

THE ANGELUS

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Christ Episcopal Church • Winchester, Virginia

December 2023

Dear People of Christ Church,

With the arrival of Advent comes the start of the lectionary cycle for the new church year. So, Happy New Year! While that sounds strange, it can also be a helpful moment to find an easy way to explore our Holy Scripture in our lections or readings for the upcoming year. We are now in year B of our Sunday Eucharistic Cycle of years A, B, C. Year B will have readings from the Gospels of Mark and John. Unlike the Gospels of Luke and Matthew in years A and C, the brevity of the Gospel of Mark allows for parts of the Gospel of John to also be read during this church year. And then outside of the reading lections for our daily offices of morning and evening prayers, we also have additional lections or readings for the Season of Advent as well as Lent.

All of that is to say that this is a great opportunity for Bible reading. Our Adult Forum on Sunday mornings (December 3 & 10) will explore how the gospels differ around our seasons of Advent and Christmas. If people also want to study how scripture readings deepen our understanding of the incarnation of Jesus, and how we see God active in times past as well as in Jesus, the daily readings for Advent give that chance.

It can be intimidating to read the Bible since there is so much there that is familiar, foreign, obvious, mysterious and so on to the point that people don't read it. However, the Holy Scripture is our sacred story of God's relationship with humanity over the years. Therefore, it is important to read.

The Sunday Adult Forum and the Wednesday Lectionary Bible study provide more interaction and conversation with others. However, the daily office readings are a wonderful way to prepare ourselves in prayer and reading of scripture either with friends or alone as time and life permits. There are daily readings including reflections from the Forward Movement Day by Day website. In case a person wants to have a selection of readings specific to Advent, there are selections on websites such as Satucket Lectionary whose website is satucket.com. Just be sure to select the year B and the correct week for the readings assigned for each day.

In some ways, this is an early practice for what we might consider to be a New Year's resolution. Hopefully this will be more meaningful for you as you read our sacred story.

Our lectionary reading cycles are sometimes found to be a well-kept secret in the Episcopal Church because our daily office is not read by many people. That is ironic since more than 85% of our beloved prayer book are citations from scripture. There is a story told of a woman who commented to her rector that she had only read the prayer book and not the Bible. Her rector encouraged her to read the Bible as well. After she had read the Bible, the woman came up to her rector and told him, "It is amazing how much of the prayer book is in Bible." Whether the story is true or not, it makes the point that we do read a lot of Scripture in the Episcopal Church. We just may not realize it.

I encourage you to take the opportunity for engaging on our sacred story, especially at this particular time of year. As we celebrate God revealed in human flesh, as we anticipate our Lord's return, and as we live out our lives following Jesus in the new year, this is a good time to deepen perspective, awareness, and understanding of our Sacred Story.

Faithfully,



The Rev. Webster Gibson, Rector
rector@christchurchwinchester.org
540-662-5843, Ext 1 or 540-773-5562



From the Clergy

Christ Church Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting and election of new Vestry members will be February 25, 2024. This is the time of year that we, the Vestry, invite the congregation to discern and nominate parishioners to serve on the Christ Church Vestry. First though, what exactly is a vestry and what do vestry members do?

Vestry can be described in several ways. In language which sounds more corporate or business-like, the vestry is described as follows: *The vestry is the legal representative of the parish with regard to all matters pertaining to its corporate property. Vestry members are elected at the annual parish meeting. The presiding officer of the vestry is the rector. There are usually two wardens. The senior warden leads the parish between rectors and is a support person for the rector. The junior warden has responsibility for church property and buildings. A treasurer and a register are also appointed by the vestry. The basic responsibilities of the vestry are to help define and articulate the mission of the congregation; to support the church's mission by word and deed, to select the rector, to ensure effective organization and planning, and to manage resources and finances.*

This description makes it easy to think that the job of the Christ Church Vestry is to run everything for the parish. However, the church is not a business or corporation, and so there are other ways we need to understand the work of our Vestry.

A vestry is a group that gathers in prayer and seeks to empower others to service in ministries of the congregation. Our diocesan canons also emphasize our Christian concern and care for one another: *“Each Vestry will cooperate with the Rector in promoting the spiritual welfare of the congregation... Each Vestry member shall support the programs of the Church through a commitment to service and biblically-based standard of proportional giving. Each vestry member shall also continuously encourage the members of the congregation to support the programs of the Church and to give generously towards the support of those programs; and each Vestry member shall extend personally a hearty welcome to newly baptized, confirmed, received, or transferred members of the congregation.”*

Perhaps one of the reasons we keep our old English term “vestry,” instead of calling it a “board,” is to help us remember our Vestry is full of disciples working together to follow our Lord.

Canonical Requirements to serve on the Vestry are:

Diocesan Canon 11, section 4:

Only Lay persons, who are confirmed adult communicants in good standing of the church, as defined in General Convention Canon I.17., shall be eligible for election as Vestry members of such church.

