

# THE ANGELUS

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Christ Episcopal Church • Winchester, Virginia

January 2024

Dear People of Christ Church,

Happy New Year from me and all of the staff to you! It was a fast Advent to Christmas turnaround. In many ways, the start of this new year reminds me of the Gospel of Mark with everything seeming to happen "immediately" and we are already at the feast of the Baptism of Jesus on Sunday, January 7.

An important conversation I bumped into several times through the December/Christmas season was people seeing new people or people they had not seen for some time. One person put it well - "I need to find a way to meet new people or catch up with those I may not know or haven't seen for a while." This month will have some opportunities for doing just that, aided by the release of the new parish directory with pictures.

You will see on Jan 17<sup>th</sup> a new effort for people to come in and talk to each other called "Common Ground." You don't need to sign up, you just need to show up. It is designed to help people get to know something about themselves - simple, non-threatening, community building. Some may say that it feels artificial to set up such a program, and it is. It helps to break that awkward silence and allow for fun conversation. No, we do not know if the facilitated conversations will be well attended or work, but we shall find out. If people find it enjoyable, then we will do it again.

For those wonderful angels, sheep, and shepherds in the pageant, I will be holding a basic communion class called "table manners" to talk with the children about what we are doing at the rail, how to behave with joy, reverence, and "thank you God for the food." It is going to be on Saturday, January 20, from 9:00 am to 9:45 am, beginning in the parish hall before we practice in the sanctuary. I enjoy this time to talk to the children because they have great questions, and the parents learn a bit as well when they hear what the children discuss. It also helps everyone learn a bit more about the community of Christ Church in our life and worship.

The other item is coffee hours and ministry fairs. One large assumption that is NOT true is that Christ Church's ministries do not need any more people to serve on them. If anything, it is quite the opposite. The community has changed quite a bit, and there are a variety of ways for us as disciples of Jesus to see where we might feel called or a gift to serve our Lord at Christ Church. Sunday, January 14, the Altar Guild will be hosting two things: For the Adult Forum, they will explain what their ministry does, why it is important, and why anyone might be interested in serving; 2) They will host Coffee Hour with the chance for people to talk with other guild members and see if they might be interested in participating. The choir will be doing a similar Adult Forum/Coffee Hour in February.

I have the privilege of talking with people new to the parish or people who want to try and do something different in the parish. The most important ingredients in those conversations are the willingness to show up, the desire to learn, the sense of humor and humility to mess up when people take a risk, and the joy of being a community. If you find that you are at such a point, there are several ways to find out. I hope that you will take the risk.

Faithfully,



The Rev. Webster Gibson, Rector  
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## From the Clergy

### Christ Church Annual Meeting

On Sunday, February 25, 2024, we will have our Annual Meeting at Christ Church from 9:20-10:15 am in the Tilford Room.

For those of you who may not have attended an annual meeting before, here is what you will find: First of all, it is the meeting where the congregation elects a new class of four people to serve on the Vestry. The Vestry is the group that serves as “agent and legal representative of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy.” The members help the rector in mutual ministry of worshipping and serving our Lord. Of course, Webster’s favorite diocesan canon for vestry is: “Each Vestry member shall extend personally a hearty welcome to newly baptized, confirmed, received, or transferred members of the congregation.” Adult communicants in good standing are allowed to vote at the meeting. If you are not sure if you are technically a member at Christ Church, please call the Church Office prior to the Annual Meeting. We encourage those new to the parish, or not yet members, to attend the meeting because this is a good way to see what is going on at Christ Church.

We will also hear reports from officers of the Vestry—Senior Warden, Junior Warden and Treasurer—about the parish. Part of the thinking with having the meeting between the church services is a desire to have as much of the faithful community attend as possible; to remind ourselves what nourishes us as a parish which is our worship of our Lord Jesus Christ and the opportunity to break bread at His table. Please be sure to be with us on Sunday morning, February 25, 2024, for this important part of our parish life.

### Common Ground Sessions

Webster and members of the Vestry invite you to join us as we seek to grow ways for people in the parish to get to know one another. Working with Pam Crawford, who has used this program in other parishes, the clergy and Vestry leaders will help facilitate Pam's "Common Ground" Program. This is “an inter-generational spiritual discussion group (please, no politics!) that has seen a few iterations in its 28 year history through three churches, two states, and two denominations. Credit this longevity to active and equal participation among its members, a once monthly hourly gathering to discuss an afore-agreed upon topic, friends, fellowship and, most importantly, learning that frequently there are no correct or incorrect answers. YOU belong. Give it a try.”

