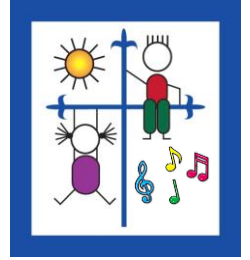




CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLOOMFIELD & GLEN RIDGE



Growing in faith ~ Serving our neighbors ~ Creating community

NEWSLETTER

EASTER 2022

Reflections from The Rector

The Rev. Diana Wilcox



"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." Luke 24:5b

Having moved through this long time of pandemic, losing people we love, worrying over our own health or those of others, after isolation and fatigue, we truly understand the reality of Christ's death & resurrection - what it means for us, the power and hope it provides. What we celebrate today is victory – victory of life over death given to us in Jesus Christ. What we celebrate today is our having moved from the tomb of despair to the hope of Easter. Alleluia!

Throughout this time of pandemic, as a faith community we never stopped worshipping together. And in gathering together (virtually or in-person), we grew by the grace of God in strength, resilience, and courage. We were given the gift of hope found in this very story of Easter.

What we know now, perhaps more than we ever have before, is that Christ meets us where we are – most especially when we are in pain, troubled,

grieving, lonely, or lost. It doesn't take much for us to imagine the cross – for we have borne witness to Christ's crucifixion in our lives today – in the bigotry, violence and hate we witness, in the world at war, in our own personal Good Friday of this pandemic – all of which allows us to feel deeply the shadow of the cross. The journey to the tomb is one we all have experienced in one way or another these past two years. Yet, it is the journey from the tomb – that is what makes all the difference. That is what the Easter story is all about.

You can try to put Jesus in a box – do the church thing at Christmas and Easter – he's born, he's resurrected – done until next year. You can certainly do that, but God hopes deeply that you realize that the only thing you will be boxing up is yourself, and all the potential you have for a life of meaning. Easter is a proclamation about Jesus, yes, but it is also about an invitation to every single one of you. An invitation to abide with him – not just on Easter Sunday, but all through the year.

See you in church.

Mother Diana+

Words from our Wardens: “We Have Come This Far By Faith”

Denise Massay-Williams, Leamon McKenzie

Lately, Albert Goodson’s Gospel song “We have come this far by faith”, has been on repeat in my head. The chorus says: *We have come this far by faith, Leaning on the Lord,
Trusting in His holy Word, He’s never failed us – yet.*



These past 2+ years have been brutal to the bodies and souls of most...if not ALL of us, but thanks be to God, our Christ Church family has survived, buoyed by faithful members and endowments of the heavenly saints. The Covid-19 Storm was not strong enough to take us out.

Under the strong guidance of our shepherd Mtr. Diana, we persisted in faith-building by offering weekly online worship services and fellowship and other offerings via Zoom and Facebook. Our weekly online services offered much needed solace, guidance, strength, and attracted on-line “visitors” from areas far and wide.

Parish life is slowly and fitfully returning to “normal” with in-person worship services conducted in accordance with guidelines from the Diocese. It is important to note that since returning to in-person worship, we have been experiencing a noticeable increase in visitors, with a number of repeat visitors. We hope they will decide to join our Christ Church family, permanently. We will continue to livestream our services as a form of evangelism; however, we pray that many more members choose the option of attending in-person worship to experience the joy of community and praising God with our church family. Hebrews 10:24-25 says, *“Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. You should not stay away from the church meetings as some are doing, but you should meet together and encourage each other. Do this even more as you see the day coming.”*



I share with you the following thought-provoking questions that Bishop Hughes asked us in one of her communications during the pandemic: How will we allow God to deepen our faith even further? Who do we need to check up on and invite to return? How will we deepen and strengthen relationship with the online community? In what ways will we speak of God’s love, mercy, and justice to those who suffer, grieve, or are hopeless? Now is the time to start asking these kinds of questions.

I conclude with these words from Bishop Hughes: “Though we do not know what the future will bring, we are certain that our lives have been transformed by God’s presence and care during the pandemic. We can look for God’s continued guidance as we grow into being the church that God desires for us to be now.”

The Wardens wish you and your families a blessed and peaceful Easter.

