our campus for some services and events; that Trinity Cathedral will be inviting us to come to their campus for some services and events; and that there will be at least one event that will start at one campus and end at the other. With a sincere heart, longing for God's presence among all of us, please welcome members of Trinity Cathedral as you have welcomed me – lovingly and warmly. And when we are invited to share an event on the Trinity Cathedral campus, please do for them as you have done for me – be brave and open to experiencing God in a new and exciting way. Please allow your presence at these Lenten events to be a symbol of our shared longing for God's presence in our lives.

There is no way to know what God will reveal and do in the future. So, it wouldn't be honest or fair to predict anything. But, I believe that we will find brothers and sisters in Christ in the members of Trinity Cathedral.

May we be blessed by God and may we be a blessing to others – now and always.

Peace,
Patrick

2025 Stewardship Update

LOVE + CARE + GIVE

We wanted to update you on our progress and say “THANK YOU” to ALL that have returned a pledge card for 2025 so that we can continue the good work of our Church and its ministries. We have received 121 pledge cards which represent 35% of our parish. The amount pledged is slightly over \$500,000. Our financial support shows our commitment to Christ Church and reflects our sharing of our blessed gifts that are all provided through God’s bounty.

Our tithing to our Church matters! We do invite those who have not made this commitment to re-evaluate making this pledge for 2025. It’s never too late. We appreciate whatever you can do!

Our Theme of LOVE + CARE + GIVE embodies all that Jesus demonstrated in his journey. He is our role model and he yearns for us to follow Him and he cares about each one of us.

Here are a few testimonials that I believe are powerful to how our Church matters:

“I was almost 40 when I came through those doors, when I found Jesus, when I discovered what it meant to be a part of church community that would help each other Know Christ, Grow with Christ, through word and with each other. I had no idea what true healthy relationships all about were until I chose to let Christ in and have the kind of church who cares deeply about your relationship with the Lord.”

“The sense of community and belonging that we have found here has been a true blessing. In times of difficulty or uncertainty, we have been surrounded by a supportive network of friends who share our faith and values. This church has been a source of peace and comfort during challenging times, and it has provided us with role models who offer wisdom and guidance.”

“Thank you” again and God’s blessings be with you.

Stewardship Committee

Paul Cox, Brenda Wood and John Itell



CHRIST CHURCH
EASTON



Year End Financial Report – December 31, 2024

We have now closed the year of 2024 and would like to say “Thank You” for your support during this year. Much has been accomplished. We continue to show how much our Church means to us and it’s ministries.

Below I have recapped our financial position and have also provided a summary page of our income and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2024.

- Pledges and Offerings were \$698,088 versus the prior year at \$807,511, a decrease of \$109,423. We are hopeful that the 2025 Stewardship campaign will inspire an increase in parishioner donations for our programs and services for 2025. If you have not seen our detailed brochure about our church, please visit the website to review or there are copies in the Narthex of the church.
- Education expenses were budgeted at a higher amount this year versus prior year to better serve our youth.
- Buildings and grounds were slightly higher in 2024 at \$163,988 versus last year at \$159,955 but below the budgeted amount of \$176,162.
- With all the staff changes from last year, our Salaries and Benefits Expense was less than last year and less than the budgeted amount.
- The deficit position for the year is \$211,513 while last year there was a deficit of \$118,157. The budgeted deficit amount for 2024 was to be \$293,763.
- Investment and Endowment returns for the year were favorable with an increase of \$650,051. Our Unrestricted Endowment accounts on December 31, 2024, were \$4,648,018 and the Restricted Endowment accounts were \$1,536,241.

We continue to "thank you" for your support to Christ Church and making this our church to worship, pray and to be inspired. The Vestry continues to closely monitor our financial position for the best interests of the church. We are blessed to have a strong Endowment position that has supplemented our deficit position and allows the continued services and programs that we provide. The Vestry understands we cannot continue to operate in a deficit position continually. We have a beautiful Church and it’s a pleasure to call this Church our home.

