



CHRIST CHURCH

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The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector

August 28, 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

The 2017-2018 academic and program year at Christ Church begins in a few weeks. I love summer very much, but I can't wait to get back to the ministry and mission that comes alive when our Parish's program year starts back up.

Included along with this letter are a calendar for the 2017-2018 year, a flyer for the Blessing of Backpacks and Church School Open House on September 10, and a Church School Registration Form. Whether you have church school aged children (Pre-K through 7th Grade) or not, this letter and packet contains material that concerns all of us.

The first item enclosed is a Church School Registration form. If you have Church School aged children or grandchildren, please fill out the form and return it to the parish office. If you prefer you can fill the form out online – christchurchpelham.org/church-school-registration – and you can send the link to friends and family who might be interested in Church School. As noted in the flyer we will also have in-person registration available on September 10 for those who have not yet sent in a form or registered online.

The enclosed calendar includes all Church School, Youth Group, and special all-parish events that are planned for the coming year. Please hang it on your refrigerator or on a bulletin board in your house.

The first event on the calendar is the same one advertised by the enclosed flyer. Our program year at Christ Church kicks off on Sunday, September 10. That day we will have a Blessing of Backpacks at both 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services. All whose backpacks are blessed will receive an Episcopal Church pin that can be placed on the backpack as a reminder that Jesus Christ is always with us and that Christ Church is our spiritual home. In addition to the Blessing of Backpacks, our Parish Choir will return that Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Following the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist on September 10, our Church School will offer an Open House and a time for in-person registration. The Open House will be an opportunity for parents and children to see our classrooms and meet some of our teachers. **Please note** that Church School classes begin the next Sunday, on September 17 – we can't begin until we have an idea of how many children have registered for 2017-2018.

The afternoon of Sunday, September 10, features the opportunity for a Parish Road Trip. After (BYO) lunch at Christ Church for all planning to join the outing, our Seminarian Michael Kurth will lead the Youth Group and any adult who wants to tag along to New York City to visit two world famous Episcopal churches. First, Michael will offer a tour of Saint Bartholomew's Church on Park Avenue. Then he will lead the group to Saint Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue for Choral Evensong at 4:00 p.m. The Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys is world famous, and that day's Evensong features the start of their program year and a special guest as preacher for the service (yours truly). If you are interested in helping Michael shepherd the Youth Group, please let him or me know – we need several chaperones. I am looking forward to preaching at Saint Thomas, and I hope to see you in the congregation that day. I promise to wear my glasses so I can see who's who!

I want to close with a word of gratitude and a special appeal. After years of dedicated service Marcie Wiehagen has stepped down as director of our Church School. As you know, a vibrant Church School is essential to our common Christian life together, and Marcie has been magnificent in her leadership through the years. On behalf of the entire Parish, I want to offer our sincerest and deepest gratitude to her for the time and energy she gave to the Church as director. I also want to thank her for the guidance and assistance she has provided during the transition to new leadership. This year, Eileen Peluso and our Seminarian Michael Kurth will co-direct our Church School. This is a new and exciting role for each of them to which they bring a wealth of talent and experience. I ask that you offer them your prayers and support.

Please consider volunteering to be a Church School teacher and or an assistant this year. There is a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. We have divided the Church School year into sessions and special events. You only need to sign up for a few weeks at a time, or you can sign up to lead or assist a special session when we do not offer full Church School. If you have experience teaching Church School, please offer us your time and expertise!

If you have never taught or helped with Church School we are happy to show you the ropes and guide you through the programs we use. We are looking for adults for Teachers and Assistants. We are also looking for high school students who can serve as Assistants and receive Community Service hours. Please consider signing up for a Sunday or a full Session. Our children are the future of the Church, and we have an opportunity to help them learn to love the Lord and their neighbors. They are really great kids, they are a lot of fun to teach, and you are guaranteed to learn and grow as a Christian when you teach them.

I hope you are enjoying your summer holidays. Mine has been wonderful, and I am looking forward to the coming academic year and the great events we have planned. I hope to see you all on September 10!

In Christ and with fondest affection,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hoxsie Mead". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "H".

The Reverend Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector