

Reports for The Parish

at the 177TH ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Report

CHRIST CHURCH
CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

A REPORT FOR THE PARISH COMMUNITY

I am pleased to present this report of our ministry as we devote our life and labor to the Lord Jesus Christ. Even with one hundred pages, it would be impossible to capture the fullness of our ministry, our service to God and to others in Jesus' Name. At each anniversary of our parish's founding, we present reports at our Annual Meeting. Then, throughout the year, it has been our custom to use our communications to lift up our many ministries week by week and on our website, which contains a wealth of information about the parish.

As we continue our efforts in reaching the ambitious goals of our 2022-2027 strategic plan, again this year, I have asked the clergy and program staff to summarize their ministries in this report to the parish (pgs. 5-10). Their work addresses the first two goals of our strategic plan, now two years underway. While these staff reports will not be shared in presentations at the 177th Annual Meeting, I think it valuable for each member of our team to share the work they have accomplished and future efforts they anticipate. In addition, a report on our preschool and another on my ministry are included (pgs. 15-19).

There are two reports in this document that address the third strategic goal and represent the presentations made to the parish at the Annual Meeting on May 18 (pgs. 11-14). The Finance and Property Committees oversee the wise management of our resources and report to the Vestry every month and the parish every year. Financial documents are also shared on our website.

On the last pages of the report are two slides related to our parish engagement survey, distributed each spring to assess our members' sense of belonging. Thanks to Martha Holler for her review of the 188 responses this year and the creation of both the 2024 and 2025 survey results (pgs. 20-21).

There are many other ministries that are not mentioned in this document but, nonetheless, aid our parish in being a loving and joyful community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. To learn of them, visit the website or call the parish office, and we can connect you with a ministry leader.

Thank you for your part in Christ Church Christiana Hundred's 177 years of ministry.

Faithfully,



15th Rector of Christ Church Christiana Hundred



Christ Church Christiana Hundred

Our Mission

Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, Christ Church welcomes you into a loving and joyful community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Our Core Values

Belonging: There is a place for you here.

Care: We support each other and those in need.

Community: We nurture relationships and connections where all of God's children can experience love, hope, and peace.

Episcopal Faith: The Episcopal tradition guides our worship, spiritual development, and church life.

Growth: We celebrate and encourage lifelong spiritual development of children, youth, and adults.

Sacred Experiences: We appreciate the beauty and holiness of our shared life, liturgy, music, and grounds.

Service: Following Jesus' example, we love and serve our neighbors by sharing our time, talent, and treasure.

Our Key Goals for the Next Five Years

We will grow our Episcopal faith community with God's help.

- By year-end 2027, we will have more than 2,000 active members, a 50% increase since 2022, by inspiring current members, re-engaging inactive members, and attracting new members, especially families with children and youth.

We will grow deeper relationships with God and with each other, following Jesus Christ.

- By year-end 2027, weekly worship attendance will have grown to 775 (this includes all services offered through the week) and participation in our program offerings for children, youth, and adults will average 150 children, 70 youth, and 470 adults engaged.
- Our Ministry Match implementation will have energized our members in caring for one another and supporting parish ministry, and our next generation of lay leadership will be in place.
- We will be known as a church that serves in our local community, sharing our time, financial support, and Jesus' message of hope, love, and self-worth to those disadvantaged by poverty and underserved in education.

As stewards of the gifts that God entrusts to us, we will faithfully manage and share our property, financial resources, and the time and talents of our members to support our ministries in and beyond Christ Church.

- By year-end 2027, we will have monthly events that draw people to our campus, both for CCCH programs and for use by the local community.
- We will ensure the sustainable stewardship of our parish for future generations through our commitment to pledging, our care for the master property management plan, and our efforts to expand legacy giving to strengthen our endowment.

REPORT FROM THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR



“For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven...a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted...a time to break down and a time to build up...a time to weep and a time to laugh...a time to mourn and a time to dance” - select portions of Ecclesiastes 3:1-4

It has been my joy and honor to serve alongside you for five years. As I embark on a season of transition and new ministry, I look back fondly at this past year and all that we accomplished as we served others and grew deeper in relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

My ministry portfolio at Christ Church oversees our outreach efforts to our community, newcomer and evangelism ministry, and chaplain to the preschool. These areas all have one thing in common: the enmeshing the world outside of Christ Church with the life of our parish.

The Outreach Committee seeks to connect Christ Church members with our neighbors in need. I witnessed this firsthand throughout our frigid winter in our weekly assistance at Friendship House’s Code Purple warm-up centers. Dozens of Christ Church parishioners participated in making food and assisting drop-in center operations. We’ve also continued regular service opportunities through Lutheran Community Services, Family Promise, and Ministry of Caring—the latter of which will recognize Christ Church’s years of volunteer service with a Caring Bowl banquet award this month. In 2025, the Outreach Committee will steward \$159,500 of parish funds to community members in need through our outreach partners with a primary focus on serving children and education, family health, food and housing, and addiction and recovery. Additional funds are dedicated to support our outreach efforts—our shared ministry. Thank you to the 16 Outreach Committee members and Convener Carol Morley for leading our parish’s response to our community’s needs.

Christ Church continues to grow and welcome new members into life in Christ. From May 2024-April 2025, we had 30 baptisms, which included two adults. We confirmed two adults in 2024 and anticipate additional adult confirmations and receptions in June. We hosted two newcomer classes for 26 participants and welcomed 36 total new household members (participants and their spouses and children). I’m grateful for the Invite Welcome Connect ministry team’s leadership in streamlining our welcome process and for the enthusiasm and joy they bring to sharing the love of Christ.

