

JULY 2025

CROSSROADS

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



CHRIST CHURCH
EASTON



A Message from Patrick Collins, Interim Priest

Dear Christ Church Family,

As I'm writing this, demonstrations have been happening in Los Angeles for several days concerning raids by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). These government officials are seeking to arrest and deport people who have immigrated to this country in ways that are not in alignment with our national laws. Because some of the demonstrations have turned violent, President Trump has called in the National Guard; is deploying Marines and is even talking about the possibility of arresting Governor Newsom, who himself, is in the process of bringing legal cases against President Trump for deploying the CA National Guard. With the violence, there has been property damage and destruction and people have been injured (as of this writing, no deaths have been reported). There have also been some clashes between protesters and police agencies and in some cases tear gas and rubber bullets have been employed.

In the news this morning, it was reported that protests are being planned in other major cities around the country this coming weekend. One of these protests is being planned here in Easton, and there are other protests being planned in different communities on the DelMarVa Peninsula. I can't predict where our country, or our community, will be by the time you are reading this. But, it is hard to imagine this situation de-escalating easily or quickly.



As I'm seeing this news, I'm also recalling that just hours ago, I was leading us, as a faith community, in renewing our Baptismal Covenant together. Before the humorous moment of asperging (throwing/sprinkling holy water droplets on) the congregation, we did the serious work of self-reflection and we were challenged by our own shortcomings as well as the need for God to assist us with the very promises that

we made together. In that very act, we admit that, like so many before us, we need and yearn for God's presence in our lives.

It is from this position as a "Follower of Jesus Christ" that I write to you. No matter where you find yourself on the political spectrum, I ask that you remember that it is a core teaching of our faith that all of humanity is created in God's image and all of humanity has been given the 'breath of life' from God. In God's eyes, we are all loved, and we are all brothers and sisters. Our standing for or against any earthly leader, or political point of view is secondary to our standing with God. The Baptismal Covenant challenges us to be agents of God's love in our world. Our various political views are not to supersede our faith; and our faith should not be set aside for the sake of political expedience, only to be picked up later when it is convenient. According to the vows that we all just renewed, we are to 'seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves'.



We can all interpret God's word differently. We can disagree about how to understand the meaning of the stories contained in the Bible. God has given humanity the gift of diversity and with that gift comes many differing ways of understanding and engaging our sacred stories and living in the world. But those differences should never be an excuse for treating others as less than a beloved member of your own family.

To be clear, if you are feeling a need to protest, as a citizen of our country, you have the right to gather and voice your concerns to our governmental leaders. Our rights have been purchased with the efforts and lives of those who went before us, and those rights are worth exercising and protecting. But, as a follower of Jesus, I ask that if you choose to protest, that you do so in a way that is peaceful and that honors the way that Jesus taught us to live. Please remember that even as he was being nailed onto the cross, Jesus was praying for forgiveness for the very people who were executing him. Jesus did not vilify, demonize or demean his executioners... he saw them as people in need to God's love and forgiveness. Let Jesus' example be your compass just as your presence will be a powerful statement about how your faith and political views blend into the way you live your life.

At times like these, I take comfort in the Prayer Attributed to St. Francis:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is discord, union;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

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

Peace,

Patrick



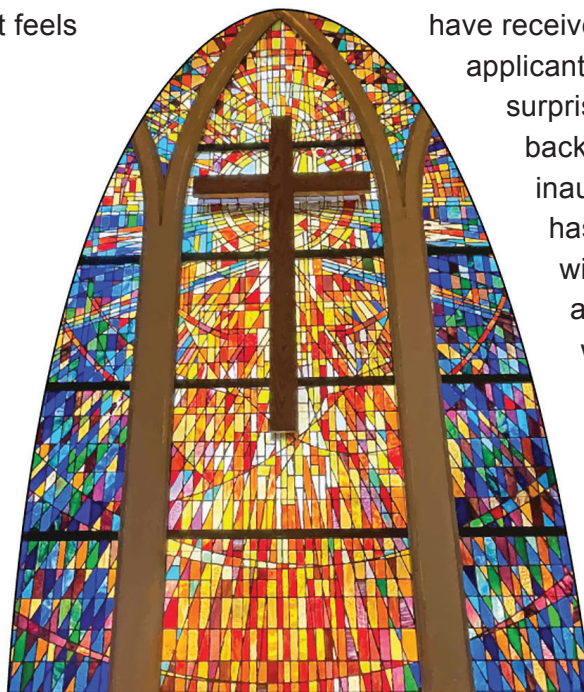


Rector Search Committee Update

Summer is upon us, and it feels like time is speeding up.

In some exciting ways, it feels like the search process is speeding up as well. However, the committee is not going to rush to pick the first “right” candidate that comes along, but will ensure that all qualified applicants are interviewed. We have a process that all candidates will follow, which will help ensure we pick the person God has truly called to Christ Church Easton.