New Vestry and Warden Elections Coming Up on June 5, 2022

We have been blessed with a fantastic vestry who have served our parish well beyond what was expected, many since 2019. **We will be having a special meeting of the parish after the 10:30am service on June 5, Pentecost Sunday, to elect new Vestry and Wardens.**

Our current Vestry: Michelle Ryndak, Stephanie Reynolds, Bill Seeman, Joseph Durham, Desiree Noel, Jeicol Herrera, Amy McAllister, Amy Reynolds, and Dan Wing

Our current Wardens: Denise Massay-Williams and Leamon McKenzie

What is a Vestry?

The Vestry is the governing board of the church. The Vestry is comprised of the Rector, two wardens, and twelve parishioners elected by church membership. The Vestry is responsible for determining the policies and goals of the congregation and overseeing the various aspects of the church's financial condition, its physical facility, outreach priorities, and diverse church program and activities under the direction of the Vestry Committees.

What is a Warden?

The canons of the Episcopal Church say very little about wardens other than their responsibility to ensure that worship services are continued in the absence or disability of the rector or parish priest. The term itself dates back to seventeenth century England because of the individual's responsibility to unlock the church doors for worship and other events. The distinction between "senior" and "junior" warden or "rector's warden" and "people's warden" depends on the diocese, the parish and even geographical or regional customs and practice.

Working Together

Putting canons and customs aside, the primary role of the warden is to serve as the lay partner of the rector in articulating the mission and vision of the parish, managing its day-to-day operations, identifying and nurturing leaders, and empowering members of the congregation to live out the Gospel in their daily lives. The role requires an open, honest and trusting relationship between warden and rector — and it is virtually impossible to fulfill if these key elements are missing or impaired.

Many others have served in these roles, and it may be one that you find yourself called to. We ask that you prayerfully consider if this is something you would be interested in; we will be asking for nominations during our meeting on June 5.



A few of our vestry members pictured at a retreat in 2018

Musical Notes

Scott Ziegler, Director of Music



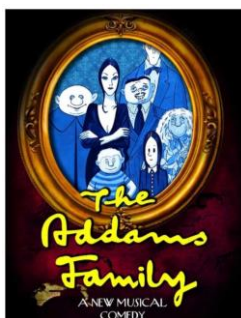
We warmly welcomed Scott Ziegler as our new Director of Music last Summer. Scott is a Music Teacher at Dwight Morrow High School in Englewood where he teaches keyboards, chorus, and directs the spring musical. He is currently pursuing a M.Ed. online from the University of Virginia and holds an M.M. (Organ Performance) from the University of Florida and a B.M. (Music Education) from Montclair State University. As an Organist Scott has appeared with the Ocala Symphony Orchestra, Bach Festival of Central Florida, University of Central Florida Orchestra, and Stetson University choirs. In Florida he served as the full-time Organist at First Presbyterian Church of Lakeland and as the Collaborative Pianist in the music department at Florida Southern College before moving back home. Scott was received into the Episcopal Church in 2013 while serving at St. Mark's Church in Mendham, NJ. A highlight of his pre-pandemic career was rehearsing choirs to perform at Disney's Candlelight Processional at Epcot alongside the Voices of Liberty.



Our Director of Music playing for Palm Sunday, 2022



Our choir processing for Palm Sunday, 2022



Last week, he directed and produced his first show, *The Addams Family*, at Dwight Morrow High School in Englewood. This was an incredible accomplishment and required so much time and dedication. He has been working on this production in addition to his teaching roles and director of music position here at Christ Church. We are blessed and grateful to have him on our staff!



A collection of photos taken in the month of March at our Nursery School

The Nursery School of Christ Church

What joy we have being able to open our doors again to welcome children to our Nursery School. We were closed during the pandemic, and finally reopened in September of 2021. Since then we have been growing, and our children are thriving. Our enrollment is growing each week, and we are now hiring to meet the demand.

Our school has been a ministry of our parish since 1967, and many of our teachers have been with us for ten or more years! Prior to pandemic, we had children in our school whose parents were children in our school. All of which is a testament to the quality of care and education we offer in this most important ministry.

In April, our children will be focused on Spring, recycling, growing and planting, and so much more. We started a monthly newsletter via email to provide useful and fun content for the parents, with upcoming dates and events, photos from the month, and activities to do at home. We're working on setting up a portal on our website, also. So many exciting things happening, which is great for the church, too!