General Convention Canon 1.17: Definition of adult communicant in good standing:

Canon 1.17.2

(a) All members of this Church who have received Holy Communion in this Church at least three times during the preceding year are to be considered communicants of this Church.

(b) For the purposes of statistical consistency throughout the Church, communicants sixteen years of age and over are to be considered adult communicants.

Canon 1.17.3 All communicants of this Church who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, are to be considered communicants in good standing.

All nominees must have their status confirmed by the nominating committee prior to their becoming actual nominees. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone to serve on the Christ Church Vestry, please contact Scott Arthur, Clare Dame, or Pam Kennedy.

Christian Formation for All

Sunday School News

Gingerbread, anyone? On December 9th at 10:00 am, families with young children are invited to come to build a gingerbread house to take home in the Tilford Room. A light brunch will be provided. All materials are being donated so there is no fee. Just let us know if you're planning to come so we will have enough for all. Sign up on the church website or in the Commons right away.

This year's **Christmas Pageant** will be on Sunday, December 17th, during the 10:30 am service. This will be the traditional pageant with the children and youth recounting Luke's Gospel with Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and animals, the angels and all of the company of heaven. Everyone is invited to be part and all costumes will be provided. Instead of Sunday School that morning, setup and costuming will take place in the Fairfax Room during the 9:30-10:15 am time slot. We will notify those who may need to attend a brief rehearsal on December 10. Please sign up in Sunday School or email Margery at wingenschach@comcast.net.



On Sunday, December 24th, during the 4:30 pm service, children will also have an opportunity to participate in the **Nativity Procession**, a special Christmas offertory parade for children to help bring food donations forward. Children are invited to come to church dressed as their favorite Christmas character, but costumes are not required to participate. (The church will not be providing costumes for this procession.) There is no sign up to participate.

Children are welcome to celebrate the Nativity as part of either or both services as we hope to accommodate the schedule of young families with multiple options during the busy holiday season.

There won't be Sunday School or Children's Chapel on Sunday, December 31st.

Thank you to the Elwood family for sharing their thoughts about the annual Christmas Pageant at Christ Church:

From **Gregory**: *"It's simple, I just like it! The costumes are fun, and I look forward to doing it every year because we only do it once a year."*

From **Florence**: *"I like being an Angel and love the music! It's so special because it's only once a year and Christmas is so special!"*

From **Beatrice**: *"I want to hold Baby Jesus! It's fun being up front in the church."*

Church Calendar

Services at Christ Church

8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I
10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II
in the Sanctuary

Holy Eucharist at Westminster-Canterbury
Every 1st & 3rd Thursday at 10:30 am



Find us on
Facebook

Look for
Christ Episcopal Church Winchester
and like us to stay up-to-date on the latest news!

The Church Office is open Tuesday—Thursday
from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.
Call ahead before you visit!

Committee & Group Meetings

Adult Forum	Sun: 9:30 am
Choir Rehearsal	Wed: 7:00 pm
Bible Study	Wed: 10:30 am via Zoom
Outreach Committee	4th Tues: 7:00 pm
Knit Unto Others	3rd Tues: 2:00 pm
Properties Committee	3rd Tues: 7:00 pm
Vestry	2nd Tues: 7:00 pm
Daytime Faith Study	2nd & 4th Mon: 10:00 am
Treasure Box	Wed & Fri: 10 am—4 pm Sat: 10 am—1 pm
Women's Book Studies	Tues: 10:30 am—Parlors or First Thursday at 5:30 pm —Tilford Room



CHRIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA



The Angelus is a monthly publication of Christ Episcopal Church.

Church Calendar

December Birthdays

- 1 Mary Margaret Applin
- 4 Betty Futral
- 5 Bill Armstrong
- 6 Pam Friestad, Peggy Dowd
- 7 Harry Poling
- 8 Lelia Wingenbach
- 10 Rob Ross, Gary Sheppard
- 12 Linda Gibson
- 13 Dana Shook
- 14 Penny Byler
- 17 Terri Cluss
- 19 Eleanor Thomson
- 21 Bill Pifer
- 25 Evan Francis
- 26 Christopher Turnbull
- 27 Charles Casey
- 28 Ashley Futral, Jr.
- 29 Carole Ann King
- 30 Sarah Roberson, Sam Worsley
- 31 Rob Boyd



December Anniversaries

- 4 James & Marsha Baden
- 8 Stephen & Suzanne Pettit
- 18 Bill & Gail Walsh
- 18 Steve & Ashley Haines
- 21 Kevin & Pam Kennedy

Please Note:

We will publish birthday and anniversary information only with explicit permission. Please contact the Church Office if you wish to be added to or deleted from these lists. Please keep the Church Office informed of any changes to your address, phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

Celebrate!



Coffee Hour hosts needed in January! Please sign up on the website.

The
**TREASURE
BOX**

Shop at the Treasure Box Thrift Shop!
Open on Wednesdays and Fridays 10—4
and Saturdays 10-1
at 114 W. Boscawen St.