My aim as preschool chaplain is to provide compassionate, Christ-centered care and worship for preschool children, parents, and staff. Weekly children’s chapel builds a foundation for our children to experience God’s presence and scripture stories in a loving and joyful way. Recently, we’ve augmented chapel with a take-home “Chapel Talk” worksheet for parents. Chapel Talk has our weekly scripture story, songs, and prompts for family prayer and conversation. Connection between church and preschool has grown through collaborative planning. Our Christ Church Episcopal Preschool Sunday in January saw five preschool community members baptized.

With my time at Christ Church concluding, I’d like to thank the parish for the ways you have helped me grow in my five years as your associate rector. As scripture tells us, “To everything there is a season.” My season at Christ Church formed me as a priest and leader in the church. We have shared times of weeping and times of laughing, times of mourning and times of dancing. I am confident that I (and you!) can face the challenges of tomorrow because of the spiritual strength we have built today. Among our many accomplishments, we have persevered through a global pandemic, built and strengthened community ties through service, and created new and engaging worship to meet modern family circumstances. Thank you to our rector, staff, wardens, and vestry members from over the years who have contributed to this chapter of my family’s life.

God bless, and God’s peace,

Michael B. E. Kurth

REPORT FROM THE INTERIM ASSOCIATE RECTOR



In December 2024, I joined the staff of CCCH as Interim Associate Rector, having recently ended a 14-month posting as Interim Rector at Church of the Messiah, Gwynedd, Pennsylvania. In my new role at Christ Church, I was given responsibility for adult formation and pastoral care. The interim position was created until a new, permanent associate could be found.

This is my second posting at Christ Church—the first being three and a half years ago to cover Fr. Michael's paternity leave. In years past, I have led a number of adult formation *Faith and Poetry* classes at Christ Church.

There have been many highlights over the past six months. The teaching sessions on Wednesday evenings—the *Word into Life* course and then *Knowing God* during Lent—were well supported and offered opportunities for fellowship and education. In Lent, I led a Quiet Morning on the theme, *A Place at the Lord's Table*. Celtic Eucharists were celebrated on Epiphany and St. Patrick's Day, with the participation of musicians Janet Witman, Trevor Koenig Sr., and Sandra Borrer. Another will be offered later this month on Ascension Day.

Our Pastoral Ministry Team, headed by Jaq Whalen, hosted a Saturday morning seminar, *Fostering Compassionate Connections*, which was led by the Rev. John Pumphrey, with contributions from Jaq and myself. In June and July 2025, the team will be hosting *Planning as We Age*, a 3-session course about coping with changes later in life. My warm thanks to Jaq and other members of the team for their cooperation and commitment.

Thank you to all of the adult formation, small groups, and Bible study groups. There are too many to name, but you know who you are. These groups have and will continue to provide an opportunity to explore in greater detail and depth the life of faith. Thanks, too, to our Eucharistic visitors who take communion to the sick and the housebound.

On a personal note, my third book, *Blessed by God*, was published by Cedar Tree Press in 2025. The culmination of many years' work, the book is a balance of stories and theology. Thank you if you bought a copy!

Christ Church is an exciting and vibrant church. During my brief time here, I have enjoyed working with the CCCH staff, wardens, and vestry. It has been a privilege to work alongside clergy colleagues Ruth, Bill Lane, and Michael Kurth. Like many, I was sad to hear that Fr. Michael is leaving. He has given so much to the life and witness of the church. I know he will bring his many talents and experience to benefit St. David's.

Finally, to those of you whom I have prayed for, visited, and held in my heart—thank you and God bless you.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. David Beresford

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC



The year 2024-25 was a fine year for music at Christ Church. There is much to be thankful to God for in this area of ministry here, most notably in the work of our Choirs, our Organ Scholar, our Concert Series, and our visibility and witness within the greater community and beyond.

Our Choirs

Our Parish Choir, an adult ensemble with a core of Christ Church Choir musicians leading non-professional musicians, has done excellent work in this, just their second year of existence following a hiatus necessitated by the COVID pandemic. The Parish Choir sings monthly at the 10:30 service and for other services throughout the year, including Christmas Day, the Easter Vigil, and Choral Evensong. Their work is made all the more effective by their commitment to their ministry. I am ever grateful for that, and new singers are always welcome!

Our Choristers, under the direction of Dr. Jo Harney, continue to not only grow both numerically and musically but to *thrive* as they develop as young musicians. A great amount of thanks and appreciation go to Jo for the work she has done in reviving this vital ministry over the past several years; she was the *exact* right person to do this on so many levels, and I know I speak for our Choristers and parents, for our leadership, and for our congregation when I offer her my thanks for a job well done. Jo has made the difficult decision to step down from this ministry at the end of this current season, and conversations with leadership and chorister parents about the way forward are ongoing...stay tuned! In the meantime, if you know a child who has an affinity for singing and/or music, please put us in touch with them or them with us! They need not be parishioners. This program is an open door to the life and community that is Christ Church.



The Christ Church Choir continues its 111-year history of musical leadership and excellence both in liturgy and in concert. This outstanding instrument is an integral part of the fabric of Christ Church. This past March, we welcomed James O'Donnell, Professor in the Practice of Organ at Yale University (Music Director Emeritus of Westminster Abbey, London), to be our Musician in Residence where he worked with the Christ Church Choir and led our Sunday 10:30 Eucharist and 4:00 Choral Evensong. The Choir, once again, rose to the occasion and sang magnificently. Our "singing season" as choir ends this July singing in residence for a week at York Minster, York, UK—an experience that will

continue the Choir's trajectory of excellence and commitment to Anglican worship, and that will also highlight Christ Church's presence and ministry to the larger Church and to a longing world.