Blessings,

John Itell, Treasurer

Christ Church Financial Summary
For The Year Ended December 31, 2024

	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>Prior Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Income :</u>			
Pledges and Offerings	\$698,088	\$807,511	\$805,500
Investment Transfers- 5%	242,547	242,611	242,547
Other Income	<u>13,007</u>	<u>6,016</u>	<u>5,075</u>
Total income	\$953,642	\$1,056,138	\$1,053,122
<u>Expenses :</u>			
Worship	\$168,919	\$190,929	\$203,356
Outreach	17,878	15,585	23,800
Education & Fellowship	49,427	25,597	59,372
Rector Compensation/Benefits	126,564	245,084	157,490
Staff Compensation/Benefits	401,725	409,383	498,446
Bldg & Grounds	163,988	159,955	176,162
Office	77,402	67,721	67,500
Other	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,500</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>1,005,903</u>	<u>1,114,254</u>	<u>1,187,626</u>
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	(52,258)	(58,116)	(134,504)
Diocesan Pledge	(159,252)	(139,576)	(159,259)
IRS COVID refund	<u>0</u>	<u>79,535</u>	<u>0</u>
Net (Deficit)	<u>\$ (211,513)</u>	<u>\$ (118,157)</u>	<u>\$ (293,763)</u>

Christ Church Youth Group

From Kelsey Spiker, Minister For Community Life and Families

Happy New Year! We hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday & snow season. We can't wait to get started on a new year of ministry with you! We have missed you!

Here are a couple of basic CCYG reminders:

Drop-off is **6:15 pm** for pizza and free time.

We invite a dollar donation from students for pizza.

We start our lesson and BIG Group Time at 6:30 pm.

CCYG is for Jr. High **AND** High School students.

Friends are always welcome.

Our style is to learn together through interactive discussions that are always based on scripture. We encourage questions, thoughts, deeper discussion, inquiry, and uncertainty. This is how we grow in our faith together.

We have engaging games and/or activities each week after our lesson.

Pick-up is 8:00 pm.

WHAT WE'RE TEACHING



FROM NOW ON: A 4-Week Series from the Gospels on Following Jesus

SERIES OVERVIEW:

During his time on earth, Jesus' message was clear— from now on, things will be different. Jesus spent his life showing people how God wanted to connect with them and help them connect with each other. Because of Jesus, our world can be forever changed—we just need to follow him. In this 4-week series from the Gospels, we'll explore what it means to follow Jesus and look at the life he invites us into. We'll see how we can **trust Jesus is with us**, how **Jesus gives us peace**, that we can trust **Jesus loves us**, and how **Jesus gives us a place to belong**.

Christ Church Youth Group

March 4th: Pancake Supper Fundraiser

Each year CCYG hosts the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Christ Church! This event provides fellowship for our community and helps to offset some of the costs of our youth ministry. We need student and family support to make it happen. We make and sell several kinds of pancakes, tater-tot waffles, jambalaya, breakfast meats, and even desert pancakes! All to help raise funds for our awesome youth. It's a great time for a great cause! Please mark your calendars and plan on having students present on Tuesday, March 4th from 4 pm - 8:00 pm. We encourage parents to get involved too!



April 25-27: Spring Youth Event

The Province 3 Youth Event is a 2 night, 3-day retreat for the youth groups within our Episcopal Diocesan Province. This event is specifically for students in grades 6 - 12.

On Friday, April 25th we will depart from Christ Church for The Claggett Center in Adamstown, MD and will return home in the afternoon of Sunday, April 27th. The theme of the retreat will be determined by the Province 3 High School Design Team and will be announced closer to the event. The Design team is open to High School Juniors & Seniors - if you are interested please contact Rev. Kelsey. The weekend will include dynamic speakers, worship music, breakout groups, small group discussions, activities, games, and a focus on fostering opportunities for students' growth in their relationship with God and one another. The event cost of \$100/student includes travel, lodging, food, activity, and swag expenses for the weekend.



July 5th - 13th: Summer Mission Immersion

Our Summer Mission will take us to Wilmington, North Carolina where we will have the opportunity to serve alongside those doing long-term disaster relief work in the Wilmington area. Service may include home repair projects, serving those experiencing homelessness, and partnering with several other local service organizations who are trying to bring hope and restoration to the people in the community. In the evenings, we will explore Wilmington's scenic boardwalk with endless views of the riverfront, tour the famous Battleship North Carolina, and enjoy an evening on the beach.

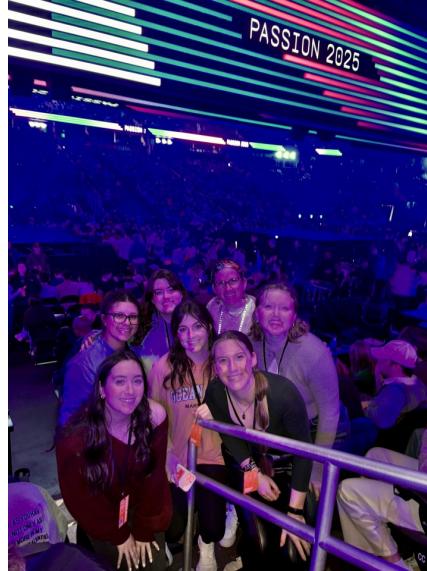
This Mission is open to middle and high school students (those who will be entering 6th grade and up), as well as adults who are interested in experiencing and participating in Mission.