Children and Youth

Candice Whitaker, Director of Family Ministries



Warmer weather is just around the corner, along with so many exciting opportunities. The pandemic has been especially hard for kids, but we are thrilled to be able to gather again. Children have always been welcome in church, but we introduced new Kid Kits as an additional option to make our worship more kid friendly. Inside these bags you will find books, crayons, activities, and quiet toys that allow children to be present in worship even if they are not yet sure how to participate. We continue to have our kid zone in the back of the church, also. There are plenty of books and activities, rocking chairs, and more space for littles to move around. We love having more children present in worship, though we do hope to offer child care again soon for those that wish to utilize it.

again soon for those that wish to utilize it.

We are also excited to have our Easter Egg Hunt again this year! Since the kids will be in the church during the service, we will have the eggs hidden around the parish hall and on the playground (if the weather is nice). We are also looking forward to our giant coloring page project that all are invited and encouraged to participate in. We will put that up in the parish hall as we start to decorate and make our bulletin boards more vibrant again.

In July, I will be attending General Convention in Baltimore, MD, along with



Milo and Brighton Whitaker hanging out in the Kid Zone with Ms. Syndie

one of our youth and the youth of our Diocese. As a group we will meet with deputies from our diocese, attend legislative hearings and worship, explore Baltimore, and engage with a local outreach ministry. It's a great opportunity and I'm very excited for it!

Lectionary-based lessons and activity ideas for kids, along with family devotionals during Lent, have been sent out weekly in our parish emails. We will start working on Sunday School registrations for the fall, and as we start to fill our calendar again, we will likely start sending out a separate weekly email just for families. If you would like to be on that list also, please let me know.



A few of our kids enjoying the Kid Zone during worship on Palm Sunday

Outreach Ministries



Distributing the checks the first year of the Epiphany Project, 2020

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



Our parishioners write where their donations have been made

see how our parishioners have spread Christ's light out into the world through this project!

In April, we once again hosted the Bloomfield MLK Jr. Day of Service (which was delayed). Hundreds of personal hygiene kits were created for those in need,



A few of our parishioners participating in Bloomfield's MLK Jr. Day of Service

as well as bags upon bags of socks donated (and still to be donated) to Ukrainian refugees. Some of our own parishioners were able to join in and help, also!



Our largest annual food pantry collection in November, blessed at the altar and then donated

Over the past several years, we have developed a strong partnership with the Presbyterian Church on the Green in their ministry to feed the hungry. We collect food year-round to be collected by the food pantry. Our largest collection takes place in November, where we work with the Nursery School to gather bags of groceries. The food items are collected, blessed at the altar, and then donated. 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.



Crossroads starts their Good News Garden in 2021

There are projects for all skill levels and lunch will be included. It is a great way to contribute to a camp that provides so many opportunities for our kids! 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.

We are also home to PFLAG NJ. The PFLAG NJ group meets at Christ Church on the second Thursday of the month. Founded in 1972 with the simple act of a mother publicly supporting her gay son, PFLAG is the nation’s largest family and ally organization. Made up of parents, families, friends, and allies united with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), PFLAG is committed to advancing equality and full societal affirmation of LGBT people through its threefold mission of support, education, and advocacy. PFLAG has over 350 chapters and 200,000 members and supporters crossing multiple generations of American families in major urban centers, small cities, and rural areas in all 50 states.

These are just a few highlights – we have so much going on in our community! It takes many hands to coordinate these events and stay involved. If you would like to help and get involved with our Outreach Ministries, please contact Mother Diana.

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 Opening Day is Saturday, May 21- a fun work day event for all ages. Individuals, youth groups, families, and congregations are invited to volunteer for the day to help prepare camp for the summer season.

OPENING DAY
AT CROSS ROADS
 Saturday, May 21


A work day for all ages! Bring your families, youth groups, and congregations for a day of service to help prepare camp for the summer season.

Opening Day at Crossroads is Saturday, May 21. All are invited!