Our Organ Scholar

In September 2024, we welcomed Cameron Kuzepski, a Wilmington native and senior at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, to be our Organ Scholar. His impact has been significant, and he has been generously welcomed by our congregation and choirs. His position, much like that of a curate, is a training/learning position, and he is taking full advantage of the richness of the Anglican musical tradition as expressed at Christ Church! He graduates with his bachelor's degree in December of this year, and our hope is that he will remain with us for a good bit longer. We offer great thanks for his ministry here at Christ Church.

Our Concert Series

We continue to offer programming throughout the year, which brings people to Christ Church who might not otherwise set foot on our campus. Highlights this year included programming we produced ourselves—a beautiful concert, *Music in Memoriam*, with music from Philip Ledger's *Requiem*, featuring the Christ Church Choir, internationally acclaimed organist Nathan Laube (who played the dedication recitals for our Chapel organ, Fisk Opus 164, in 2022), and an outstanding instrumental ensemble, in addition to our second progressive organ recital with esteemed Oberlin College organist Christa Rakich, and a concert of chamber music by the Philadelphia-based ensemble Filament. Other programming is offered annually by two internationally acclaimed organizations with whom we have a symbiotic relationship—Piffaro, the Renaissance Band and Tempesta di Mare (Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra). Both organizations offer a handful of concerts each year here at Christ Church. December 2025 will see the Christ Church Choir partner with Tempesta di Mare to offer two performances of Handel's *Messiah* here at Christ Church, and, for the first time, two performances in Philadelphia; just as in our York residency, we are taking our blessings “on the road.”

Our Visibility and Witness

The foundational principal of our music program and programming is to give witness to the love of God through the gifts that have so lovingly been bestowed upon this faith community. Whether in worship or concert, rehearsal or performance, building up and encouraging the Body of Christ in this place is our mission. Our work with Ministry Architects over the past few years has highlighted our need to reach out into our community *and* to bring people onto our campus. This two-pronged challenge is one that can, at least in part, be met well through music. I believe our congregation both knows this and embraces this. For those who are active participants in the music program here, our greatest joy is to see the health and love of our community become an expression of God's love for the world. It is a noble endeavor, and we are delighted to engage in it.

Final Thanks

It would be impossible for such a far reaching, broad, and expansive music program to exist without the support of the vestry and staff and of our Rector Ruth Beresford. Scripture tells us in Proverbs: “Where there is no vision, the people perish”—it is a gift to the world to have such vision here at Christ Church Christiana Hundred. Long may this vision be tended to well.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce J. Barber II
Director of Music

REPORT FROM THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



It has been just over a year since assuming the role of Minister for Children & Youth here at Christ Church, and it has been wonderful. The community at Christ Church is so welcoming and caring, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work here. This past year, I have been spending time thoroughly familiarizing myself with the church, our regular programming, and special events. With a solid understanding of all that this ministry entails, I am excited to share the growth I've seen last year and even more excited for what this next year holds.

All of our Sunday offerings have seen a boost in attendance this past year. Our 9 AM Sanctuary service in the Church has seen an 8% growth in attendance compared to last year, and our concurrent ARK service in the Chapel has seen a 15% growth. Higher attendance in worship has also helped boost attendance in our formation offerings, with all classes seeing similar growth. Our Confirmation class is our biggest offering with a total of 16 youth who have attended classes regularly throughout the program year.

This year we also began a new Sunday morning formation offering to allow high schoolers unable to attend on Sunday evenings to have spiritual formation outside of worship. The Flynn, Grundner, and Zakielarz families helped in creating and leading this new Bible Study where the group discusses scripture, theology, and analyzes video clips from things like *The Chosen* and The Bible Project. In Bible study and youth group, we now have over 15 active high schoolers, and 13 will be joining us on our annual mission trip to the Dominican Republic this year.

The Children & Youth Ministry Team has been hard at work this year to ensure that our ministry runs smoothly and is looking at ways we can continue to grow the ministry. One of the major projects the team and I worked on was creating a mission statement and values for our ministry. As we move forward in planning programs and events, we want to be sure we are aligned with the church's mission and values and have some specific to our ministry as well. Please take a moment to review these on the next page.

The past year has been amazing for our children and youth ministry. We have seen such growth already, and I am excited to keep the ball rolling and continue to grow more. I want to thank my wonderful volunteers who have dedicated themselves to this ministry and are one of the biggest reasons this program has been able to grow. I also want to thank all the parents who make time to bring their children to worship, formation, and our many other events. Without the love and dedication from parents and our volunteers, this ministry would not be possible, and I cannot thank you enough. Our children and youth are the future of the church, and I'm happy to say that our future looks bright.

Mason Cruz
Minister for Children & Youth

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES
Mission Statement & Values

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to establish a strong faith foundation for children and youth by welcoming them into a joyful, inclusive community rooted in Christ. We strive to create a space where they feel valued and inspired to show up, not as part of their daily routine but as a meaningful and transformative experience. Through formation, not just teaching, we nurture our children and youth's spiritual growth and help them build a faith-based community grounded in love, curiosity, and belonging. Together, we guide them to deepen their relationship with God and live out their faith in the world.

Values:

Community: In our formation offerings, we provide a safe space for children and youth to be themselves, build relationships, develop a sense of belonging, and know that Sunday offerings are not a time for school but a time to come together as a family united by Christ.

Service: Following Jesus' example, we are called to love and serve our neighbors by sharing our time, talents, and resources. We embrace our role as stewards of the earth, caring for creation with gratitude and responsibility.

Growing Deeper Personal Relationships with God: We encourage children and youth to explore and deepen their relationship with God through prayer, reflection, education, and faith practices that nurture their spiritual journey.

Intergenerational Relationships: We celebrate the strength of our community through intergenerational connections, fostering opportunities for all ages to grow in faith, share wisdom, and support one another.

God is Always with Us: We remind children and youth that God's presence is constant, especially in times of challenge or struggle. Together, we learn to recognize and live in the assurance of God's love and guidance in every moment of our lives.

