

November 2015

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Save the Dates!

Sun, Nov 1

All Saints' Sunday
Open House at the home of
Edna Marie and Father Bill

Mon, Nov 2, 12 noon

Commemoration of Faithful
Departed, Historic Church

Sun, Nov 8

Commitment Sunday

Sat-Sun, Nov 14-15

Thanksgiving Ingathering

Sun, Nov 15

First Intentional Communion
Liturgy & Celebration

Sun, Dec 6

Christmas Ingathering
Advent Spaghetti Dinner,
5:00-7:00 pm

Sat, Dec 12

Cookie Walk, 10 am-noon



The Monthly Newsletter of Christ Church, Middletown NJ



*Cheryl & Brian Strom
with their rescues,
Casper and Rocky at the
Blessing of the Animals
on October 4th.*



The Christ Church Calico Fair returned on October 10, 2015. Thank you to everyone who donated, shopped, baked, organized, decorated, set up, cleaned up...in short, thank you to *everyone!* Special thanks to our three "Fair Chairs" Lauren Badal, Erna Sottile and Betty Truscott.

Deep Church Musings

by The Rev. Dr. William Carl Thomas, Priest-in-Charge



During November I will be with you on the weekends and away for a number of days during three of the weeks of this month. I will enjoy sharing the story of Christ Church Middletown while at Clergy Conference over November 2nd through

November 4th. I'm interested to see if our bishop changes the Tuesday agenda should the World Series with his beloved New York Mets go into a sixth game!

I will be deepening a set of skills that I hope I will not have to use when I attend two disaster response trainings presented at The Beecken Center of the School of Theology of the University of South and the National Disaster Interfaiths Network in Sewanee Tennessee November 9th through the 11th. From the course information guide: *These curricula prepare chaplains and credentialed religious leaders to provide spiritual and emotional care during deployment to disaster sites as well as within their own communities. The Disaster Chaplaincy training Nov. 10–11 comprises four 4-hour*

sessions offered over two days, covering disaster operations, disaster spiritual care, disaster mental health, and self-care for caregivers. Engaging Faith Communities in Disasters on Nov. 9 provides an overview of why and how to engage and work with faith communities during crises, disasters and public health emergencies.

On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, Edna Marie and I will travel to Mystic Connecticut for time with grandchildren Amelia and Charlie. We will also support our daughter-in-law Leah as she coordinates a Thanksgiving Day feeding program held annually at St. Mark's where son Adam is the rector. We'll be back in time for what I expect to be a great start to Advent at Christ Church with the liturgies in the Historic and Main Churches as well as the Advent Workshop in the Undercroft.

And thank you to everyone who made October such an incredible month at Christ Church. From the Calico Fair, to the teens helping with First Intentional Communion, to the opportunity to show off the new landing on the Main Church to the Monmouth Convocation... WOW and THANKS!!!

What a joy and privilege it is to share life and ministry with you.

Bill

Remembering Our Departed Loved Ones



Please bring a picture of a departed loved one to church on Sunday, November 1st. Your picture(s) will be placed around the Historic Church and the Main Church during the respective All Saints liturgies on that day. Father Bill will take a picture of each picture with his iPhone. The digital pictures from his iPhone will then be compiled into a slide show that will run on his iPad (placed on the altar) during our commemoration of All the Faithful Departed on Monday, November 2nd at Noon in the Historic Church.

What is the difference between All Saints Day and the Commemoration of All Faithful Departed? [Read on.](#)



Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour before you retire for the night this Saturday, October 31.

Stewardship Update

Our stewardship campaign is well underway, and as of October 26th we have received 57 pledges for \$163,210. We have a long way to go but this is an encouraging start. Thank you to everyone that has submitted their pledge card. If you have not, please consider doing it this week. Pledge cards are available in the Narthex and Undercroft.

Join us on Sunday November 8th for an extended Commitment Sunday coffee hour to celebrate all that we have been given and our commitment to be good stewards of God's gifts. Thank you!

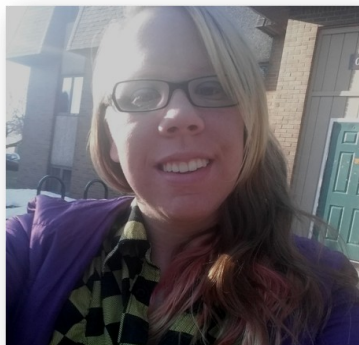
Patricia Robertson

Five Stewardship Commitment Points

1. Evangelism calls people to commitment.
2. Christian Formation teaches the meaning of that commitment
3. Worship celebrates that commitment.
4. Stewardship is the practice of that Commitment
5. Discipleship that leads to Apostolic Action is the outcome of that commitment.