We will hold an interest meeting in March for students and parents to ask questions and learn about the cost of the mission and how we fundraise for the mission. Stay tuned for that date.

Christ Church Youth Group continued on next page.....

Christ Church Youth Group

Rev. Kelsey Spiker & Melanie Chapple accompanied 6 college students to Passion 2025 January 2nd – 4th. Below is a letter of gratitude and praise from Vestry Member & Mom Melanie Chapple sharing her thoughts and reflection after returning from the Passion Conference in Atlanta Georgia this January where 2 separate groups of 17,000 18-25 year olds gathered for 3 days to Worship our Lord and sing praises to Jesus.



“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 6:33

I always think I’m going to chaperone kids, but it turns out God always has something special just for me. What a way to bring in a new year! Worshipping the Lord, studying the scriptures, and worshipping with my kind of people... kids!! It was truly a privilege to be at Passion 2025 in Atlanta.

Attending Passion 2025 in Atlanta was important for me because it offered a unique opportunity to witness firsthand the powerful movement of God among the next generation of believers, including my own daughters, Katie and Sara. It was not just about being a chaperone or providing support for the young adults who joined me, but also about my personal spiritual growth and connection with God.

For me, going to Passion 2025 was a chance to be reminded of the joy that comes from being in God’s presence. It allowed me to see how the youth are passionately chasing after God’s truth and to be encouraged by their bold faith. It was a moment to be spiritually refreshed, to connect with others who share my passion for Christ, and to grow deeper in my own faith.

Moreover, it was significant because I was able to witness the powerful impact of young hearts seeking God's kingdom, as well as how God is using this next generation to boldly stand for the gospel. I was able to be part of something bigger than myself—seeing the torch being passed on, with the younger generation rising up, and knowing that God is using this movement for His glory.

Attending Passion 2025 also underscored the importance of living out the call to “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness,” and to not be ashamed of the gospel. It was a reminder of the joy that comes from following Christ and living fully for Him, and it helped reignite my own passion and purpose as I step into the new year, alongside my children and the youth who were so boldly and beautifully living out their faith.



Overall, the message about hiding and being found in Jesus’s teachings revolves around God’s pursuit of lost souls, His invitation to step into the light of His truth, and the joy of restoration and salvation when one is found by His grace. Sadie Robertson Huff’s message at Passion 2025 was a beautiful extension of this theme. She spoke of how, when we seek God and His righteousness first, everything else falls into place—echoing Matthew 6:33: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Her words were a reminder that when we focus on God and His kingdom, we no longer need to hide in fear or uncertainty. In Him, we are found, embraced, and given purpose. Sadie’s message encouraged everyone to take a step into the light of God’s love, trusting that He has a plan for each of us, and that we are not lost, but found in Him.

Watching these young adults come together, hearts open and ready to learn about the Word of God, was nothing short of inspiring. Seeing them raise their voices in praise and sing with such passion to Jesus was a reminder of His greatness and the deep love He has for His people. I couldn’t help but be moved.

I
t was an honor to take these young adults to Passion 2025, I had the privilege of sitting among them, actively participating in worship, and being spiritually fed by so many incredible speakers. The next generation is rising up, and it’s clear that God is doing great things in their hearts. I see you, and I’m so proud of you. Keep chasing Him, because HE is where the joy is!

Let us not be ashamed of the gospel. The next generation is stepping boldly into their calling, and God gets all the glory. Passion 2025 was a powerful reminder of what it means to be united in faith, and I can’t wait to see what He does through these young hearts.

Melanie Chapple
Parent Leader & Vestry Member at Christ Church Easton

1ST HOLY COMMUNION

Classes beginning March 6th

Classes

First Communion classes help children better appreciate and understand the gift of communion. Classes are open to all children in the 2nd grade and up (including those already receiving communion).

The class will meet on Thursdays throughout Lent, starting Thursday, March 6th at 4:30 pm and ending at 6:00 pm. The class will include a snack during gathering time and a lesson that will explore an element of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, each week.