Sacred Experience: We discover and honor the sacred in all places—within the church and in the beauty of the natural world. By recognizing God's handiwork in all we experience, we are inspired to live with gratitude and wonder.

Instilling Curiosity: We nurture a spirit of curiosity and wonder, encouraging children and youth to ask questions, explore their faith, and marvel at the mystery and beauty of God's work in the world.

2024-2025 PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT



At our 177th Annual Meeting of the parish, Assistant Treasurer Bob Reardon provides a review of our financial resources and management. He serves on the Finance Committee, which meets each month to provide careful oversight of our funds and assists the rector with the preparation of the ministry budget for the Vestry’s authorization. This year, Christine Cook succeeded Marissa Stipa as the convener of the Finance Committee. In turn, Christine is supported by Terri Carpe, the finance manager, a contracted part-time employee. The figures in the following report are provided by Terri and Christine.

Assets

The value of our endowments and assets held by the parish:

- Endowment Funds (March 2025 value is \$12,329,860) which are assigned for an area of ministry, like capital projects or the choir, either at the donor’s request or by the designation of the Vestry.
- Temporary/Restricted Funds (March 2025 balance is \$1,234,628) which are designated funds given and expended for a particular purpose, like the capital improvements fund or the concert fund, or are temporary in nature, like deposits for a pilgrimage.
- Pension Fund (March 2025 value is \$820,579) which was established for the lay members of CCCH staff before The Episcopal Church provided a 403(b). This fund supports current retirees and a future retirement for one of our staff.
- Property Value (March 2025 value is \$6,319,587) The gross Book Value of our buildings and grounds is nearly \$16 million, but accumulated depreciation of \$9,455,847 provides the above net of \$6.3 million.

The 2024 Annual Budget Results

In the published financial report to the parish, the committee noted that “2024 financial results ended the year essentially on budget with interest and rental income offsetting a 1% shortfall in pledges. On the expense side, a contribution to the preschool Christ Church supports in the Dominican Republic is reflected under Parish Programs and is offset by transfers from the dedicated and restricted funds contributed for this mission work. Administrative expenses were below budget due to open staff positions for a portion of the year, and the rector and her staff managed program costs prudently throughout the year. Overall, through December 31, 2024, Christ Church closed the year with a slight surplus of \$24,380, which is accounted for in the line for Contingency/Vestry Allocations to balance 2024 expenses to income. The Contingency Fund is a restricted account allocated at the designation of the Vestry, sometimes used to close a budget’s shortfall.”

Committee Members

Derek Anderson	Allison Ayers
Hardy Drane	Barbara King*
Ted Ledden*	Jaqueline Whalen*
Mark Parsells, Treasurer	
Bob Reardon, Assistant Treasurer	
Christine Cook, Convener	
Ruth Beresford, Rector <i>ex officio</i>	
Terri Carpe, Finance Manager <i>ex officio</i>	

**appointed from Vestry*

	2024 YTD Actual	2024 Ministry Budget	Actual vs Budget	2023 YTD Actual	2024 Actual vs 2023 Actual
Income					
Pledges	1,616,125	1,636,132	(20,007)	1,534,913	81,212
Plate Collection	27,324	26,500	824	26,460	864
Endowment & Investment Income	550,021	543,453	6,568	558,119	(8,097)
Expected Gifts & Bequests	65,861	66,779	(918)	69,903	(4,042)
Special Offerings	145,191	139,000	6,191	128,460	16,731
Transfer/Rental/Other Income	338,695	325,145	13,550	346,916	(8,221)
Contingency Reserve	-	-	-	22,921	(22,921)
Total Income	2,743,218	2,737,009	6,209	2,687,692	55,526
Expenses					
Outreach/Giving Beyond the Parish	429,099	424,052	5,048	422,633	6,467
Parish Programs	359,711	305,374	54,337	327,314	32,397
Administration	1,590,317	1,652,463	(62,147)	1,577,111	13,206
Buildings & Grounds	334,111	349,520	(15,409)	347,324	(13,213)
Contingency/Vestry Allocation	29,980	5,600	24,380	13,310	16,670
Total Expenses	2,743,218	2,737,009	6,209	2,687,692	55,526
Income Less Expenses	-	-	-	-	-

2025 Ministry Budget Adopted by Vestry

The Finance Committee recommended the 2025 ministry budget, which estimates a 2% decrease in income and expenses that sustain our worship, fellowship, and service to others. This budget and 2025 first quarter results in our stewardship of the parish finances can be found on our website, <https://www.christchurchde.org/finances/>.

	2025 Budget	2024 Actuals	Budget vs Prior Year Actuals
Income			
Pledges	1,674,542	1,616,125	58,417
Plate Collection	29,716	27,324	2,392
Endowment & Investment Income	518,204	550,021	(31,817)
Expected Gifts & Bequests	66,238	65,861	377
Special Offerings	119,000	145,191	(26,191)
Transfer/Rental/Other Income	287,056	338,695	(51,639)
Contingency Reserve	-	-	-
Total Income	2,694,756	2,743,218	(48,462)
Expenses			
Outreach/Giving Beyond the Parish	409,211	429,099	(19,887)
Parish Programs	309,800	359,711	(49,911)
Administration	1,701,916	1,590,317	111,598
Buildings & Grounds	273,829	334,111	(60,282)
Contingency/Vestry Allocation	-	29,980	(29,980)
Total Expenses	2,694,756	2,743,218	(48,462)

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT



Time for Significant Repairs

Last year's presentation took you all for a tour of our facilities and shared examples of the initial cost of construction for each significant building on our property, along with examples of recent improvements we had done to each building. In some cases, the recent cost of an improvement far exceeded the cost of the original structure—such is the nature of time, money, and inflation. I am sure the members of Christ Church, in the midst of The Depression, thought spending \$41,600 to construct a new rectory was outrageous. Today, it looks like a bargain!