Pledge cards are available in the Narthex and Undercroft

Welcome, Samantha!



We welcome our own Samantha Rossnagel as the Christ Church Nursery Caregiver. Samantha comes with excellent experience in child care; she is a children's swim instructor for the YMCA, CPR and is First Aide certified. In addition, Samantha is a distinguished graduate of Mercyhurst University, and has been a member of Christ Church for many years.

Nursery care is offered free of charge to children under 3 during the 10 a.m. liturgy. Toddlers and families, please stop by to play and visit the Nursery in its new location and meet Samantha.



Jimmy's Room:

Christ Church Nursery

We are pleased to announce the re-location of the Nursery, which now is in close proximity to our church service. "Jimmy's Room" is named in remembrance of Jim Dolan, beloved husband of Mona Dolan.

The date and time of the dedication of Jimmy's Room will be announced soon.

Worship

Join us for worship:

- Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Church
- Sundays at 8:00 a.m. in the Historic Church
- Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in the Main Church (traditional music, choir, and pipe organ)
- Taizé Prayer and Holy Eucharist on the second Saturday of each month, at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Church.

Prayer Chain

The Christ Church Prayer Chain is a group of people dedicated to daily intercessory prayer for each of those on their prayer list.

Many thanks to Stephanie Faulkner for her years of dedicated service to our church as the coordinator of our Prayer Chain. Christine Ruland will tend the prayer list until a new coordinator steps forward. Interested? Please call the church office for more information.

Please email Christine at cc-prayerchain@verizon.net with your confidential prayer requests, or if you wish to join the prayer team. Feel free to call the church office with any prayer requests if you do not have email.

Vestry Highlights

October 27, 2015 Meeting

- The Annual meeting will be held on Feb. 7, 2016.
- Gross receipts from the Calico Fair were over \$17,000 - expenses are still being calculated.
- Monmouth Convocation begins at 7:00pm on Thursday, October 29. All are welcome to attend, but only delegates may vote.
- Church windows that were damaged are being repaired, the Narthex has been painted, and front doors will be painted Heritage Red.
- Steve King is working on signs for the church, which will match signs on the Church property.
- Church school attendance has been increasing steadily and teachers are signing up for the year. Father Bill plans to offer a Sunday Children's Moment in church on a monthly basis as well.
- The CROP Walk raised \$1,370. Eight Christ Church walkers and friends participated.
- A special coffee hour will be held on November 15 for First Intentional Communion, as well as a welcome gathering for new members. There will be no Sunday school that day.
- Volunteers are needed to host or help with Coffee Hour!
- Fifty three pledges have been received, for a total of \$157,770. Commitment Sunday for Stewardship will be celebrated on November 8th, with a nicer coffee hour with a cake and bagels and quiche. Pledges may be sent in at any time.
- A Christmas pageant is being planned under the leadership of Nancy Coffin and Dan Thurman.
- On the Sunday after Christmas, there will be just one service at 10 a.m. with carols in the Main Church.

Jane Foran, Vestry Clerk



November 14

If you are looking for a quiet, peaceful worship experience, join us for Taizé prayer and Holy Eucharist on Saturday, November 14th at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Church.

Taizé is a meditative service marked by significant periods of silence, meditation, and simple songs in a candlelight setting.



Thank you for a Wonderful Calico Fair

Dear Friends –

As we write this we're facing tents that went up and are down again, forecasts of rain and a Hurricane moving away from us. But we're fearless and undaunted. This Calico Fair Day will be exactly what it is meant to be – an opportunity for ALL of us to come together and work together and simply be together. It is old friends sharing laughs and new friends joining in new fellowship and



making memories – it is a day that will end with our being exhausted to the core but absolutely filled with good will and love for one another and for Christ Church.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to so many – those who contributed our seed money, our precious committee chairs, a host of volunteers, contributors to Rummage and to Book Sale, to the Silent Auction, Accessories and Holiday Shop. To the bakers, to the writers, to the creative minds and fingers – thank you, thank you, thank you. And a special thanks from our hearts to -

Father Bill – Thank you for your enthusiasm, your interest, your presence

Christine Ruland – there are simply not enough words, thank you for always being open to yet ANOTHER request and thank you for anticipating what we forget to do!

Susan Best – OMG – your talent, your patience, your dedication to doing quality work....thank you for creating our marketing brand for this Fair, the cards, the posters, this journal. Susan Best ROCKS !!

