

THE ANGELUS

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Christ Episcopal Church • Winchester, Virginia

January 2026

Dear People of Christ Church,

Every January we work on that dreaded new year's resolution which should make us feel better about ourselves if we do it. However, then comes January 2nd and because the resolutions requires something from us that makes us either uncomfortable or we just don't want to do it, we stop. This year, I want to give people of all ages the opportunity to fulfill one specific resolution which is either already on people's minds, or will be eventually. It is something that you absolutely should and need to do, and only you can do it. If you can just do it once, it will be something which you not only can check off of your list for things accomplished in 2026, but you can also check it off of your bucket list. It is something which you do not have to do alone. In fact, I encourage you to bring a partner with you. In fact, you can even bring the whole family since it is something that will help to promote and create a family bond on a whole new level of faith and understanding in a way many will not have known before. It is something that you are not stuck with for the rest of your life if you change your mind, but you have to start somewhere.



Maybe you have figured it out by now! That one resolution is to plan your funeral. This does not have anything to do with your wills – that's lawyers. No, it does not have to do with your funeral home arrangements – that's with the funeral home. No, it does not have to do with medical care – that's with the doctors and nurses.

This is you talking with me about planning your funeral service. Join me on Sunday, January 25, from 3:00-5:00 pm with a cup of tea and I'll give you everything you need to plan your funeral service. When you leave, you will have the service you want outlined. You will know what homework you need to do with your family. You will also have just given your family one of the greatest gifts you can give them by having this done.

Why this "workshop?" Because I, as your clergy, am trying to give you the best pastoral advice and direction I can to help me care for your family and friends after your departure from this part of life. Every year that we offer our "End of Life" workshop, those who attend say that they want to meet with me to go over the funeral service. To date, that batting average is around .150 to .200. At the same time, the death rate is still 100%. NO, you do NOT fill in a line on the form with your death date. YES, it will happen some day. And when it does, you do not have the ability to tell people what you would like at that point.

Another reason to attend is it is a huge gift to help family, especially children who may not be active in church, to not have to try and remember what hymns or Scripture you may or may not have liked because they often times do not know. Instead, I can meet with them to help them with their grief and not have to worry about the planning of the service.

You do not have to be at retirement age or older to do this. You can come with your parents, or you can bring your older children, and everyone can go through this process to get the service planned. Even if you move to another church or place, you can take it with you.

Please think about it. And then join me in giving a wonderful gift to your loved ones. It is not locked in stone. You can change it at any time. However, I find that it helps you to know what your options are with the service and what you need to decide so that you can do it. Then you may find that you want to change it, which is great.

The process is not difficult. I will walk you through the main parts of the decisions and help you see where you need to do other planning. It might take you an hour. It might take more or less time depending on what you need. This is the easiest New Year's resolution to achieve in 2026! Happy New Year!

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Webster".

The Rev. Webster Gibson, Rector
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Christian Formation & Worship

Bishop Visitation to Christ Church

The Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris will be joining us on Sunday, March 8, 2026 at the 10:30 am service for our annual Bishop's visitation. The visitation allows the bishop and congregation to do just that – visit. It is also a time for baptisms, confirmations, reception and renewals. What does that mean?

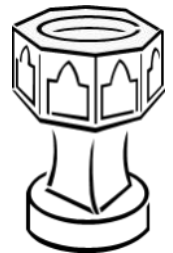
As you have become more involved in the parish life, this is an important opportunity to become full members at Christ Church. For those not familiar with the Episcopal Church, being a member of Christ Church allows you to serve in roles of leadership in the parish as well as being able to vote at annual meetings or at other meetings involving items such as our recent meeting to vote on sale of church property.

This does not have anything to do with validity of baptisms or previous denominations you may have grown up in. Instead, this is a way that we publicly acknowledge your desire to serve Jesus in the universal (or catholic) Church through this particular denomination called Episcopal. The Bishop Visitation is our way of welcoming people into the faith. That is also wonderful way to celebrate your being part of the same Christian Community called Christ Episcopal Church.

For those who are already Episcopalian, if you have not done so already, you only need a letter of transfer of membership from your previous Episcopal congregation. You may have already done that. If not, check with Noelle Creamer in the church office and she can check for you.

For those who grew up in another denomination, most denominations have some form an adult profession of faith in Jesus. We call that confirmation. Out of respect for that a person's previous adult profession of faith, we call our process "reception" into the Episcopal Church. If you have not done that, then you are confirmed. Of course, if you have not yet been baptized and wish to do so, this is the best chance you get where you are baptized and confirmed all at the same time.

To start this process, join Webster Gibson on Sunday, January 4 at 9:30 am in the Pilgrim's Chapel when we will talk about life and formation in the Christian Faith and how this process will work. Anyone who is interested in learning more, or seeing what this means is welcome to attend.



