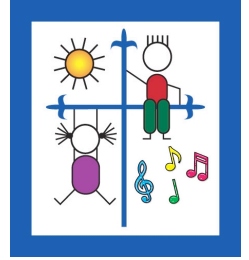




# CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLOOMFIELD & GLEN RIDGE



*Growing in faith ~ Serving our neighbors ~ Creating community*

NEWSLETTER

EASTER 2024

## Reflections from The Rector

**The Rev. Diana Wilcox**



Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Dang, that never gets old.

And perhaps that is why you are here. You already know the story – just as with Christmas. And yet, here you are. Because this proclamation we just made – it changes everything – and has for centuries.

That is our faith – and it is not an easy leap. It runs counter to our senses. It challenges us to see things in a new way. Yet because of the empty tomb we have hope at the foot of the cross. We know that light is always present in the darkest of nights, even if cannot yet see it. We know that love will always overcome hate.

And we know that new life is always possible in the face of death.

We may be the body of Christ, but even he gathered others around him to form a faith community. They in turn formed their own, and so on through the centuries to those who founded this very church in which we now worship. What we do here on Sundays – every Sunday, not just Easter – matters. Being physically present here with one another, being nourished in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, that is what we commit to in our baptism.

So let us, who today sing that Christ is alive, remember that we are sent by that same Jesus to share the good news in word and in deed. Let us, who shout with joy that Christ is risen, return here each week to be nourished by him in the Eucharist. That as the sound of our Alleluias fade into the woodwork and stone of this place this night, the truth of the risen Christ will remain in our hearts, and by our service to him in the world, all may come to know the power of God's great love.

And that, THAT, is truly is something that never, ever, gets old. See you in church!

*Mother Diana+*

# Words from our Wardens

## Tom Reynolds and Michelle Ryndak

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### *An Easter Reflection from Tom*

As we head into Easter, I have been thinking about what Easter means to me beyond the chocolate bunnies and candy-filled eggs. Easter has always conjured up three thoughts for me: Easter service, time with family, and the resurrection of Christ. I fondly remember a packed house at Trinity and Christ Church on Easter morning, catching up with everyone we hadn't seen since Christmas. Hearing parishioners talk about the ways in which people have grown, taken on new positions and the general

hope for spring and summer.

I also fondly remember Easter with my family, especially as the family grew. When my sister got married a few years back, her in-laws and their family would join us for Easter. And there was never a shortage of food. At the end of Easter dinner, everyone was always finding their corner of a couch to lie on lazily.

Then, there is the deeper meaning of Easter, which is resurrection. Something happened recently that made me rethink the resurrection.

The other day, I was driving to the nursery school to drop Sophia off, and she said, "Grandma is my best friend." It hit me like a ton of bricks. My grandmother has been gone for six months, and Sophia starts the morning with this?! "Grandma says I have to go to school." She continues. I felt the tears choke back as I tried to keep my vision from blurring coming down Hillside Ave. "What else did Grandma say?" I ask with a cracked voice. "Grandma says I love you."



I'm glad the light was red, and could collect myself then.

I think about moments like that as we come into this Easter season, this Resurrection season. We could put too much emphasis on the word resurrection; it feels heavy. It draws images of unthinkable acts or something we can dismiss because I've never seen a resurrected person before. We could explore the





resurrection more with any character who was a part of it, like Mary.

Mary has just watched her son put to death. She gathered the strength that day to visit the place where her son was laid. It took me almost 30 years to visit my father's grave. I can't imagine going the day after. But Mary did that the next day and was greeted by an empty tomb.

I think of the power in that moment when faced with what feels simply impossible. They

placed the lifeless body in the tomb and sealed it up. And then he was resurrected. Or, in my context, we buried my grandmother's body, and now she is speaking through my child—the impossible.

But maybe that's what Easter is about—taking a brief moment to believe the impossible. Like the line from Alice in Wonderland, "Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

What are the impossible things? Five years ago, I thought it might be impossible for me to be a warden, that was something saved for those like Dwight Jackson, Sr. or Walton McLeod. Fifteen years ago, I thought it impossible that I would have a daughter and a house. Twenty-five years ago, I thought it impossible to do so many of the things I've managed to do thus far. And yet, here I am, reflecting on the impossible I've done.