Ross Bernstein and Outrageous Parties Entertainment – thank you for your contribution, your generosity and for the FUN

Bill Cuff – thank you for your continued support of Christ Church – we miss you guys! Love the Quiches.

Robert Wilson, Paul and Pauline Dawson – Thank you for contributing raffle prizes

McCormack Farms – Thank you for the pumpkins, the soon to be masterpiece creations of little fingers

Capelli's Nursery – Thank you for your generous donation of the mums and cornstalks that beautify our Fair

Bruce Schower and Cooks Tree Service – Thank you for getting that banner up in the sky, we know it ain't easy!

Jordan – thank you for repairing those tents at the 11th hour and moving furniture and all the stuff we threw your way.

St. George's Episcopal, St Mary's, Robert Wilson and his friend Lou, and Christ Church Shrewsbury – thank you for loaning us the raffle cage and tables (we never seem to have enough ;))

Bruce Schower, Robert Wilson, George Speidel and our friends from Capellis – thank you for picking up the tables, we're sure each one was heavier than the one before it

Bruce Schower (busy man!) and the Middletown Auxiliary Police – thanks much for your watchful eye.

Bob Schuler – thank you for watching out for us all

To each of our Committee Chairs....this day would never have happened without each of you. Thank you for your willing spirit, your hard working hands and open hearts. We are so truly blessed and more grateful than you will ever know.



Thank you to **Cyndi Corbitt**, Accessory Boutique; **Judy Forsys**, Bakery; **Joyce Friedersdorff**, **Tom Warren**, Books; **Elyse Badal**, **Becky Truscott**, **Diane Perullo**,

Calico Fair -Thank you! *Continued from page 5*

Café & Candy Shoppe; **Lou and Joyce Friedersdorff**, **Kim Schuler**, Finance; **Chaballa Family**, **George Speidel & Alana Hoy**, Food Court; **Pat Corbitt**, **Carol Negron**, Frito Bandito; **Susan Best Jones**, Graphics/Brochure; **Theresa Blackburn Tuttle**, Historic Church Activities; **Rita Grootenboer**, Holiday Shop; **Pat Robertson**, Kids & Pumpkins; **Cheryl and Brian Strom**, Children's Games; **Theresa Blackburn Tuttle**, **Susan Best Jones**, Marketing/Publicity; **Paul and Pauline Dawson**, Raffle and 50/50; **Barbara Garrity**, **Ronnie Warren**, Silent Auction & Journal Sales; **Christine Ruland**, Journal Accounting; **Linda Schedel-Barbarino**, 50/50; **Barbara Marshall**, **Sue Murphy**, **Joyce Wright**, White Elephant & Collectibles.

And finally, to **Clint, Marty and Vincent**, and **Becky, Elyse, and Michael**. Thank you for missing us without a complaint and for holding us up when everything but the Fair weighed heavy. We love you – you are our greatest gifts and our greatest treasure.

We are, as always, in complete and utter awe at the capacity of our Christ Church Family to always turn up, to always give more and to always lift us up. You have all been an inspiration and a great comfort to each of us.

With the greatest love and affection –
Lauren Badal, Erna Sottile and Betty Truscott

Congratulations, Raffle Winners!

Ross Prettitore - Gist Office Chair
Mary Hasler - Sentry Home Safe
Steve & Cathy King - Night on the Town
Jackie Milani - Acer Chromebook



*Visit the Christ Church
[Facebook](#) page and [website](#)
for more great photos*





Visit the [Church World Service](#) website to learn more about CWS ministries. [Click here](#) to learn more about CROP.

COG Household Goods Drive

On Saturday, November 21st we'll be packing up the personal and household cleaning items for distribution to the families receiving assistance from the Calico Cupboard pantry.

Each month we've collected a different item to fill the shopping list of household goods; a few more of each item are still needed. Below is a complete list; please consider picking up one or two if you see a good sale.

- 3 bars of bath soap
- 1 container of dish detergent (12-19 oz.)
- 1 deodorant
- 1 spray container of liquid kitchen/bathroom cleanser
- 1 box of plastic wrap
- 2 boxes of facial tissues
- 2 tubes of toothpaste
- 6 rolls toilet paper
- 1 container of liquid laundry detergent

Please place your donations in any Little Red Wagon. Thank you so much for your continued support!

Joyce Wright, Coordinator

CROP Walk - Thank you!

Thank you to all who contributed to the 35th Annual Red Bank Crop Walk. We raised \$1370 for Church World Service, to be used right here in Monmouth County and in some of the neediest locations on earth. Thanks to Sandra Casci, Anna Schuler, Susan Zaccaria, Hope Stypinski, Dalia Habiby and their friends for walking!