For those curious about what topics look like, the first gathering will have people share two little known facts other people may not know about you. We will meet on Wednesday, January 17, from 4:00 to 5:00 pm in the Tilford Room. If you have questions, please feel free to call Webster, Clare Dame, or Bob Puttock.

### Adult Forum in January

Join us for Adult Forum on Sundays at 9:30 am in the Tilford Room. On January 7, we'll talk about baptism and the Bible – what is John getting us into? The Altar Guild will present information about their ministry on January 14. On January 21 and 28, we'll consider if Vince Lombardi was right: what that means to study the Bible.

# Ministry Spotlight

## What's Altar Guild All About?

You walk up to the altar, kneel, accept the wafer, dip it in the wine or sip, and off you go. It's what we do every Sunday, likely without considering the small acts of service that make our weekly Eucharist possible. Always there and predictable, our weekly sacrament is a blessing in the life of the church.

I grew up in a tradition that only took communion four times a year, so even after 22 years of being an Episcopalian, I am always impressed and full of gratitude that we manage to pull off such a feat every week. However, we are only able to do so thanks to the dedication of the Altar Guild. Dedicated individuals make sure the supplies are ordered and ready, polish the silver, clean the linens, lovingly set the table, and clean up after so that the entire congregation can engage in the sacrament.

When I first joined Christ Church, I had the impression that being in the Altar Guild required white hair and many years of arduous training in order to attain the level of perfection necessary. Since then, I have learned that **people of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds make great additions to the Altar Guild!** All that is needed is a desire to help. It is an ideal job for someone like me who enjoys working quietly and behind the scenes.

Whenever I serve, I relish the camaraderie of working with wonderful people as we set the table, enjoy conversation, and have a few laughs. Little mistakes happen all the time and are part of the process. Preparing the Eucharist is about serving others, not being perfect.

I believe that the Altar Guild benefited greatly from being shut down for a while during the pandemic. We came back with renewed appreciation for the ability to gather and a little less worried about getting something wrong. We are all just happy to be here and enjoy helping make the Eucharist possible every week. As we have slowly found our way back to a new normal, the procedures have changed many times. So no one is really an expert anymore. We are all in it together, embracing a beginner's perspective.

Though I greatly value the fellowship of being in the Guild, my favorite part is peacefully setting the table in a dimly lit and quiet sanctuary. It is in those moments that I feel closest to God and am reminded of the sheer joy of silent acts of service for others. ~ Polly Nesselrodt

**We would love to have *you* as part of the Altar Guild! Please contact Katie Harvard for more information.**



*Please join us as the Altar Guild presents  
at Adult Forum and hosts Coffee Hour on  
Sunday, January 14.*

# 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: 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<br>Sat: 10 am—1 pm                                |
| Women's Book Studies | Tues: 10:30 am—Parlors<br>or First Thursday at 5:30 pm<br>—Tilford Room |



*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
- 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
- 31 Jazmine Pellot



## January Anniversaries

- 11-Jan Frank Baxter & Skip Bowling
- 29-Jan 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.



Coffee Hour hosts needed this winter! Please sign up on the website.



**Shop at the Treasure Box Thrift Shop!**  
Open on Wednesdays and Fridays 10—4  
and Saturdays 10-1 at 114 W. Boscawen St.  
Donations accepted during shop hours.



# Parish Reminders

## From the Outreach Committee

Christ Church will again host the **Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter (WATTS)** from February 3 to 10, 2024, in the Parish Hall. Please mark your calendars and plan to volunteer if you can.

Another great program from WATTS is their Warming Center. The daytime Warming Center opened November 25, 2023, at Market Street United Methodist Church (131 S. Cameron Street) and will run through Friday, March 29, 2024. It provides a space for the WATTS guests to go during much of the day for food, coffee, and warmth. (WATTS host sites like ours are only available in the evening and overnight.)

Last year, as part of our parish's effort to help with WATTS, we collected and donated a large stack of the **gallon-sized cans of Folgers and Maxwell House coffees**. The Outreach Committee invites you to join us once again to see if we can make an even larger stack of coffee in January 2024 to ensure the Warming Center has plenty of hot coffee this winter. The collection begins on Sunday, January 7, until the end of January. You can bring the coffee cans to church on Sunday or deliver to the Church Office at 114 W. Boscawen Street on Wednesdays between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm.



## From Christian Formation: Sunday School News

As Epiphany begins and we focus toward the revelation of Jesus to the world, our lessons will follow Jesus through his early years and into his ministry. For kids, this is the time to learn about Jesus as he grows up and is baptized. We learn and grow through studying Jesus's examples of what following God looks like. Jesus shows us in these lessons how we should live and carry out God's work, so it's going to be a very busy season!