In 2000, Christ Church conducted a major capital campaign with the primary goal of constructing the building we are in today. The Parish Center, including the new education wing, was the cornerstone of that capital campaign and cost \$4,000,000 to construct. Included in the project were Parish Halls A & B, the classrooms above the new parish hall, the elevator in Parish Hall C that runs up to the 3rd floor office space, and an expanded row of offices on the 3rd floor that were installed on what had been a flat roof on the rear of the building.

Marrying old and new is never easy. Aesthetically, the team did a great job, particularly the stone masons who matched 1951 and 2000 beautifully. However, today, after 25 years, we are faced with needing to address the reality that our two buildings have issues where they link up and where our roofs run into the vertical walls. In short, we have leaks. And these leaks are causing damage to the structure each and every time it rains.

There are three main areas where we are experiencing water penetration into our “building envelope.” The building envelope is the six sides of a building—roof, four walls, basement/foundation—any or all could be a potential source of water penetration.



- 1) The flat roof above Parish Halls A & B—particularly in the area that connects the Chapel to the new education wing. There is evidence of water penetration through the deteriorating membrane of this roof and where the roof meets a wall and the flashing is no longer flashing off the water. Instead, the water is penetrating the walls and deteriorating the building envelope.
- 2) The same issue is occurring where the elevator meets the old Parish Hall structure. Where the roof links to the original stone facade, we have water penetrating.
- 3) Finally, the original chimney of the Parish Hall, which is no longer used for utilities or for the fireplace in the Commons Room, leaks in dramatic fashion where the chimney meets the new roof above the offices that were put in place in 2000.

Beginning in 2010, we have repeatedly addressed the areas where we could see possible sources of leakage. In large measure, we (meaning Andy Marine) became pretty adept at stemming the evident water flow, particularly into areas like our Kitchen entrance. But, the problem remained.

This past fall, thanks to professional contacts that Thorpe Moeckel and Jon Payne have, we brought in TBS Associates to evaluate our situation. TBS Associates is a New Jersey based architectural firm that specializes in building envelopes. Their team has extensive experience working on historical (and religious) structures. After their initial review of our problems, we asked TBS to develop and provide a scope of work estimate to better understand the probable costs of our project.

In short, this is a big project. The Scope of Work identified a range from \$600,000 to \$1,000,000 for the total project. TBS initially partnered with Whiting-Turner (who is now our construction manager) to validate their preliminary estimates. With a goal to execute the project this summer, we approved TBS to commence with conducting the necessary building forensics and then drafting comprehensive architectural plans for our project. This work has been paid primarily through funds outside of the Building & Grounds Capital Reserve and annual budget. To date, we have committed and spent about \$170,000 to bring us to the point where Whiting-Turner is currently securing competitive bids from the sub-contractors (roofers, masons, etc.) in order to complete our project this summer. We are expecting a final budget from Whiting-Turner by May 28.

The scope of work has expanded since we began this process last fall. But, at the end of day, we believe the entire project will be most efficiently and economically executed if we tackle all of the above areas at the same time—and the sooner the better. Our goal is to have this project completed by the end of August, so that work can take place during what are generally quieter months on our campus.

There are health and safety issues to consider. And like any home owner, if you defer maintenance on significant systems—like a roof—there is real risk that much greater damage will occur while repairs are delayed.

We, the Property Committee, the Vestry, along with Ruth Beresford and Mike Sayer, have been charged with maintaining this irreplaceable property for our generation and for the generations to follow. Sometimes, the roof just needs to be replaced. It's not the sexiest home improvement, but we all can appreciate that it may be one of the most necessary.

Thank you,

John Faulkner
Property Committee Convener

Committee Members

Randall Attix	Barbara Cairns
Tom Desper	Michael Flynn
Martin Taylor	
John Faulkner, Convener	
Thorpe Moeckel, Vestry Representative	
Annie Williams, CCEP Faculty Representative	
Lisa Tuleya, CCEP Faculty Representative 2025-2026	
Jon Payne, Owner's Representative for Construction	
Michael Sayer, Facilities Manager	

REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



Christ Church Episcopal Preschool 2024-2025 – The Preschool’s Nineteenth Year!

Our preschool is thriving, and it’s been an exciting year! I began my ministry as your fifth Head of School on July 1, 2024 and am honored to lead our beloved CCEP community.

Campus & Classrooms

Through the week, you can find children in the outdoor classroom studying nature, doing a science project, or enjoying imaginative free play. In addition to time spent on the playgrounds each day, faculty take their classes to the field, the labyrinth, the front lawn, and for play time in the safety of the Parish Center circle entrance. Each class attends Spanish, Music/Movement, Art, and Godly

Play each week. Worship occurs on Thursdays in the Chapel of the Christ Child. Once a month, the Chapel service includes parents and special friends as the school worships together. This year, we implemented a few community learning projects with the understanding that we are all lifelong learners. We hatched chicken eggs and learned about the life cycle of chickens. Several students were able to see the hatching of baby chicks in real time, and students were able to hold the baby chicks. We also raised butterflies beginning from the larva stage and then released them into nature.

Enrollment

The 2024-2025 school year started with 73 students enrolled, representing 63 families. Approximately 20% of the CCEP community are also parish members. Enrollment for the 2025 summer camp is averaging 35 students for each of the eight weeks of summer camp. Looking ahead, the 2025-2026 school year has 65 students enrolled, and three more students are pending. The Primary classes (for 3-year-olds) can accommodate six more students. Prekindergarten enrollment stands at eight students. The 5- and 3-day Beginner and Nursery class half-day programs are near capacity. Openings remain in the Kickstart program, a 2-day program offered in the Beginner and Nursery programs.