April

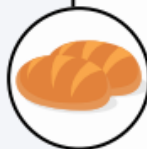
Mark your calendar for our Holy Communion Retreat to the National Cathedral. This is a very special part of the class for the whole family to enjoy



12

April

16



Wednesday April 16th we will make bread for our 1st Communion and have a rehearsal for the upcoming service. Drop off is 4:30 pm.

April

The Children's 1st Holy Communion will be held during a very special Maundy Thursday Service that begins at 7:00 pm.



17

Registration Link is on the Christ Church Homepage



Musical Notes



From Choir Director Carolyn Cutler



Choir rehearsals have resumed, and the choir is once again adding special music to our 11:00 traditional service.

Currently, the choir is also rehearsing for the upcoming presentation of the Faure Requiem on March 30 at 4:00 pm in collaboration with the Trinity Cathedral choir. This will include a 35+ voice choir, instrumentation and guest soloist. It promises a very special musical event.

Additionally, the choir will work with the contemporary band to provide music for the joint services on February 23rd at 9:00 am (preceding the annual meeting).

The choir is always open to new singers. As work continues on, the Requiem and with Lent/ Easter music coming up, it's a great time to join! For any additional information, contact Carolyn Cutler, choir@christchurcheaston.org or at 352-455-3353.



Save the Date: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Pa-Looza on March 4

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake-Palooza is BACK on March 4!

Tickets for dinner are \$14 per person and children 5 years and under are \$5 per child. Dinner seating is from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm and the buffet will include a variety of pancakes (including gluten-free), breakfast meat, a tater-tot waffle bar, red bean & rice, all the fixings, beverages, and dessert!

This annual event is run by leaders, parents, and participants of the Christ Church Youth Group and supports youth programming at the church and an upcoming mission trip to Charlotte, NC, to help with recovery efforts from the damage caused by Hurricane Helene.

Parish Annual Meeting & Proposed New Vestry Class



There will be only one worship service on the weekend of Feb. 22-23, which will be at 9:00am on February 23, with a meal in the Parish Hall after the service, to encourage parishioners to be a part of this important annual meeting.

The Parish Annual Meeting is when the business and mission of the church come together to report, to envision, to be transparent, to look at what the church did last year and where it is heading this year. The annual budget will be presented, new Vestry members elected, and an update and presentation by the Rector Search Committee, including the results and findings of the congregational survey.

Brunch will begin in the Parish Hall after the 9:00am service (approximately 10:30am). It will be a catered event and we would like to get a head count to know how much food to have on hand.

The proposed class of new and returning Vestry members will serve three-year terms. The proposed class is:

Karen Fisher

Karen and her husband, Mike have spent most of their professional careers in Easton. Their children Aidan Fisher and Nina Fisher Thompson were born and raised in Easton and graduates of Easton High School.

Karen is a retired Adult Nurse Practitioner previously with the Digestive Health Center in Easton. She has received degrees from Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD, University of Virginia and the University of Maryland. She started her career in nursing at Hampton General Hospital in Iowa. Karen held positions in several geographies including Rochester, MN, Baltimore, MD, and Charlottesville, VA prior to moving to Easton, MD in 1989.

Karen and Mike are very active in the community and enjoy giving their volunteer time to many organizations including serving as Vice President of the Cookes Hope HOA as well as serving on the Board of BAAM (Building African American Minds), Critchlow Adkins and the Country School. Karen has also served as a Co-Producer for Easton High School musicals. She has previously served as Warden for the Christ Church Vestry.

regular members of the parish. John is entering retirement after 39 years as a CPA in public practice in Hagerstown, MD.

John Itell

John and his wife Susan purchased their home on the Eastern Shore in October 2019. They moved here full-time in late 2020. They have four adult children and five grandchildren.

Upon the COVID-19 lockdown, they found the Church Zoom services very enjoyable and have become regular members of the parish. John is entering retirement after 39 years as a CPA in public practice in Hagerstown, MD.

John has served on many non-profit boards over the years. He has been the Treasurer of our Church since March 2023. Both John and Susan have helped at the Waterfowl fundraiser and have helped make the infamous crab cakes, have attended Bible Studies regularly. Susan is on the Altar Guild and helps with the monthly food ministry and the Interfaith Shelter. John has served as an Usher as well Chairing this year's Stewardship Campaign. In addition, they both are new Talbot Hospice volunteers and helped this Thanksgiving in distributing meals in the community through the collaborative church effort of several churches.

Both Susan and John enjoy the Saturday night service and feel that Christ Church is their home with many caring parishioners. By attending this Church their spiritual lives have been strengthened.