Since the opening was posted, we



RECTOR SEARCH

Christ Church, Easton

have received multiple qualified applicants representing a surprisingly diverse range of backgrounds. In fact, the inaugural “first interview” has already taken place, with several more being arranged in the coming weeks.

We’re on the last leg of this journey, but this is also the most critical and we are not going to rush. We will continue to share updates as we have them, but please remember that we will not be sharing details about candidates.

Traditional Music Program

Thank you to our choir for providing us with beautiful and inspiring music over the past year. They are taking a well-deserved break over the summer and will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, August 27.

Several of our choir members are busy preparing for their big performance in Carnegie Hall! They are participating in a 250-voice choir which will be premiering a new musical by Lloyd Larson and singing a number of selections by Mark Hayes...both big names in church choral music. Thanks to all who have donated to help underwrite this event.

Concert coming up! On Sunday, July 20 at 4:00 pm, Christ Church is pleased to be hosting a concert by The Birch Trio in our sanctuary. Come join us for a musical journey through time with Ashley Watkins, flute, Nevin Dawson, violin/viola, and Denise Nathanson, cello. The program will feature music from Classical masters like Franz Joseph Haydn, lesser known contemporary composers like James Cohn and Valerie Coleman, and several Romantic pieces in between. Don’t miss this unique opportunity to experience the magic of live music in a historic setting. Grab your friends and family for a night you won’t forget!



Hospitality and Welcome at the Delmarva Pride Festival

On Saturday, June 14, our front lawn and sanctuary were transformed into a place where Christ Church's volunteer greeters mixed with visitors to the Delmarva Pride Festival to celebrate the full participation and cherished belonging of those from the LGBTQ+ community in the life of our church.

Lemonade was served to visitors who welcomed the refreshment on such a steamy day and enjoyed the cool and beauty of our sanctuary where they could listen to the rehearsal of our contemporary musicians and singers.

Volunteers from all four services had an opportunity to get to know each other. All the volunteers had a chance to walk through the festival and experience this important event for the Pride community and socialize with those from the Trinity Cathedral and St. Marks congregations who had tables at the festival.

Thanks to one and all who welcomed visitors in such a gracious and loving way.



Giving Envelopes

We are revamping our giving envelopes procedure. With so many going to online payments we find ourselves needing less and less giving envelopes. This year we will be ordering fewer boxes of offering envelopes. If you would still like to receive giving envelopes, please contact Shelley at connect@christchurcheaston.org. The order will be placed in July so please let us know as soon as possible. We will only be ordering envelopes for those who request

them. If you have had the same number envelope for a long time and would like to keep that number you may request it but it may not be available. All checks that are received as offerings are easily accredited to your account without the use of an envelope as we scan all the checks and your information is in Realm which recognizes your name without needing an envelope number.



Deacon Update

We are now more than half-way finished our Clinical Pastoral Education program. With a total combination of 300 clinical hours at the hospital, other organizations, and caring for Christ Church parishioners, and 100 hours of classroom-based learning, it's already been one of the most formative experiences encompassed in the canonical requirements to be ordained as priests.

When we were ordained as deacons, we were here in Christ Church with our classmates, colleagues, and friends, Revs. Joanne Fisher and Jessica Stehle. Joanne and Jess finished their CPE requirements this spring and were both ordained as priests at a service on June 28 at Trinity Cathedral.

We were both able to be a part of the service, as was our contemporary band,

and our interim priest Rev. Patrick Collins. It was an amazing service and day for the church and the Diocese of Easton.

An aspect of calling that the two of us having been working on is work-life balance and celebrating and being grateful for things that happen outside of the church. And June was a significant month for each of us. June 7 was a big day.

On June 7, Rev. Kelsey graduated Summa Cum Laude, with a finishing GPA of 3.98 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial-Organization Psychology. She has been a full-time college student for the last four years, even while working full-time in church ministry, graduating from seminary, and being a wife and a parent helping raise two girls, who each graduated from high school during the time Rev. Kelsey was



a student. An amazing and well-earned accomplishment and life goal checked off!

And on June 7, Rev. Michael and his partner, turned fiancé, turned wife, Holly, got married in a small ceremony on the (dock of the) bay in Chincoteague, Virginia. Holly has volunteered around the church in multiple roles over the past seven-and-a-half years, working in the kitchen, cashiering, cooking, and serving during Waterfowl Festival; as an Alpha co-leader, as a missionary for one of our trips to Peru, and as a Stephen Minister. Holly also helps head up a food ministry for Caroline County Public Schools, driving a food bus into food scare communities to make sure everyone has access to fresh produce and healthy prepared meals. Rev. Michael and Holly continue to serve together in their shared ministries and calling and their love of God and each other.



Big life events for both deacons on the same day!

Our next steps include: completing our CPE program, going before the Commission on Ministry and going before the Diocesan Standing Committee. When those steps are completed, Bishop San announced that the date, time, and place for our ordination as priests will be Saturday, September 27 at 11:00am, here at Christ Church Easton.





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EASTON

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