Note from the Vestry

The opening of Bonnie Blue restaurant at its new location, across Washington Street from the church, will happen now in the spring of 2026, we are advised. The Vestry has been in conversation with the owners of Bonnie Blue and the City of Winchester to discuss the impact on parking and traffic patterns in this area. One obvious impact on the parking is Bonnie Blue's parking lot will be for their patrons only. We are aware that parishioners currently use that parking on Sunday mornings, which will need to stop.

The parking spots in the alleyway behind the sanctuary belong to the owner of the old school board office building. We have not heard of any weekend restrictions on those spots at this time. However, should the owners of the building decide to limit parking, that is their prerogative. We will update the congregation on any such details.

We continue to work with the city and surrounding neighbors as Winchester grows and changes. At our last meeting, we discussed the need for everyone to exercise additional caution when driving in this area on Sunday mornings. Our main concern is to keep everyone safe.

The Vestry is available to answer your questions as best they can. However, at this point, much of the conversation is in planning and waiting for approvals. We will keep you updated as these processes move ahead.

Christian Formation & Worship

Adult Formation in January

Adult Faith Study

We will begin studying the book, *Judges*, starts on Monday, January 12, 2026. We will use the Bible study guide “Conversation with Scripture: The Book of Judges” by Roy Heller. This series uses a very approachable process to reading Scripture for the novice and the experienced reader.

One review says: “Throughout its history Judges has both entertained and appalled readers some read it as a series of simple stories about faithfulness and some as a brutal and bloodthirsty book. Heller explores how Judges can shape our understanding of our world, our relationships, and can provide a path to a deeper appreciation of the ways of God among people. Far from seeing the book as either simplistic or cruel, Heller allows this odd text to speak to us anew about God, sin, relationships, and justice.”

We meet hybrid—in person at the Smith Building Conference Room at 114 W. Boscawen Street (upstairs) and via Zoom every 2nd and 4th Monday at 10:00 am. To find out more information or to join the class in person or online, please contact Webster Gibson (rector@christchurchwinchester.org) or Pat Shaner (patriciashaner@gmail.com).

Lectionary Bible Study

Do you ever wish that you had more time to read and reflect on the Sunday readings? Do you have questions about the readings from Sunday worship? Do you wish that you could be better prepared to hear the readings?

Our weekly Wednesday lectionary Bible study from 10:30 am to 11:30 am allows you to do all of those things. It is on Zoom to allow people to participate from work or home. We begin again on Wednesday, January 7. We only focus on the readings for the next Sunday, so you can join us any week. If you have questions or would like the Zoom link, please contact Pat Shaner (patriciashaner@gmail.com) or the Church Office.

Adult Forum on Sunday mornings

Adult Forum resumes in 2026 on Sunday, January 11, with the theme, “God through the generations: how God’s sacred story moves through the generations.” As children, parents and grandparents, we sometimes fail to see what Scripture offers us to ponder God in our lives. Looking at the sacred practice of reading Scripture as part of a family, we will start at the beginning and see where the sacred story of our family speaks to how we read the Bible as family today. There is no better place to start than Genesis and Exodus. We will read it in ways you may have never thought to consider before. Come and join the discussion. Adult Forum is Sundays at 9:30 am in the Pilgrim’s Chapel at the front of the Parish Hall at 132 W. Boscawen St. Bibles are provided.

Meet The Rev. Canon Dr. J. Lee Hill

Special guest from the Diocesan office, The Rev. Canon Dr. J. Lee Hill, Jr., Canon for Racial Justice and Healing, will join us for Adult Forum and Sunday services on Sunday, January 25, 2026. Canon Hill leads diocesan programs and ministries involving curricula and programs on race and reconciliation in the church and wider community. Canon Hill also works with the Diocesan Task force on Reparations which is so often misunderstood that we wanted to be sure parishioners had the chance to hear and ask questions about what the diocese is doing with this work in the community. He can speak to current programs such as the Triangle of Hope for the youth and our history around race. He will share information about more recent programs working to deal with the often uncomfortable conversations around race and ways we understand and find reconciliation.

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



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: 6:00 pm
Bible Study	Wed: 10:30 am via Zoom
Outreach Committee	1st Tues: 6:00 pm
Common Ground Discussion Group	4th Wed: 4:00 pm
Properties Committee	3rd Tues: 7:00 pm
Vestry	2nd Tues: 7:00 pm
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: 1:30 pm—at Westminster- Canterbury OR First & Third Thursday at 5:30 pm —Parlors



The Angelus is a monthly publication of Christ Episcopal Church.