Seamen's Church Institute

This month we will deliver all of the unused, sample-sized toiletries we've been collecting to assist mariners at sea through the "Christmas at Sea" program. Please place your donations in a plastic bag marked "SCI" and place in the little red wagon at the entrance of the church. Thank you!

Erna Sottile

Family Promise

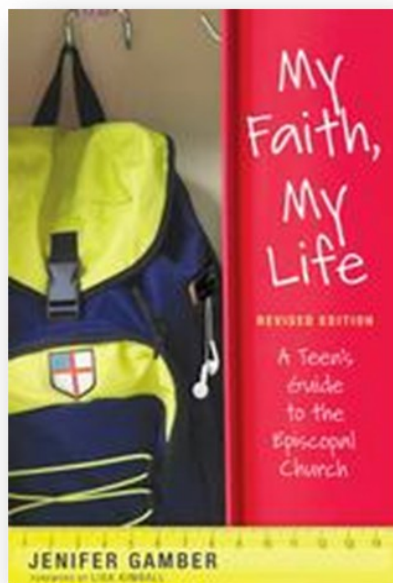
Help is needed for our hosting weeks; there are many opportunities to help, with varying levels of time commitment: Set-up/Break down, Meal Preparation, Evening Hosts, Overnight Hosts, and Pantry support. For more information, please contact co-coordinator Barbara Garrity at 732-888-7736 or bgarresq@aol.com. Following are hosting dates for 2016.

- Jan 17-23
- April 10-17
- June 5-11
- Oct 23-29



Confirmation Preparation Timetable and Resource for Youth Grades 7-12

On Wednesday evening, April 13, 2016, Bishop Stokes will come to Christ Church to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. The following concerns preparing our 7th through 12th grade age youth for this moment in their journey of faith.



Our plan uses *My Faith, My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church* by Jenifer Gamber as the foundation of our process of preparation. Each youth participant (Confirmant), adult mentor, and adult program leaders will be equipped with this useful and informative guide. Furthermore, the adult mentors and the adult program leaders will also receive copies of the Leader's Guide for *My Faith, My Life*.

Confirmants will engage the nine units of the *My Faith, My Life* within the following schedule that includes a retreat at the Stella Maris Center in Long Branch, participation in both *The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday* and *Great Vigil of Easter* Liturgies, attendance on *Ash Wednesday* and *Maundy Thursday*, and *The Nightwatch* experience at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

This process of preparation begins with recruiting and training adult mentors, program support volunteers (food, transportation) and program leaders during November and December 2015. A key goal is to identify individuals or teams to be responsible implementing one or more of the first six sessions as noted in the Leader's Guide. Father Bill will be the lead teacher for the final three sessions that fall over the retreat.

On-site sessions will be on Sundays in a suitable room in the church education wing. The timetable for implementing this process of preparation (pending confirmation of the retreat and Nightwatch dates) is as follows:

December 13, 2015	Blessing and distribution of the <i>My Faith, My Life</i> guides to the Confirmants during worship	
January 10, 2016	Introduction to <i>My Life, My Faith</i>	11:30 am to 12:30 pm (one hour) Includes overview of the process and schedule, assignment of mentors
January 17, 2016	No class	Martin Luther King Day three-day weekend
January 24, 2016	Session 1	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 1: Baptism and Confirmation: Beginnings</i>
January 31, 2016	Session 2	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 2: The Bible: Stories about Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow</i>
February 7, 2016	Session 3	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 3: Knowing Our History</i>
February 10, 2016	Lent begins	Ash Wednesday (Attendance required)
February 14, 2016	No class	President's Day three-day weekend
February 21, 2016	Session 4	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 4: Faith: What Do We Believe?</i>
February 28, 2016	Session 5	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 5: Worship: Responding to God's Blessings</i>
March 6, 2016	Session 6	11:30 am to 1:30 pm (two hours, includes lunch) <i>Chapter 8: Navigating the Church: From Local to Worldwide Church</i>



The Rt. Rev. Chip Stokes, Bishop of New Jersey

Bishop's Visitation April 13, 2016

Mark your calendars and save the date! The Rt. Rev. William "Chip" Stokes, Bishop of New Jersey, will visit Christ Church, Middletown, on Wednesday, April 13, 2016. If you would like to be Confirmed, Received into the Episcopal Church, or Reaffirm your Baptismal vows, please speak to Father Bill.

Mentors needed for the Youth Confirmation Program

Christ Church has a rich history of faithful adults offering to guide our teens preparing for confirmation as mentors. The approach we are using (*My Faith, My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church* by Jenifer Gamber, as noted in the Youth Confirmation article) includes a very rich mentor experience for our young people. Please let Father Bill know if you would like to join this effort by calling or texting him at 252-876-6841, or by email at williamcarlthomas@gmail.com.

Confirmation Preparation *Continued from page 8*

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|---|
| March 18-19, 2016 | Sessions 7-9 | Overnight retreat at Stella Maris Retreat Center
Friday beginning at 5 pm through 5 pm on Saturday
<i>Chapter 6: The Sacraments: Signs of Grace</i>
<i>Chapter 7: Spirituality: Created for Prayer</i>
<i>Chapter 9: The Mission of God: What's Your Ministry?</i>
Also includes
<i>Practice The Passion</i> spoken in parts for <i>The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday</i> on March 20, 2016.
Preparation for signing <i>The Roll of the Baptized</i> during <i>The Great Vigil of Easter</i> on March 26, 2016. |
| March 20, 2016 | | Present <i>The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ</i> , spoken in parts, at the close of <i>The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday</i> liturgy at 10:00 am. |
| March 23, 2016 | | Holy Week – Maundy Thursday (Attendance required) |
| March 26, 2016 | | Participate as scripture readers and sign <i>The Roll of the Baptized</i> during <i>The Great Vigil of Easter</i> . |
| April 1-2, 2016 | | <i>The Nightwatch</i> experience at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. |
| April 13, 2016 | | Receive the <i>Sacrament of Confirmation</i> under the hand of Bishop Stokes during the 7:00 pm liturgy in the Main Church. |



Christian Formation for Children & Youth

21 Children preparing for First Intentional Communion Support to purchase prayer books and crosses needed

The Liturgy of First Intentional Communion will take place at Christ Church on Sunday, November 15, 2015 during our 10:00 am worship in the Main Church. During this liturgy, each young person will receive a cross to wear and a copy of the Book of Common Prayer. You can support these persons in their continuing life in Christ with a donation to Christ Church of \$25.00 per cross/prayer book combination. A personalization of you as the donor can be placed in the book. This is especially appropriate if you are making a donation on behalf of a child or grandchild. Please attach a note with your intention and send, along with your check payable to Christ Church to: Christ Episcopal Church, 90 Kings Highway, Middletown NJ 07748.



Register for Church School or Youth Group

[Click here](#) to register your children for Church School now. Church School classes meet at 10:00 am on the second floor of the Education Wing.

[Click here](#) to register your teens for Youth Group now. Youth Group meets at 9 am on Sundays in the Youth Lounge



Everyone is Invited to the First Intentional Communion Celebration

Join us after the 10 a.m. liturgy on Sunday, November 15th for a special Brunch-Lunch in honor of the children in grades 2-6 who have participated in the First Intentional Communion classes with Father Bill. "DJ Jake" will liven up the party with his awesome music. Please contact Colette Jacobsen (732-787-8096, cbeausejou@aol.com, or post a message on the Christ Church Facebook page) if you would like to bring a dish to share. Thank you!

Youth Group

by Cindy McCormack

Youth group meets every Sunday at 9 a.m. in the Youth Lounge. The program is meant for those in 7th grade and older. We will focus on how teens are called to do Christ's work here in Monmouth County and beyond.

Service projects will be an integral part of our fellowship. I realize the demands on your schedules and I am open to changing the meeting time to one that is more mutually convenient. Below are some upcoming events we would like to participate in, so please save the dates!

- Nov. 14th—*Stop Hunger Now* Event (with the Middletown Reformed Church) at United Methodist Church on Middletown-Lincroft Road, Middletown

- Nov. 15th—First Intentional Communion Liturgy, 10 a.m., Main Church
- Thanksgiving Ingathering - help to organize food for St. Mark's baskets (time & date TBD)
- Nov. 22nd Class—9:00 a.m. Youth Lounge (After Church - Service hours available - transport turkeys, etc. to St. Mark's Soup Kitchen)

Looking ahead, here are some December Events:

- Dec. 6—Advent Spaghetti Dinner
- Dec. 6—Christmas Toy Ingathering
- Dec 12—Cookie Walk

As you can see, there are many service opportunities available for your student and we would love for them to join us whenever their schedule permits. If anyone feels called to help in any way please contact me anytime.