Faculty

Our teaching and administrative staff are a great strength to our school community. Last September our school administrator, Jennifer Fordham took a maternity leave through December. Thankfully, Denise Gilliam remained to assist with school administration. Lisa Stephens transitioned from her role as a nursery teacher to the director of special programs, where she organized several in-house field trips, including a petting zoo, a yoga class, a musical presentation, and a safari animal visit. No new teachers needed to be hired for the 2024-2025 school year. However, for the 2025-2026 school year, we have nine full-time teachers returning and three departures. Two of our beloved faculty are leaving to pursue education goals, while Annie Williams is retiring after teaching for 17 years at CCEP. We will be hiring three part-time teachers to join our faculty for the 2025-26 school year.

Finances

The school began the 2024-2025 year with a projected deficit larger than expected due to lower enrollment, increased staffing costs, and a reduction in summer camp revenue, also attributed to lower participation. The board's diligent efforts to increase the endowment over the past few years will sustain the school's needs for this year. Efforts to reduce staffing expenses by aligning the staff schedule based on the actual enrollment numbers are in place for the coming school year. At this time, we are 75% through our fiscal year, and we have collected 81% of our budgeted revenues and spent just 68% of our budgeted expenses. Fundraising efforts through the Annual Fund, the Gala, Running of Rams, and grant requests also help improve the preschool’s financial position.

Governance

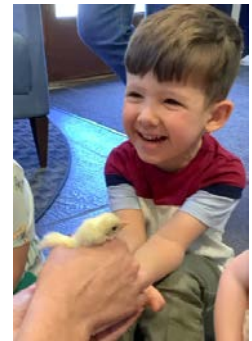
Christ Church Episcopal Preschool is a ministry of Christ Church Christiana Hundred. The Board of Trustees advises the Head of School on the day-to-day oversight of CCEP and is made up of educators, parents and alumni parents, parishioners, and vestry members. To see a list of the trustees, visit the school's website, [Board of Trustees | Christ Church Episcopal Preschool \(ccepde.org\)](http://ccepde.org).

In addition, there is oversight provided by the Board of Directors, which is made up of the members of the Vestry and four independent directors, who are usually also trustees. The directors meet twice a year to review annual budgets and approve the nominees for new trustees. This double governance structure attempts to keep the parish and preschool aligned in purpose as one community, facilitating communications and casting a vision for the future while fulfilling the school's mission.

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool educates young children, creates community among families, school, and church, and honors and nurtures children in the Episcopal tradition.

It is a blessing to lead this school community. One could say that through its 19 years, our preschool has grown through infancy and the toddler years and is emerging as a mature institution, still eager and ready to help young ones and their families chase curiosity, discover friendships, and spark joy in the heart.

Sheila Abio
Head of School



Chase Curiosity – Discover Friendship – Spark Joy



REPORT FROM THE RECTOR



It is a joy to share ministry with the people of Christ Church Christiana Hundred and to mark 177 years for this parish. In *The Book of Common Prayer*, the Catechism teaches that we are all ministers, lay and ordained, representing Christ Jesus and his Church, bearing witness to him wherever we may be and with whatever gifts we have been given. While those in holy orders—bishops, priests, and deacons—have particular responsibilities, the “duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.” *BCP p. 856*

As we strive to accomplish the goals of our 2022-2027 strategic plan, only with the investment of our lives in service to Christ Jesus and inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit can our parish experience the growth in membership and deeper relationships with God and with one another. While the vestry and staff bear the primary responsibility, each one of us can extend an invitation, or offer care and kindness, or engage in meaningful connections that bind our hearts and lives to one another and to God. I strive to honor the ministry of every Christian in our community. This ministry happens here on our campus, in our preschool and congregation, as well as among our neighbors, colleagues, friends, and strangers. It happens with those who have fallen away from active membership and those who have never heard of The Episcopal Church. We minister to one another in Christ’s name as we serve every sort of person, bold to love. We open the door to welcome others in to join us.

Every Episcopal parish has this call, and it saddens me that another congregation in our diocese has determined it is time to close its doors. Calvary Church, Hillcrest ends 150 years of ministry on June 1. Bishop Brown has summoned the diocese to attend a service with them and to write letters to Calvary’s members, reaching out in care and welcome. I encourage you to do so by sending those notes to the care of the Mission Support Office, 913 Wilson Road, Wilmington, Delaware, 19803. We honor their ministry, almost as long and truly as faithful as our witness to Jesus Christ.

Today, I honor two ministers of the parish who have served long and faithfully. Suzanne Smith first led our Parish Life Committee with her husband, Al. Then, after his death, Audrey Bruce joined Suzanne in organizing events for the parish to come together in fellowship—we changed the name of the ministry to parish fellowship. It’s an old-fashioned word that describes friendship, welcome, hospitality, and joy in the company of others. Now Suzanne and Audrey are ready to hand the reins of our fellowship ministry over, and we will be seeking new leadership for this crucial ministry that covers coffee hours, receptions, events, and the parish picnic. I give thanks to them for their gracious hospitality.

We bid farewell to the Rev. Michael Kurth this year, after five fruitful years of ministry. What other priest can write hymns, engage newcomers and long-timers, share his passion for outreach and evangelism, enthusiastically engage toddlers and elders and everyone in between in growing deeper in faith through study and prayer, and care so deeply for his fellow staff members and for all of us? Michael is genuine—a faithful pastor. He joins a long line of associates who have come to Christ Church to serve us so very well before moving on to new ministry as a rector. We are blessed that Fr. Michael will continue as a colleague in this diocese, becoming the rector of St. David’s Church in Brandywine Hundred. His last Sunday will be the feast of Pentecost, June 8, 2025.