Closed December 23—January 2

Parish Reminders

Angel Tree 2023

Christ Church parishioners gave generously again this Christmas to support local kids through the Salvation Army Angel Tree program! Thanks to all who assisted with the program, adopted angels, and made donations for others to shop for gifts.

Just a reminder, once you have finished your shopping, you will have three options for delivery of the gifts to the Salvation Army. Gifts must be returned by December 6, 2023.

- Deliver your gifts directly to the Salvation Army office at 300 Fort Collier Road in Winchester, Monday through Friday only, from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.
- Call the Angel Tree hotline and request a pickup.
- Bring the gifts to the Tilford Room on Sunday, December 3, after the 8:00 am service or before or after the 10:30 am service.

If you need assistance delivering your gifts or have any questions, please call the Angel Tree hotline at 540-486-4003.



Christmas Flowers



We are looking forward to a Christmas Sanctuary adorned with poinsettias. If you would like to make a donation to the Altar Guild in memory of or in thanksgiving for a loved one this Christmas, the suggested donation is \$15-20 per remembrance. Christmas Flower envelopes are in the back of the church. Please return them in the offering or to the Church Office. The last day to return an envelope is Monday, December 11.

You may also email Noelle at communications@christchurchwinchester.org and send donations separately (with a note that says Christmas flowers).

December Notes from the Bookkeeper:

2023 Year-End Contribution Statements will be mailed the first part of January 2024. If you are unsure of your current contribution unpaid balance, please [contact our Bookkeeper, Theresa Seitz](#) at 540-773-5566. She can provide you with this information and/or a copy of your current statement.

2024 Pledge Envelopes will be available for pick up in the back of the church Sunday December 3, 10, and 17. Thereafter, please [contact our Bookkeeper, Theresa Seitz](#) at 540-773-5566 to arrange to pick up your envelopes. Sorry, envelope sets CANNOT be mailed to your residence. Also, if you did not request a set of envelopes at the time you made your pledge, but would like a set, please contact Theresa.

From the Stewardship Committee

Update on the Stewardship Campaign

At this point in the 2024 Stewardship Campaign, I would first like to thank you for your generous support of Christ Church in 2023. In the 22 years that my family has been members of Christ Church, it has been amazing to witness its engaged membership, ministries, heavy use (and maintenance) of facilities, and, more importantly, its impact in the community.

The Stewardship Campaign kicked off in October and our goal was to conclude on Sunday, November 12. Last year, we received 136 signed pledge cards, and our goal this year is for every family or individual who attends to make some commitment. At last count, 121 signed pledge cards have been returned. I personally hope over 150 families will do so. Let's meet the challenge!

As we are coming to the close of the year, it is time for us to make plans for 2024. We want to thank those of you who have already participated in the 2024 Stewardship Campaign by sending in your pledges. If you have not yet returned your pledge card, please PLEDGE HERE. <https://www.christchurchwinchester.org/stewardship>.

For 2023, tithe offerings made up the vast majority of the budgeted revenue and plate offerings (unpledged giving at a church service or as a recurring gift) were also a large component. Your tithe helps greatly in planning for the next year for all the programs we can support. As you likely learn every time you enter the church or open an email, our community has amazing programs to support our members and numerous outreach programs to support our community. There is something happening all of the time!

We know we will have an increase in expenses for 2024 because of inflation. Increased expenses such as building maintenance, utilities, security, music programs, and Sunday School are expected and make up a large component of the budget. However, we hope to expand other program offerings but can only do so with increased pledging. Your dollars count and are the only way that Christ Church can expand its program offerings.

On behalf of the Stewardship committee, I thank you for your pledge and ask that you pray with us as we conclude our annual gathering of gifts and gratitude, and consider how you can use your works to support Christ Church in 2024. Again, if you have not yet made your gift or if you are considering increasing your already submitted pledge, you can do so via the website link above.

Faithfully yours,

Wilborn Roberson, Stewardship Chair

From the Pastoral Care Committee

A Five-Finger Prayer

December is a very busy month! I found this prayer in an old bulletin from another parish (author unknown) that I thought would be fitting for this upcoming festive season. Here is some “food for thought.”

- Your thumb is nearest you. So, begin your prayers for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C.S. Lewis once said, a “sweet duty.”
- The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct, and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
- The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the President, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God’s guidance.
- The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
- And lastly comes out little finger, the smallest finger of all. This is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, “The least shall be the greatest among us.” Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

See you in church!

Your Parish Nurses, Helen, Rosalie, and Susan



Christmas 2023



Sundays of Advent · 8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I & 10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 17 · Children’s Christmas Pageant at the 10:30 am service

Sunday, December 24 · Advent IV services

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I & 10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 24 · Christmas Eve Services

4:30 pm Family Eucharist

10:00 pm Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

Monday, December 25, Christmas Day · 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 31 · 8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I & 10:30 am Lessons & Carols