Cindy McCormack, Youth Leader

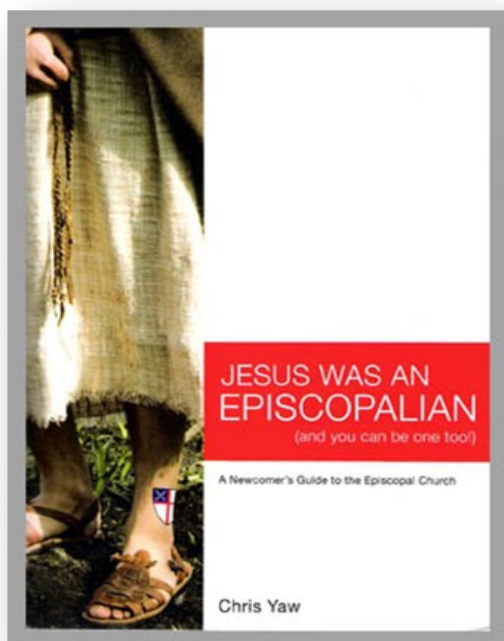
Adult Christian Formation

Centering Prayer

Be still and know God in the Centering Prayer form. Contemplative Prayer meets on Tuesdays at 9:15 a.m. in the Library. No experience necessary, all are welcome.

Women's Study Group

The Tuesday morning Women's Study Group is currently reading *This I Believe*, a compilation of the personal philosophies of remarkable men and women. All women are welcome to join this friendly group from 10:30 a.m.—12 noon.



Let Father Bill know your desire to be Confirmed, Received, or to Reaffirm your faith.

Sampling EfM

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

Sample EfM Classes meet two Mondays per month from 6-8:30 PM in the church library. Everyone is welcome to attend. Following are the remaining sessions:

- **November 2nd session** – Please note the new date. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 (What is Salvation?, Who is God the Spirit?, What is the Church?); spiritual autobiography timeline
- **November 23rd session** – Chapters 8, 9 and 10 (What is Baptism?, What is Our Future?, What Difference Does It Make?); completing the spiritual auto-biography timeline; plans for Advent

The group will decide together what the focus will be for future sessions.

—Edna Marie Thomas

Jesus Was an Episcopalian

Adult Confirmation Process of Preparation

Jesus Was an Episcopalian (and you can be one too!) is the name of a book and adult confirmation approach developed by The Rev. Chris Yaw. Father Bill envisions using this printed resource, material available for viewing on the internet, and sessions held at Christ Church to prepare adults to come before Bishop Stokes on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 for Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation of Faith. Please let Father Bill know of your interest by phone or text at 252-876-6841 or by email at williamcarlthomas@gmail.com. He would like to meet with participants one-on-one or in small groups during November and December to better design the January, February, and March aspects of the Adult Confirmation Process of Preparation. You can get a head start by purchasing a copy of *Jesus was an Episcopalian* as well as go to jesuswasanepiscopalian.org and view the videos that support this process.

Holiday Outreach Projects



*"Reminder Slips" will be given out
Oct 31-Nov 1 and Nov 7-8*

Thanksgiving Ingathering: November 14-15

Our Thanksgiving Ingathering, to benefit the families served by St Mark's Center for Community Renewal, will be held on November 14-15. Reminder slips will be given out on October 31-November 1 and November 7-8.

This year we will sort and pack the baskets on a different day, which will be announced shortly. Please consider helping if you are available.

You have the opportunity to help those who cannot afford a Thanksgiving dinner by providing all or part of a 'basket'. Items in each basket include:

- A frozen turkey, 12 – 16 lbs. (please place in Church Kitchen freezer)
- 2 – 3 cans turkey gravy
- 1 large or 2 small boxes of stuffing
- 1 large or 2 small boxes of instant mashed potatoes
- 1 large or 2 small cans of sweet potatoes
- 1 large can or 2 small cans of green beans
- 1 large can or 2 small cans of corn
- 1 – 2 cans of cranberry sauce
- 1 large or 2 small bottles of apple juice
- a one-pound tin of butter cookies

Christmas Toy Ingathering: December 5-6

Our Christmas Toy Ingathering of new, unwrapped toys for all ages will occur at all services on December 5th and 6th. This year the Outreach Committee has decided to share our Ingathering with the ministry of Holiday Express, a non-profit organization of more than 1,700 volunteers, including 150 musicians.

This year marks the 23rd season of the Holiday Express ministry, when it will travel to a record 81 locations, delivering music, food, gifts, financial support, and friendship to those in need. They visit the mentally and physically ill, the homeless, the hungry, the disabled, and so many others. "We will give out 20,000 gift bags this season. No one leaves empty handed," says Holiday Express founder, Tim McLoone.