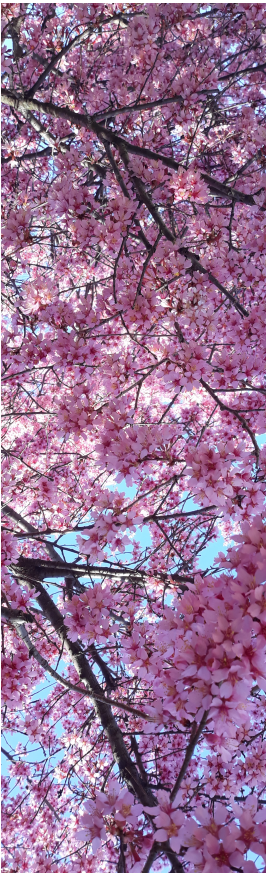
So, what impossible things do you need to believe? Or better yet, what barrier have we placed in front of us that keeps us from growing into who we are meant to be, who God intends us to be? And how has Christ Church been a part of that growth for you? Maybe it is the sign language classes Ann Watson hosts, book club, or Gospel classes Mtr. Diana held, or the choir. Maybe it is something you would like to see happen that you can spearhead. How can you grow the mission and message of Christ Church?



So, as we head into this Easter season, I am drawn to a quote from Ephesians: "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." (Ephesians 2:10 NLT)

Blessings,

Tom



Dearest Christ Church Family,

As Spring blossoms around us, it reminds us of the new Life seen in God's natural creation and parallels our celebration of Jesus' resurrection. We feel this joy in the Life that fills our Blessed Church! We are a very special gathering place. As Mother Diana often says, "Our Church is not the destination but the place we come to gain strength for the Journey." This is through prayer, hearing the Word, receiving the Sacrament, and engaging as a truly caring community.

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. – Romans 8:11

By coming through these doors, we gain the sustenance to carry on as we exit them. We are truly alive! Alleluia!

Peace and Blessings,

Michelle

## The Ordination of Jacqueline McLeod to the Vocational Diaconate

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We welcomed Ms. Jackie McLeod to the staff of Christ Church in March of last year.

Jackie is a seminarian in formation for the vocational diaconate (to serve as a Deacon, the oldest order of the church, and a full and equal one to the priesthood). As part of her preparation, she has partnered with Mother Diana in worship, outreach, pastoral response, and formation for the last year. She has helped us re-start our Healing Ministry program, and led a very successful Food Drive for the pantry of Holy Spirit Verona, and Toy Drive for children in our diocese with incarcerated parents. We are so grateful for the time and talents she has brought to Christ Church and look forward to celebrating her ordination.

God willing, and the People of God consenting, the Right Reverend Carlye J. Hughes, XI Bishop of Newark, will ordain Jacqueline McLeod to the Vocational Diaconate on April 13 at 10am at Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark. See the official invitation on the following page; join us in supporting her on this important day!

Please keep Jackie in your prayers as she prepares for ordination. She will be preaching the following day, and we will have a special coffee hour to celebrate.



God willing, and the People of God consenting,

The Right Reverend Carlye J. Hughes,  
XI Bishop of Newark,

will ordain

Jacqueline Delores Brown McLeod  
and  
Annie-Alexandra Pike

to the Sacred Order of Deacons  
in Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church

Saturday, the Thirteenth of April  
in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Four,  
at ten o'clock in the morning

Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral  
608 Broad Street  
Newark, New Jersey

For those unable to attend in person,  
please join us online for this joyous occasion via YouTube at  
[www.youtube.com/c/DioNewark](http://www.youtube.com/c/DioNewark)

Clergy: Red Stoles



## Musical Notes

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Our choir rehearses each Thursday at 8:00pm from Labor Day through mid-June. All are welcome to join! After another very successful Lessons & Carols just before Christmas, our choir has been hard at work this spring. We are looking forward to spectacular Mass on the Grass, with Brass! on Sunday, June 16th featuring the beloved Brass Quintet. We hope you'll join us for this wonderful outdoor service!



A very special thank you to Scott Ziegler for his time with us at Christ Church. We have been so fortunate to have these last few years with Scott leading our choir and serving as our Director of Music. Easter Sunday is his last day with us and while he will be very dearly missed, we wish him all the best!



We welcome Steven Zimmerman as our interim organist during this transition. Steve is a graduate of William Paterson University with a degree in Music Education, concentration in voice and piano. He studied under the direction of world-renowned and Grammy nominated bass-baritone Stephen Bryant and Gary Kirkpatrick.

Steve has credits in the community theater world as pianist and Music Director. He has played at venues such as The Barn Theatre, Sussex County Playhouse, Mayo PAC, Brundage Park Playhouse, among others. Steve has performed as tenor soloist all over Northern and Central NJ with groups such as New Jersey Conservatory of Music, Choral Art Society of New Jersey, Pro Arte Chorale, North Jersey Chorus, Masterwork Chorus, New Jersey Choral Society, the Cathedral Choir, and the Bach Vesper Choir where he has been featured soloist in a number of Bach cantatas.