Mark Powell

Mark and his wife, Tiffany returned to the Eastern Shore in 2019. Tiffany and Mark have two daughters, Rowan and Sadie. Rowan lives and works in Baltimore and Sadie is a sophomore at West Virginia University majoring in Social Work.

Mark was born in Fayetteville, NC. His family was Baptist and he attended U.S. Air Force Protestant Chapel as the family traveled the United States, Europe and Asia. Mark was baptized at Haymount United Methodist Church in Fayetteville, NC, and he attended St. David's Episcopal Church in Laurinburg, NC.

He married the love of his life, Tiffany in 2002. Tiffany's career has spanned photography for the Baltimore Sun to teaching in public and independent schools, including Christ Church Day School. She is now retired.

The Powells joined Christ Church Easton in 2002. Mark and Tiffany moved to Baltimore in 2009 and attended Church of the Redeemer Episcopal Church. In 2019, they moved back to the Eastern Shore.

Mark earned a BA in Journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was Director of Communications at St. Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg, NC, Public Information Officer at The American University, Washington, DC, the Assistant Editor, Managing Editor and then Editor of the The Delmarva Farmer, The New Jersey Farmer and Mid-Atlantic Grower publications, based in Easton. In 2003, Mark became Director of Special Projects at the Maryland Department of Agriculture. In 2006, he became Chief of Marketing for MDA. He still serves in that capacity.

Barbara Reinhardt

Barbara has been worshipping at Christ Church Easton for more than 30 years. Born and raised an Episcopalian in Pennsylvania, Barbara and her husband moved to the Easton area just months before arriving at Christ Church, where she immediately knew she had found her new church home. She felt then, and continues to feel, blessed to be surrounded by a welcoming and spiritual church family, of which her own family became members of.

During these past three decades, Barbara has served on numerous committees and has participated in various study groups. She has been involved in a multitude of church activities, which include Sunday School teacher, Acolyte Master, Youth Group leader, Chairman of The Sale & member of the Episcopal Church Women, as well as coordinating countless fellowship activities. She currently serves as a LEM, a Lay Reader, a member of the Altar Guild, and is a ringer in the handbell choir, St Peter's Carillion.



Birthdays

1 Ann Holladay

Louis Runz

2 Sophie Leight

5 Phil Foster

Casey Boyd

8 Connie Loveland

9 Dan Campbell

10 Brandon Coleman

13 Betty Hartmeyer

Josh Clow

14 Peter Gallagher

16 Jason Faller

18 Abbie Keswick

Tomm Mackall

19 Anne Kirby

21 Cara Murphy

Bruce Bennie

23 Doug Kawakami

24 Steve Kinlock

Eli Omohundro

27 Brianna Brandow

28 Mark Soldano

Christy Gibson

29 George Roberts

Patty Foss-Bennie

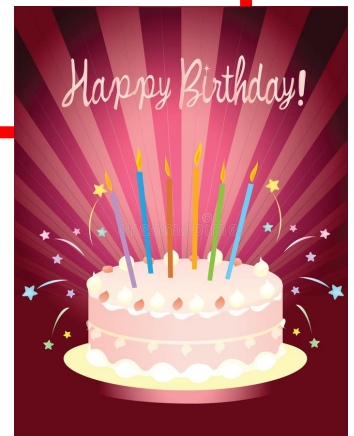
30 Richard Murphy



***If you would like your birthday to be listed in the next Crossroads newsletter please add it to your Realm account.**

February Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Jan Hynson | 14 Laurin Westerfield |
| 2 Joey Brown | 15 Tom Seip |
| 4 Kari Clow | 16 Rick Hynson |
| 5 Laramie Weise | Stephanie Saunders |
| Dick Shirley | 17 John Dodge |
| Gary Radziewicz | 18 Sally Akridge |
| 6 Felicia O'Donnell | 19 Christy Bartlett |
| Will Coughlan | 21 Bud Wallace |
| 7 Michele Coughlan | Colin Walsh |
| 8 Carol Murphy | 24 Mike Bickford |
| Carol Webster | Greg Allen |
| 9 Ginny Capute | 25 Barbara Fitzsimons |
| Benni Tulloch | Caron West |
| Ellen Stehle | 26 Georgiann Gibson |
| | Bill Keswick |
| | Megan Omohundro |





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111 South Harrison Street

Easton, MD 21601

410-2822-2677

www.christchurcheaston.org



The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hope of
the wicked will perish.

Proverbs 10:28