For more information visit their website at holidayexpress.org. Also, be sure to listen to their theme song on YouTube. Just put "Holiday Express - Alone on Christmas" into the search box and listen to the main song that will be sung at each location.

We hope you will help us share the love of Christ with those in need this Christmas season through the Toy Ingathering donated to the ministry of Holiday Express. Thanks!

Tom Warren for the Christ Church Outreach Committee



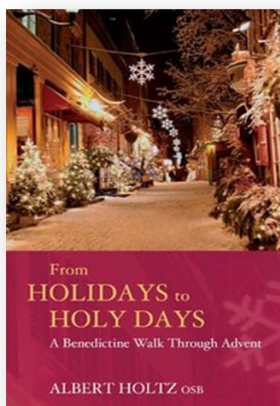
**HOLIDAY
EXPRESS**

An Advent Breath Prayer
The Best Way
to Prepare
for the Coming of Christ
is to
Never Forget
the Presence of Christ.

Advent Workshop with Father Bill Sunday, November 29th during Coffee Hour

An Advent Wreath is a wonderful way to engage this saying, "The best way to prepare for the coming of Christ is to never forget the presence of Christ." A section of the Undercroft will be dedicated to making Advent Wreaths during Coffee Hour on the First Sunday of Advent (November 29th). Father Bill will also use this space and this time to present some Advent spiritual resource for adults and children. One great resource for adults will be available for purchase: *From Holy Days to Holidays: A Benedictine Walk through Advent* by Albert Holtz OSB. Children will leave with fun yet spiritual things to do at home with their family.

From Holidays to Holy Days: A book by Albert Holtz, O.S.B.



When our children were small, Advent was a time of preparing for Santa Claus. We did include the Nativity narratives of course, and tried to teach them the true meaning of Christmas was the Incarnation (not using such a big word however) of Jesus. Melinda and Adam had red and green construction paper Advent Chains made each year in Sunday School; a tin of 46 green and red M&M's from which they could take two each night before brushing their teeth; a homemade Jesse Tree with alphabetical symbols – A is for Angel, B is for Bethlehem, C is for Cattle, etc.; and, in addition to the Advent Wreath on our table, an Advent Candle which burned down one number per night as we read one of our many Christmas picture books. They were certainly ready for December 24th when they found the baby Jesus figure we had hidden and placed him in the manger of our Creche.

As Melinda and Adam outgrew these practices, my own Advent observances got lost too. My full time work as a bookstore manager, and Bill's church responsibilities, left little time for us to do more than occasionally remember to light the Advent Wreath.

The annual deep sighs of relief while we opened gifts and watched *The Court Jester* (another of our favorite movies starring Danny Kay and a young, very beautiful Angela Lansbury) the afternoon of December 25th became our family holiday tradition. When I was introduced to Albert Holtz, first by way of his Lenten meditations *Pilgrim Road: A Benedictine Walk Through Lent*, then through *From Holidays to Holy Days*... I was given a return to Advent.

Brother Albert's reflections begin the first Sunday of Advent as he walks through the streets of downtown Newark. The shop windows have been filled with Christmas decorations and "necessities" since Halloween. As in each subsequent reflection, Holtz uses the cultural, visible signs of the holiday "season" to remind us of the sacred to be found in each moment. One of my favorite reflections on the Wednesday of the second week of Advent is on Christmas Trees:

Picture an imaginary Christmas tree representing Christ at the center of your life. How would you decorate it? Try hanging on its branches not only your victories, the things you are most proud of, but also the faults and problems that Christ has helped you with. If you were to include pictures of people, whose pictures would you hang there first?

Through this reflection, I have created a holiday tree on which pictures of the generations of our families hang in miniature frames. When I set this out each year it reminds me of the many gifts each person has given me through the years; the traumas and the joys; the laughter and the tears; the memories and prayers for each of them, departed and with me still.

My wish for each of you as we approach Advent together is that you will find your own way of observing, celebrating, and sharing the season as a family, united through the one true gift, the Incarnation.

Submitted by Edna Marie Thomas



Children's Chimes

The Christ Church Advent Spaghetti Dinner is coming on December 6th! It is the time when we dust off our Santa hats and sing all our favorite Santa songs (including *Grandma got Run over by a Reindeer*!) The children and adults always have a great time, and everyone gets into the holiday spirit.