Steven lives with his wife, Stephanie, in Boonton, NJ. Welcome, Steve! We're glad to have you here at Christ Church.

# Nursery School News

## Aazhae Coleman, Nursery School Director

Spring has arrived, and with it comes a renewed sense of energy and excitement at The Nursery School of Christ Church. As the winter season leaves us, we eagerly anticipate the warmer months ahead, filled with outdoor play and joyful learning experiences.

Our students have been enthusiastically participating in dance, soccer, and gymnastics, working on honing their skills and expressing their creativity. These activities provide valuable opportunities for physical development, such as balance and coordination and creative expression through movement.

In February, we celebrated the 100th day of school, a testament to each child's growth and progress. This year, being a leap year, brought a unique blend of celebrations. We marked Valentine's Day with a classroom party, where our students exchanged heartfelt valentines. With parents' permission, we also observed Ash Wednesday, a solemn occasion, inside the Church. These experiences, unique to our school, provide our students with a well-rounded education and a sense of belonging.



March is Reading Month and we have yet again invited parents to read to our classes every Tuesday and Thursday for the entire month. The parent participation has been exceptional. As educators and parents, we all understand the importance of reading to our children daily to boost their development and social/emotional awareness. Reading to your child daily is also a great way to spend quality time together. Dr. Suess once said, "You are never too old, too wild, too wacky, to pick up a book and read to a child." This month was an exciting month dedicated to fostering a love for reading.

As March ends and April arrives, we look forward to various activities and events such as, Easter, Earth Day, Pinwheels for Prevention, and fall reregistration.

May is a month brimming with joy and anticipation. We will celebrate Mother's Day, embrace the spirit of Cinco de Mayo, and witness our students' talents shine at the dance recitals. We will also begin preparations for graduation, a significant milestone in our young learners' lives. This year, the Nursery School of Christ Church graduation will be held on Friday, June 7th at 2:00 pm. We are thrilled about the exciting events and activities that await us and look forward to celebrating the achievements of our young learners. Happy Easter, everyone!



# Children, Youth, and Families

## Candice Whitaker, Director of Family Ministries

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We have so many fun things coming up at Christ Church! Since February, we have resumed weekly childcare on Sundays, provided by two of our Nursery School staff, Candida and Andrea. You can meet them in the church in the beginning of the service, and they'll go back to the toddler room/parish hall area once the service starts.

Sunday School has also resumed, and will continue on the last Sunday of each month during the school year. If you're interested in helping with Sunday School, please let Candice know.

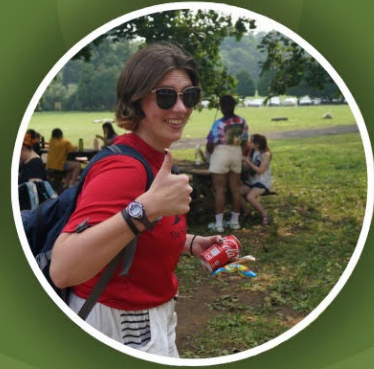
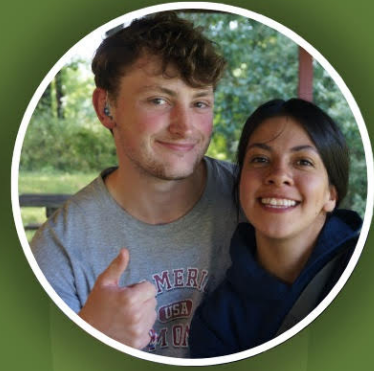
For our older youth grades 8-12, registration is open for the 2024 Diocese of Newark Summer Youth Trip. This year the youth will be traveling to Louisville, KY during the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. While there, youth will get to see some of the workings of our denomination, connect with other youth from across the Episcopal Church, meet with our Bishop, take part in spiritual formation, participate in justice activities/missions... and of course there will be lots of fun and food included. **Registration deadline is April 5.**

We continue to partner with Cross Roads to provide events and activities for our youth of all ages, and families throughout the year. Summer camp, of course, is always a highlight. Week-long overnight camps are offered to those entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up. Registration is happening now if you want to make sure you have a spot. If you are looking for a great summer camp experience, Cross Roads is awesome! There are also several different



types of leadership programs for high school students, all of which are excellent for personal growth and development, and teaches valuable life-long skills, applicable to any future job. Several of our youth have participated in camp programming through day camps, leadership programs, and retreats, and we'd love to see more of our families continue to benefit from these opportunities. It is also a great summer job opportunity- see the flyer on the next page for details, and let Candice know if you're interested in more information.