No Episcopal parish can be formed without an elected body of lay leaders, the wardens and vestry. Ran Barton has fully invested himself in the leadership of Christ Church. I'm grateful for his keen mind and great heart. He and Alexia Wolf and all members of the vestry have taken hold of the management of the strategic plan and lead us effectively, giving generously of time and talent. I give thanks for the leadership of outgoing vestry members, Audrey Bruce, Ted Ledden, Eliza Phillips, and Bart Reese, and our youth representative, Alexander Maynard.

Of course, there are many others who deserve our gratitude and recognition for their faithful ministry, whether in altar guild, ushers, choirs, and other worship ministries, or serving on committees and ministry teams for outreach, formation, fellowship, invitation & welcome, or managing and maintaining our resources in property and finance, the members of our renovation team and vestry, our preschool board of trustees—to one and all, we cannot be Christ Church without you. Without each minister—the three-year-old toddling up the aisle carrying the cross, the gardener weeding in the cool of the summer evening, the greeter standing in the cold wearing a warm smile—without you, we cannot create a loving and joyful faith community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. To one and all, I honor and appreciate your ministry.

The Work of Ministry

For those ordained to the priesthood, we are called to serve as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God. That is from the Catechism again. *BCP p. 856*

In my ministry this year, I have:

- delighted in singing as a part of the Saturday worship band most weekends, appreciating the talents of our members and professional musicians as we praise God and lead that informal, intimate worship;
- thoroughly enjoyed each Thursday morning, first leading a Eucharist at 6:30, then a hybrid Bible study, this whole year in the Psalms, then the chapel worship for our preschool classes;
- grieved with those who grieve, leading funerals crafted to minister to the family while proclaiming the Good News of the resurrection. This is a pastoral ministry that our parishioners share in, offering hospitality and support to the family around the reception and extending our care in grief support;
- rejoiced with those who rejoice—weddings, baptisms, confirmations, graduations. It is a joy to share life at these important moments;
- prepared for a holy pilgrimage, this time to Northern England, exploring the Celtic influences of our faith;
- searched for a new clergy colleague to fill the hole left when the Rev. Stacey Carpenter accepted a call to ministry in Lancaster;
- served in the diocese as an Intake Officer, which means if one of my clergy colleagues may have done injury or broken trust, I am among the first to help the Episcopal Church in Delaware address it and to determine the way forward;
- crafted liturgies that are varied to suit the time of day and the intended congregation. I treasure partnering with staff and clergy colleagues and garnering input from participants so that services are thoughtfully and prayerfully prepared.

There is more I could list. Some say I am too busy, but I love all that I do for God and for the church. I pray that the example of my faith gives witness to the love of Jesus that heals, blesses, and restores us to unity with God and with one another.

Discernment of Gifts

One of the ministries of the church is to discern with those who hear God's call to a distinct ministry, like Holy Orders. In the past decade, we have listened and prayed with the Rev. Marta Illueca, the Rev. Cate Anthony, the Rev. Maryann Younger, and the Rev. Clay Brown. In Jordan Kinsey, I have found someone whose heart is eager to serve. Jordan has completed a course of study in the Stevenson School and now will meet with eight members of this parish to allow us to know that we can support him in his intent to become a vocational deacon. Thanks to Jordan for his infinite patience and to Cindi Cozza (team leader), Jamie Jones, Jim Whalen, Barbara Tucker, Sue Scott, David Schueck, Jim Storey, and Mike Socha for their willingness to listen with Jordan.

It takes time to discover the ordained minister God has chosen for our parish. When Stacey left, I asked the Vestry for permission to call an associate rector to take up the work of pastoral leadership and adult formation. I gathered a devoted team of members to listen for God's call to us and to another faithful priest who would join us in ministry. Thank you to Fran Bayard, Chris Scott, Shelley Kinsella, Barksdale Maynard, Lola Michael Russell, Mike Rushlow, Brenda DePuy, Thatcher Flynn, Lu Johnston, Jaqueline Whalen, and Ran Barton for hours invested in discovering our next associate rector.

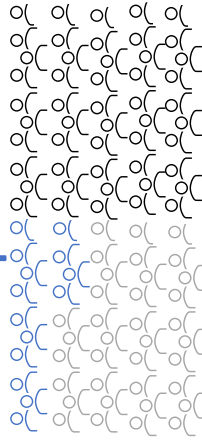
It is a pleasure to inform you that the Rev. Thomas Word Peters has accepted our call to serve Christ Church Christiana Hundred. Thom is coming home—raised in Wilmington, Delaware, having attended Camp Arrowhead, he chose a career path in education first, teaching at the Hopkins School near New Haven, Connecticut for the past 33 years. Along the way, Thom served in lay leadership roles in the parish, the diocese, and the province, eventually convinced that he was called to ordained ministry. He has served in part-time ministries and is eager to engage in parochial ministry full-time with us starting this summer. Here is the hidden blessing—Thom's parents were founding members of St. Alban's Church and close friends with Tilly Maassen, a longtime lay leader of our pastoral ministries. When that congregation concluded its ministry, Tilly invited Pete and Harriett Peters here. Thom's father is a resident at Country House and is just learning that his son will be the associate rector of Pete's parish. Thom's pastoral care and his love of learning and teaching will be great gifts for this community. Please join me in welcoming Thom and his wife Kristin to Christ Church.

On a personal note, I am so grateful to this parish and preschool, for the love and support you have shown me and my husband, Fr. David. In January, we were surrounded by your joy as we welcomed a grandson, and I so appreciate the Vestry's encouragement for me to take six weeks for a "grannibatical" to be present with my son and his wife and newborn. Then, in the sudden loss of my father in March, once again we were surrounded, this time with consolation and prayer. This is a kind and caring church community, rich in love and generous in good works. Thank you for the privilege of serving Christ Church and sharing in ministry with you. This is a gift we offer one another, in loving and joyful service in this parish, to the glory of God.