After church (during coffee hour) on November 22nd and 29th we will have a short chime practice to get the children ready to ring the chimes at the Spaghetti dinner. All children are welcome. If you have any questions please email me at acatmom@aol.com or call at 732 566-6815. Just to let you know, we are having a Christmas pageant with our church school children. The pageant will be on Dec. 20th during the 10:00 liturgy. Please mark your calendars for these two Advent events. Thank you!

Nancy Coffin



Cookie Walk



Cookie Walk

Saturday, December 12th
from 10am to noon

Just imagine the Undercroft filled people circulating around tables loaded with the largest assortment of Christmas Cookies they have ever seen. Now imagine those people filling pastry boxes with an assortment of Christmas Cookies they can claim to their friends that they baked! We do the baking beforehand. They do the choosing (wearing sanitary gloves). We sell by weight. They leave happy. We profit!

Organization details are forthcoming. Just start thinking about what cookies you would like to bake, how many (think dozens+), or just how easy it will be for you to find the cookies others bake to round out your Christmas Cookie offerings to family and friends.

Volunteer Opportunities

"Many hands make light the work"

Are you able to give a little bit of your time and energy to help beautify our church or grounds? Look for the sign-up sheets on the undercroft bulletin board and please consider signing up to accomplish a small project.

Special thanks...

Thank you to Kim Schuler, Candi & Steve Carl, and David Murphy for painting the Narthex in the Main Church.



Altar Guild

The Altar Guild needs new members to continue its mission of preparing both churches for worship services. It is pleasant work with nice people and the teams serve about once a month. Training will be provided. For more information contact Joyce Friedersdorff at 732-671-7381.

Church School Teachers

Church School teachers are appreciated and needed! Please contact Cindy McCormack or Christine Ruland at the Christ Church office if you can help. Thank you!

Coffee Hour Hosts

The Coffee Hour host sign-up sheet is located on the undercroft bulletin board. Please consider hosting a simple coffee hour, and sign up to become a part of this important ministry. Thank you!

Thank You!

Christ Church has been in a flurry of activity! Many repairs and necessary building improvements have been accomplished through the generosity of a number of parishioners. Just in the past few weeks, all of the gutters have been professionally cleaned, and the gutters on the Education Wing have been repaired, the Main Church windows have been professionally painted, the Main Church doors have been professionally repaired and primed for painting (they will soon be Heritage Red!), the Historic Church sacristy sink was repaired, and the Main Church Narthex painted. Thank you so much to all of you who have made it possible by showing your love for our church in this way.

Clergy, Staff, & Vestry

Priest-in-Charge

The Rev. Dr. William Carl Thomas

Assistant Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Cathy Bickerton

Music

Nancy Coffin, Choir Director

Marilyn Brace, Organist

Dawn Stegner, Saturday Accompanist

Parish Administrator

Christine Ruland

732-671-2524;

christchurchmiddletown@verizon.net

Sexton

Jordan Sisolak

Wardens

Barbara Garrity

Cynthia McCormack

Parish Officers

Paul Dawson, Pauline Dawson, Treasurers

Jane Foran, Vestry Clerk

Vestry

Sandra Casci, Worship

Kim Schuler, New Membership

Joyce Wright, Existing Membership

Tom Warren, Outreach

Chuck Watson, Finance & Administration

Pat Robertson, Stewardship

Robert Wilson, Buildings and Grounds

Jane Foran, Communications

Feline in Residence

Sylvia, D. EoT

“Like” us on Facebook



Click on the icon, or log on to the Christ Church Facebook page at

www.facebook.com/christchurchmiddletown.

Weekly Worship Schedule

- Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Church
- Taizé Worship (2nd Saturday of each month)
- Sundays at 8 a.m. in the Historic Church
- Sundays at 10 a.m. in the Main Church

Small Group Schedule

Contemplative Prayer—Tuesdays 9:15 am

Women's Study Group—Tuesdays 10:30 am

Bell Choir Rehearsal Thursdays 6:30 pm

Adult Choir Rehearsal Thursdays 7:30 pm

Support Group Schedule *in the undercroft*

Sundays, 8 pm—Alcoholics Anonymous

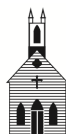
Tuesdays, 8 pm—Narcotics Anonymous

Wednesdays, 7:30 pm—Cocaine Anonymous

Thursdays, 8 pm—Nar-anon

Fridays, 8 pm—Alcoholics Anonymous

4th Saturday of the month, (excluding holiday weekends) 8:30—11:30 am Job Search Networking



CHRIST CHURCH
the Episcopal Church of Middletown

90 Kings Highway • Middletown, NJ 07748 • 732.671.2524

www.christchurchmiddletown.org