Office and Communications

Candice Whitaker, Director of Communications

VIRTUAL OFFERING PLATE

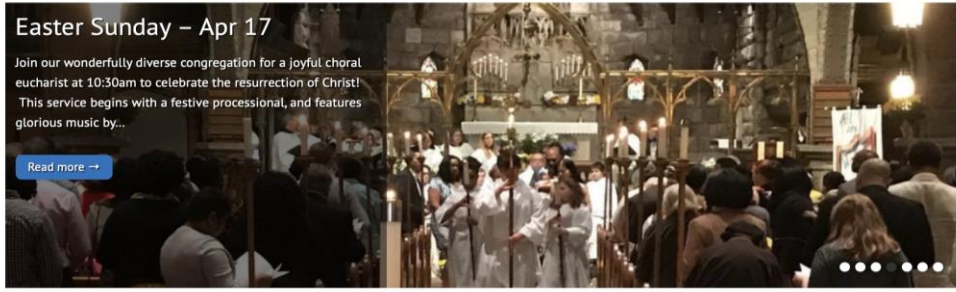


SCAN ME

Easter Sunday – Apr 17

Join our wonderfully diverse congregation for a joyful choral eucharist at 10:30am to celebrate the resurrection of Christ! This service begins with a festive processional, and features glorious music by...


Read more →



Upcoming Events ↗

News To Share ↗

NEED TO JOIN US ONLINE?



ONLINE PLEDGE CARD!

The Parish Office is responsible for all communications and the management of the facilities. It is also the first point of contact for visitors, groups, vendors, and others looking to know more about the church.

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 communities. We are very active on social media and post regularly on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (@cc74park on all accounts). 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.

We have seen a huge growth in visitors, and our welcome bags for visitors continues to be a hit! These welcome bags include a Connection Card, brochure, Rector's letter, and a Christ Church mug.



Are you on our email list? It's the very best way to stay up-to-date on all the news and updates at Christ Church and in our Diocese. We send out weekly emails to help you stay better connected. If you're not subscribed, or not if you have been getting these emails, simply use your phone camera to scan this QR code to subscribe!



Don't forget- we offer a text service to provide you with last-minute updates, closings, news, events, etc. If you haven't done so, text **CHRISTCHURCH** to **313131** to receive these messages.

As always, we produce the bulletins and Sunday Papers for every worship service. Did you know these are also uploaded on our website every week? In an effort to reduce our carbon footprint and our printing costs, we have started to print fewer bulletins each week. It is always available under "This Week's Bulletin" in the top left corner of our website, or simply scan the QR code with your phone or tablet on the sign next to the bulletins as you enter the service and it will come up.

There are plenty of ways to stay connected at Christ Church; don't miss out!



A few highlights from: Palm Sunday, A baptism, Episcopal Visitation, Blessing of the Animals, All-Parish pageant, Hurricane Ida Clean-up, Lent, Day of Service, Un-Annual Parish Meeting, and All Saints Day.

A Message from Bishop Hughes for Easter 2022

April 13, 2022



Dear Companions on the Journey,

Suddenly it is Holy Week! What a gift and blessing to observe Holy Week services in person this year. As importantly, we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a changed people. God has been generous, and we are grateful.

We have learned a new appreciation for the gift of time with family, friends, and our faith community. We have become more aware of God's presence in our daily lives. Our sacred texts, the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*, have seen regular usage and study. The way we pray has expanded, taken deep root, and informed our response to the troubles of these times. We are a changed people and a changed church.

I am confident that, as we observe Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection this year, we are more able to see, hear, and know God's leading for our lives and our churches. The changes and pressures we face may be relentless, but God is steadfast.

May Jesus' ferocious love of all God's people fill us and propel us into the world, generously sharing the abundance of God's love, mercy, and compassion with a hurting world.

You have my prayers for a blessed Holy Week and a glorious Easter.

Grace and peace,
Bishop Hughes



The Voice is the biweekly publication of the Diocese of Newark. It is currently published every other Wednesday. You can subscribe to it here: <https://dioceseofnewark.org/e-news>.



UPCOMING EVENTS AND SERVICES

May
10 Confirmation service at Christ Church, Short Hills

June
5 Pentecost
Special Meeting to Elect New Vestry and Wardens

June
12 Mass on the Grass...with Brass
Parish Picnic

Our Newsletter

We at Christ Church are excited by the new life and transformation in this place, and this newsletter is a part of the many ways we are stepping boldly forward in faith. This newsletter is published twice each year and covers the life of this congregation – worship, music, children & youth, spiritual formation and so much more. Let us know what you think!



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And the best way...come to church!

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