Church Calendar

January Birthdays

- 1 Olivia Adams
- 3 Jim Griffin
- 4 Neile Martin
- 5 Sam Wise
- 7 Jillian Kalbaugh, Vivian Schower
- 11 Clarke Wiley, Susan Ross
- 12 Sam Leinbach, Jr.
- 13 Thomas Ellington, Stephen Pettit
- 15 Amy Whipkey
- 16 Betsy Young
- 17 Damian Sawle
- 18 Pam Lamborne
- 24 Margaret Arthur, Helen Zebarth
- 25 Robert Bronson
- 26 Ned Stock
- 28 Roger Lamborne
- 29 Claire McDonald
- 31 Jazmine Pellot



January Anniversaries

- 29 Ron & Koy Mislowsky

celebrate!

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.

Registration for 2026 Shrine Mont Camps is Open!

Visit www.shrinemontcamps.org and learn about all the camps offered! The clergy at Christ Church is committed to helping every child attend camps, so there are scholarship funds available for those needing assistance from the diocese and the parish. If there are any questions about the camps or scholarships, please contact Webster Gibson (rector@christchurchwinchester.org).



Shop at the Treasure Box Thrift Shop!

Open on Wednesdays and Fridays
10—4 & Saturdays 10-1
at 114 W. Boscawen St.

Donations accepted
during business hours.

To submit a prayer request, please visit the
website and click on
“Add a Name to the Prayer List”
in the Quick Links section.

Parish Life Committee

Hosting Coffee Hour in 2026

Providing hospitality was important to Jesus. He taught about its importance in the parables. For that reason, hospitality is also important to Christ Church and we practice it in our outreach ministries, as well as within our own congregation. Hospitality, in simple terms, is inviting friends for a meal, welcoming new neighbors with baked goods, and taking meals to a church member who is recovering from surgery. It's also providing meals to those who cannot provide for themselves in our community and around the world.



Offering hospitality within our congregation is just as important as providing it to the greater community. Coffee Hour is one very important way in which we offer hospitality to each other within Christ Church. Through Coffee Hour, we welcome newcomers and visitors, we nurture those who may be forgotten or ignored, and we comfort those who may be grieving or hurting. Coffee Hour offers us the opportunity to notice those who are often overlooked because they don't look or talk like us. Sometimes, we provide this type of hospitality without even knowing it.

Providing Coffee Hour gives us the opportunity to invite, escort, accompany, introduce, reach out, and bring in our Christ Church family members every Sunday. Most importantly, we do it selflessly without the expectation that the favor will be returned. This is how we provide hospitality to each other and why hospitality is so important in our Christian lives.

When you consider signing up to host Coffee Hour know that you are offering the precious gift of hospitality to your fellow churchgoers and this is a gift we cannot take for granted. You can sign up to host via the church website or direct any questions to Jody Wall at jody_wall@yahoo.com. Thank you for your consideration!

The Parish Life committee would like to thank all those groups and individuals who hosted Coffee Hour throughout 2025! We appreciate your gift of hospitality to the congregation!

Outreach Committee

Ministry Updates

One hundred "angels" thank the Christ Church congregation for Christmas deliveries! Warm coats and new school clothes, shoes and socks, caps and gloves, as well as just about every toy imaginable filled the bags -- those bags often talking with "chatty" games and dolls. With the help of five parishioners, the bags were taken to the Salvation Army headquarters where they were checked in and ready for pick up by families for Christmas. As a congregation, you were so very generous and helpful making this ministry possible! ***Thank you!***

As the New Year approaches, please consider volunteering with the Outreach Committee by providing one meal a month for the Winchester Rescue Mission. There are opportunities to prepare the meals with ingredients purchased by the Outreach Committee; to cook the meal in the new kitchen at the Rescue Mission; and to serve the residents of the Rescue Mission. Separate teams cover each step of the process so it is only several hours a month and also the chance to meet and grow to know other members of the congregation. Look for Signup Genius soon on the website to volunteer or contact Betsy Young at betsykyleyoung@comcast.net. There will be at least one experienced person on each team to show the way.

Outreach Committee

Getting Ready for WATTS Host Week

The Outreach Committee continues its work with WATTS this winter. Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter (WATTS) is a program conducted by congregations in Frederick and Clarke Counties and Winchester to provide warm, safe shelter and nourishment to homeless members of our community during the winter months. WATTS has been very successful. Since its inception, WATTS has grown to 20 host congregations, which significantly increases support to the most vulnerable members of our local homeless community. Please read more about the work WATTS does in Winchester on their website: watts-homelessshelter.org.

The 2026 Christ Church WATTS Host Week will be January 31 – February 7, 2026.

There will be a meeting on Sunday, January 18, 2026, after the 10:30 am service in the Parlors (upstairs in the Parish Hall) to discuss 2026 WATTS procedures & changes, volunteer opportunities, and to provide a WATTS ministry overview for those new to it. The SignUp Genius will be published that same day—January 18; it will list WATTS tasks, dates & times; Parishioners can review it & sign up to volunteer.