It is also an appropriate time to thank all the teachers, chapel leaders, music directors, parents, and friends who continue to faithfully accept the call to teach and support our children. Our teachers and Children's Chapel leaders have shown great flexibility in accommodating our scheduling. This year again, we owe special thanks to Pam DeBergh, who organized our Advent wreath-making event and our morning of building gingerbread houses, and to Jackson Stock and Elizabeth Loring who represented St. Nicholas and St. Lucy to the younger classes during Advent. Thank you parents; you were so much help during the Christmas pageant providing invaluable aid in keeping everyone on time and into costumes. That's a big ministry to our children and the entire congregation. Thirty-one of our children and youth participated this year!

# From the Treasurer

## Financial Update

As we start 2024, the budget for 2024 is still a work-in-progress that the Finance Committee will present to the Vestry in January.

Overall, 2023 has gone very well (final numbers still to be determined). Some parts of the budget are very stable and predictable, such as personnel and utility expenses. We have been on target with them. Some parts of the budget, such as the Properties expenses, are more fluid and less predictable. You never know when an elevator will break down or a water heater needs replacement. (Both have happened this year.)

One of the hardest areas to predict is the revenues, and especially predicting them by month. These depend so much on peoples' generosity and keeping up with their pledges. The December contributions for pledges and plate offerings are always the largest and least predictable of the months. The December contributions are frequently double the average of the other eleven months.

The data presented here is through November 2023. As you can see, both the revenues and expenses for the month came in less than expected. Additionally, the year-to-date actual revenues are above budget expectations. But the year-to-date expenses are also higher than budgeted.

With the November financials looking good we were in a good position going into the holidays. Hopefully, 2023 ended on a high note!

| 2023     | November |          |            | Year-to-Date |            |            |
|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
|          | Actual   | Budget   | Difference | Actual       | Budget     | Difference |
| Revenues | \$54,684 | \$62,669 | (\$7,985)  | \$494,750    | \$481,687  | \$13,063   |
| Expenses | \$39,242 | \$47,822 | (\$8,580)  | \$539,320    | \$551,557  | (\$12,236) |
| ERC*     |          |          |            | \$55,471     | \$55,000   |            |
| Net      | \$15,442 | \$14,847 | \$595      | \$10,900     | (\$14,869) |            |

*Pledges for 2024 are still happily accepted if you did not submit yours yet! Please consider pledging so that we can plan on your contributions in the new year. Pledge online or print a pledge form at [www.christchurchwinchester.com/stewardship](http://www.christchurchwinchester.com/stewardship).*

# From the Pastoral Care Committee

## Learning to Waste Time

By Alan Bentrup for ECF Vital Practices

If you're like me, you feel like you're running around all day, every day. I wake up at 4:15am nearly every day, and then it's work and school and sports practices and cooking and housework and everything else that comes with life.

So this past week on vacation I've been learning to waste time. And if I'm right that your busyness often resembles mine, you might need some help in that area, too. Wasting time this week has helped me reorient my sense of self, build and deepen connection with loved ones, and renew my relationship with God.

One of the most well-known teachings about rest and wasting time comes from the Sabbath. In the book of Exodus, God instructed the Israelites to set aside one day a week for rest and worship. This sacred day was not meant for productivity but rather for rejuvenation, reflection, and restoration of our true selves. By "wasting time" and observing Sabbath, we remember that the world doesn't revolve around us.

In the New Testament, we find Jesus spending quality time with his disciples and others, highlighting the importance of human connection. Slowing down invites us to invest in relationships, to waste time by engaging in meaningful conversations, and to be present for those we care about.

Psalm 46:10 encourages us to "Be still and know that I am God." In our hectic lives, it is easy to become consumed by busyness. However, taking the time to be still, to meditate on God's word, and to pray is essential. In these moments of "wasted time" we can gain clarity, find inspiration, and deepen our relationship with God.

So, let us learn to waste time wisely and discover the blessings that lie in the moments we pause, reflect, and simply enjoy being present. And for the record, my wasted time this week has looked like slow mornings, drinking tea on the porch, hiking beautiful trails, reading good books, and cooking great dinners.

<https://www.ecfvp.org/blogs/4049/learning-to-waste-time>

**What are some ways that you waste time, reconnect with yourself and those you love, and find peace for your soul?**

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From the Parish Nurses: What does kindness mean?

- K Kindness costs nothing.
- I Ignite a smile in a parishioner, family member, co-worker.
- N Note the beauty of our surroundings.
- D Decide to make a difference in your community. Volunteer!
- N Nod in conversation with another (shows you are listening).
- E Exercise each day.
- S Self-care/allow yourself some quiet time each day.
- S Sleep 6-8 hours each day.

See you in church!

Your Parish Nurses, Helen, Rosalie, and Susan