Ruth Beresford
Rector

2024 Parish Survey Key Findings

135 Responses



14% are new to Christ Church, attending within the last 2 years

About half have attended at Christ Church more than 20 years

Sense of Belonging

On our scale

75% feel strongly that they belong

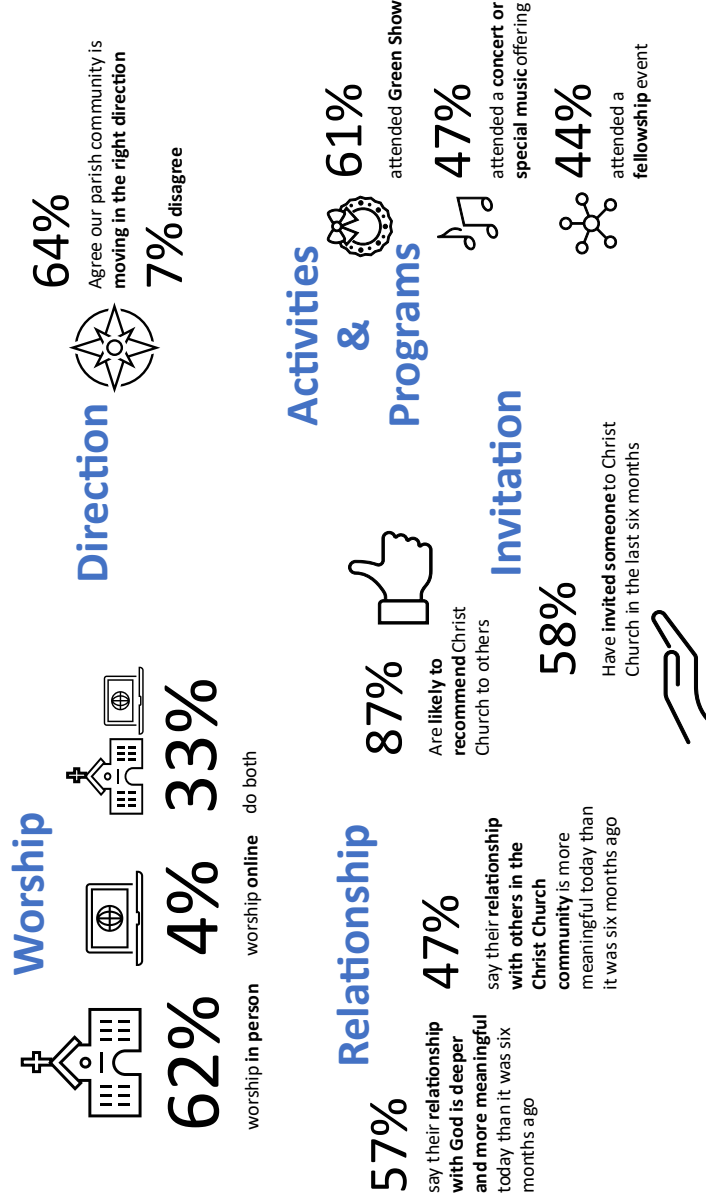
9% are neutral about belonging

16%

do not feel they belong here

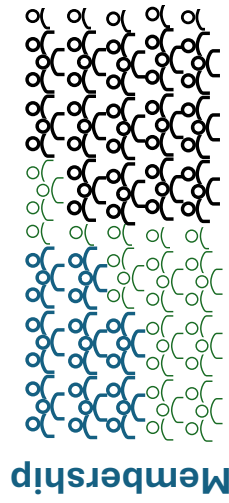
As proposed in the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, a survey was conducted to measure parish progress toward the goal of growing deeper relationships with God and others, following Jesus Christ. Questions were designed to understand parishioners' contentment, engagement, and sentiment about the parish and our mission.

Emailled to all parish contacts and shared in eNews, the survey was available for completion between May 1-13, 2024. The vestry will be reviewing the responses for insight and direction.



2025 Parish Survey Key Findings

From 188 responses

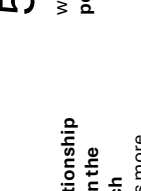


24% have attended Christ Church **less than 5 years**
47% have attended Christ Church **20 years or more**

70%
say their relationship with God is deeper and more meaningful today than a year ago



60%
say their relationship with others in the Christ Church community is more meaningful today than a year ago



70% Agree our parish community is moving in the right direction
11% disagree

Belonging

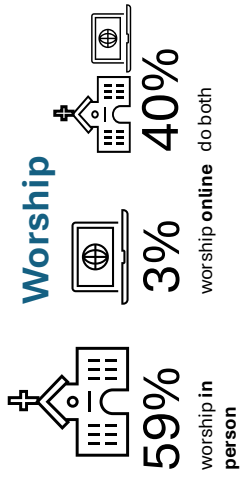
76%
Feel like they belong

14%
do not feel like they belong

Invitation

85%
Are likely to recommend Christ Church to others

72%
Invited someone to Christ Church in the last year



59%
worship in person

3%
worship online

Greatest Satisfaction
Sunday 8 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
Sunday 4 p.m. Choral Evensong
Sunday 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II (in person)

Lowest Satisfaction

Sunday 9 a.m. The ARK Holy Eucharist (for young children and families)
Sunday 9 a.m. The Sanctuary Holy Eucharist (for older children, youth, and their families)
Sunday 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II (online)

Most Frequently Attended

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II (in person)
Sunday 9 a.m. The ARK Holy Eucharist (for young children and families)
Sunday 9 a.m. The Sanctuary Holy Eucharist (for older children, youth, and their families)

Activities & Programs

69%
attended Green Show

53%
attended a concert or special music offering

51%
attended a fellowship event





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