Volunteer Opportunities include:

Saturday Set up 12 slots– (Jan. 31 from 7 to 11 am) Receive and set up cots, bundle and distribute linens to each cot, and document and store extra linens for future use

Sunday Breakdown 5 slots - (Feb. 1 from 7 to 9 am) Rearrange WATTS site to accommodate Coffee Hour and Sunday School.

Sunday Reset 5 slots - (Feb. 1 from 12:20 to 2:30 pm) Reset the Christ Church Parish Hall for WATTS after the Sunday Coffee Hour, i.e. arrange cots, tables, chairs etc. both in the Parish Hall and the second floor Sunday School areas.

Intake 6 slots – (6 to 7:30 pm) Register guests into the Christ Church WATTS shelter.

Dinner Service 6 slots - (6 to 9 pm) Work with the cooking team to set up the dining area for dinner. Serve dinner to WATTS guests and clean up after dinner.

Breakfast Duty 2 slots – (5 to 8 am) Prepare and serve breakfast to guests and provide bag lunches to guests.

Clean up and Resupply 1-2 slots – (Daily – time is flexible) Work with Tuffy to clean Tilford Room during the day as needed. Purchase supplies as required basis.

Site Breakdown 12 slots - (Feb. 7 from 7 am to noon) Take down and load WATTS cots and equipment into the van for movement to the next host church and clean up the Parish Hall.

Can't Volunteer? Donate!

The Outreach Committee asks for donations in January of sweatshirts, white tube socks, knit caps, gloves, thermal under garments and hand & foot warmers to give WATTS guests during our host week. Sizes M, L, or XL preferred. All items must be new. You can bring donations to church on Sundays in January or drop off at the Church Office on Wednesdays from 10-2.

Stewardship Committee

A Life of Stewardship—Be the Church

Stewardship typically is perceived as an annual campaign to raise funding for church ministries. That largely has been the case at Christ Church. As this year's Stewardship Campaign comes to an end, we thank all who have generously pledged. Your commitment to Christ Church allows the church to share Christ's love within our walls and with the larger Winchester community.

Looking ahead, we offer a new vision for stewardship at Christ Church, a vision that moves beyond the annual funding campaign to a broader focus of strengthening our church and our ministries through broader engagement of the time and talent of all parishioners. This engagement does not have a start or an end. While stewardship will still involve an annual campaign to raise funds, the new vision shifts the stewardship focus to ongoing efforts to more broadly share Christ's love.



Simply stated, stewardship calls us to **BE THE CHURCH**. Each of us has a role to play, some large and some small. All are important. This vision will challenge some of us to move from the predictable comfort of our seat on Sunday mornings to become part of other critical, living ministries long-cherished within the church. And this vision will challenge us to find new ways to be the church and to manifest God's love throughout our community. At the core of this new vision is a recognition each of us is responsible and accountable for our church. Christ Church can only do what we empower it to do through our time and talents.

What do we mean when we seek your time and talents? Our church and our larger community have many needs. Within our parish, we always need lay eucharistic ministers, readers, acolytes, and choir members. We have standing ministries that depend on new participants and fresh ideas. Just to name a few:

Christian Formation helps us live into our Baptismal Covenant and empowers us on our journey with Christ by providing opportunities to share knowledge, ask questions, and by offering space and time for encountering Christ. Opportunities for education exist for all age levels, all year.

Outreach provides fellowship and purpose for parishioners as they work to meet the needs of the less fortunate in our community. Through your generous giving, we support the work of partners like the Salvation Army, Bright Futures, the Rescue Mission, WATTS and CCAP.

Parish Life and Fellowship is about our church community. We strive to welcome newcomers, build fellowship, and provide opportunities for parishioners to participate in the Christ Church community. In addition to Sunday Coffee Hour, we have parish dinners and events, newcomer gatherings, fellowship groups, and special receptions. Our new Community Table program allows small groups of parishioners to gather in fellowship.

Pastoral Care encompasses efforts aimed to care for the Christ Church family and extended family. These include crafting prayer shawls for the sick, praying for those on the parish prayer list, providing meals when needed, sending cards, and offering programs to educate parishioners.

Stewardship, as discussed, is a way for us to be the church through our time, talents, and financial support.

The Treasure Box, located on the first floor of the Smith Building at 114 W. Boscawen Street, accepts donations of clothing and household items for resale within the community. The proceeds are distributed annually to local agencies and organizations. This shop was established in 1959.

We close by asking: In this season of Epiphany how will you manifest Christ's love? How will you support our church's mission to manifest Christ's love? Do not be afraid to stretch a bit, as we will always support each other in this effort.