# WE ARE HIRING SUMMER STAFF

APPLY NOW



## AVAILABLE POSITIONS

- Camp Counselor
- Day Camp Counselor
- Media and Marketing Assistant
- Leader in Training Director
- Aquatics Director
- Arts and Crafts Coordinator

With Cross Roads' training and your passion, you can spend the summer making a difference in the lives of campers, building lifelong friendships, and gaining valuable work experience. Apply today for an unforgettable summer.

[www.crossroadsretreat.com/employment](http://www.crossroadsretreat.com/employment)



# A Few Highlights

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## Iftar Fast-Breaking Supper



We had a wonderful and informative evening with our new friends from Peace Islands Institute as they broke the fast with us at the Iftar dinner hosted by our church on Friday, March 15. This event was featured on our Diocesan website, see the following text:

“Ramadan Mubarak!” was a common shared greeting at Christ Church in Bloomfield & Glen Ridge when parishioners broke the fast at Iftar with Muslim neighbors from the Peace Island Institute (PII). About 50 people gathered together, with PII offering a presentation on Ramadan. Everyone listened to a recitation of the call to prayer, and then, in an adjoining room, Muslim attendees offered the Maghrib prayer just after sunset. The people of PII spread around the room to answer questions, as all ate from tables laden with delicious Turkish food, from lentil soup to baklava.

Afterward, members of PII asked for a tour of the church, and the Rev. Diana Wilcox reflected on the way in which Lent is a time in our faith for intentional practices that return our focus to God, drawing on the similarity to the focus of the fast in Ramadan. They were particularly interested in the labyrinth as both a prayer practice and a vehicle for pilgrimage.

## Lenten Evening Services

During the season of Lent, we partnered with Christ Church Orange and Holy Spirit Verona to share a Lenten journey of fellowship and prayer on Wednesday evenings. Each Wednesday began with a short meal together of bread and soup, followed by a service. Thank you to those who provided the soup and bread on the two evenings we hosted at our church! This was an excellent way to gather with our community in this season.



# Coming Up at Christ Church

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## The Gospel of Mark as Story | Begins Wednesday, April 17



During Eastertide, Mother Diana will lead a five part series on The Gospel of Mark as Story. The title comes from the text we will use, authored by David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie. The book may be purchased anywhere books are sold.

This formation series will be offered over Zoom on Wednesdays from 7pm-8:30pm beginning on April 17th. Register on our website to receive the Zoom link.

**If you plan to attend, please prepare by reading the Preface and pages 1-39 prior to the first class.**

## Spring Parish Work Day | Saturday, May 18



On Saturday, May 18th, from 9am-12pm we will have a Spring Parish Work Day. During Hurricane Ida, we lost many of our plantings around the front of the church, so we will spend this time planting perennials and shrubs, lay mulch in the beds, and tidy up a bit. We will provide coffee and lunch. We are grateful for all the extra help!

If you are willing to work on a landscaping plan, or donate towards the purchase of the plantings, please see Mother Diana.

## Pentecost | Sunday, May 19



Pentecost is the ending of the fifty days of Easter. We celebrate the Holy Spirit descending as flames of fire upon the earliest followers of Jesus, and that is why this is often referred to as the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit is often depicted with images of a dove, but also of fire, and so we wear red on this day to honor the Holy Spirit, whose work within and around us sustains and guides us in our life of love and service.

It is also a day for baptisms, so if you are interested in baptism for yourself or your child, please see Mother Diana after worship on any Sunday.

## Mass on the Grass...with Brass! | Sunday, June 16



We will have our Annual Mass on the Grass...with Brass on Sunday, June 16 at 10:30am at the rotunda on the Glen across the street from our church. Please bring your own blankets or chairs to sit on.

This is such a fun and unique service with a special brass quartet- you won't want to miss it!



# Outreach Ministries



## Epiphany Project

Christ Church has been a very busy place! We continue to welcome many new and returning groups into our space to use our facilities throughout the week. An outreach project we have done the past few years is the Epiphany Project. When our parishioners make their pledge by December 31 of that year, they receive a check from our outreach funds to then make a donation to a nonprofit of their choice. The season of Epiphany is a time of God's revealing Christ to the world, and we in turn will reveal Christ to our community through these gifts. Each pledger is able to write that check over to the non-profit of their choice. It has been so inspiring to see how our parishioners have spread Christ's light out into the world through this project!

## Diocese of Newark Prison Ministry

In November & December, we collected gifts for our Diocesan Prison Ministry, giving to children whose parents are incarcerated. Thank you to so many of you that contributed! Such a blessing to those families.



## Feeding the Hungry + PAWS Montclair

We had a very successful food drive for the pantry of Holy Spirit, Verona in November. We are so grateful to our seminarian, Jackie, for coordinating everything, and to everyone who generously donated. We were able to collect over 4 car-loads! The food items were collected, blessed at the altar, and then delivered.





We like to help feed our furry friends, too, and we work with PAWS Montclair, the local animal shelter, to provide needed food and supplies throughout the year. We also do a big collection for PAWS at our Blessing of the Animals in October, as pictured left.

### **Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center**

We continue to partner with Crossroads, the official camp and retreat center of our diocese. We have worked with them for several years to provide an awesome day camp in the summer for our kids and kids in the community. A few of our older youth have spent weeks on site for their summer programming. We like to contribute in helping to make camp accessible and as affordable as we can by participating in fundraisers and work days at Crossroads. Their annual Rally for Cross Roads was in October.

The last few years, they have been doing a 5k to raise funds for camp. All ages are invited to participate both near and far, on site or in your own neighborhood. It is their largest fundraising event and it is always so much fun to be a part of.



Another outreach opportunity is to contribute to Good News Gardens – a church-wide movement involved in a variety of food and creation care ministries – gardening, farming, beekeeping, composting, gleaning, feeding, and food justice advocacy. There are a variety of settings and locations, one of those being Crossroads. They are working to expand their Good News Garden and you can support them as volunteer builders, gardeners, harvesters, food bank delivery, or with donations.

### **The Charles Seller Foundation**



In 1950, a young man named Charles Seller was struck by a train losing one of his legs. His family and friends came together to put on a variety show named Talent Time to aid in his medical costs. This started a tradition in Bloomfield, NJ, that has continued on for the past almost 74 years. Each summer their members, who are in their mid-teens to early thirties come together to produce and perform a musical in which all profits go towards someone in the area with high medical bills. The Charles Seller Foundation have held their

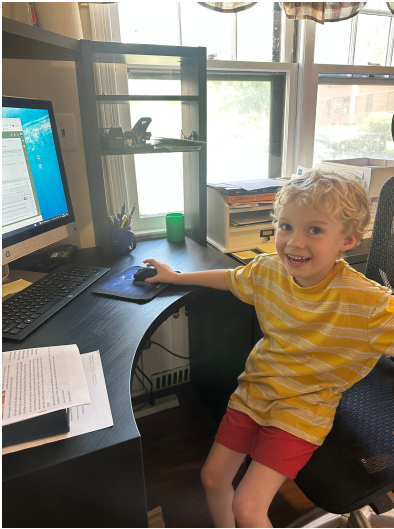
rehearsals at our church for the last several years. We host them every summer with additional times as needed. Their performances typically take place at Bloomfield High School. You can learn more about their theater projects at [thecharlessellerfoundation.org](http://thecharlessellerfoundation.org).

**These are just a few highlights – we have so much going on in our community! If you would like to help and get involved with our Outreach Ministries, please contact Mother Diana.**

# Office and Communications

## Candice Whitaker, Director of Communications

Spring is another vibrant season at Christ Church! We have so much to share, and have been doing so through many platforms – Instagram, Facebook, Threads, Weekly Emails, our Sunday Paper, and our website.



We work very hard to remain active members in our community and ensure that all the good things happening in and out of Christ Church are well-known in our surrounding neighborhoods. Press releases are always sent out to local media for our events, and our big events are submitted and posted on the Diocesan calendar and events page.

The best way to stay up-to-date on all the news and updates at Christ Church and in our Diocese is through our email communications. We send out weekly emails to help you stay better connected. If you're not subscribed, or if you have not been getting these emails, scan the QR code below to subscribe.

Don't miss out! As part of our church family, there is always a place for you here and plenty of ways to stay connected.

### Stay connected with us:

[www.christchurchepiscopal.org](http://www.christchurchepiscopal.org)

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Read our Sunday Paper, an insert in our Sunday Bulletin, which is also located on our website for download to your e-reader, phone, or iPad.

And the best way...come to church!



# Our Staff



**THE REV. DIANA WILCOX**  
Rector



**JACKIE MCLEOD**  
Seminarian



**AZHAE COLEMAN**  
Nursery School Director



**SCOTT ZIEGLER**  
Director of Music



**CANDICE WHITAKER**  
Director of Communications  
Director of Family Ministries



**BONNIE VAN ORNUM**  
Director of Finance & HR



**DON GIBSON**  
Sexton

# The Vestry



Michelle Ryndak  
Warden



Tom Reynolds  
Warden



Bill Seeman



Leo Toledo



Ben Reynolds



Denise Massay- Williams



Carol Madden



