



CHRIST CHURCH

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The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead
Rector

The Rector's Chronicle

Holy Cross Day 2016

Dear friends in Christ,

The autumn is a particularly busy time in the church and around town. In this Chronicle I look at some of the exciting things happening this fall in our worship, outreach, and youth ministries. My hope is that giving you a heads up on some of the great things that are happening at Christ Church will allow you to plan ahead.

**JESUS SAID: "LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL,
WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH."**

The worship of Almighty God, revealed in Jesus Christ as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the starting point of every church. The Baptismal Covenant (BCP pg. 304) includes a promise that we make every time Baptism is celebrated that we will, with God's help, "continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers". For most Christians that means attending worship, as regularly as possible, on Sunday mornings.

I've always felt that if I was to take a break or a vacation from Sunday worship it would be akin to me taking a vacation from the promises made (and often renewed) at Baptism. This past summer, as we do every summer, my family spent our four vacation Sundays worshipping at other churches. If that hasn't been part of your routine when you are away, I ask you to consider giving it a try; whether it is summer vacation next year, a weekend getaway, or a midyear week on the slopes or by the seashore, there is usually an Episcopal Church or some church of another denomination nearby – even in foreign countries. Your faith will deepen, you will be nourished by regular Holy Communion, and you will get a taste of the wonderful breadth and width of the Episcopal Church.

Whether it is summer or not, people's schedules are busier than they used to be. The days are gone when Sunday was a Sabbath that was rarely or never encroached upon by work commitments, charitable events, or children's sports or programs. As a parent and as a citizen, I often find myself declining to participate in events (birthday parties, certain sports for my boys, or any number of wonderful charitable events) that happen on Sundays. The most recent example of this was the official Pelham observances for 9/11 which were scheduled at the same time worship services were being held at Christ Church... I would have loved to participate, but my primary responsibility as your Rector is celebrating the Eucharist at Christ Church. I know that most people

have family, work, and civic responsibilities in addition to their church responsibilities, and I understand that finding time to balance all of them is a challenge.

It is with that in mind that we have expanded our worship services schedule at times other than Sunday morning:

- Sunday 5:00 p.m. *Come As You Are* offered about twice a month
- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
- Thursday 12:15 p.m. Eucharist
- Holy Days (as announced) – the next major Holy Day falls on September 29, the Feast of Saint Michael & All Angels (aka Michaelmas) when we will gather in our Parish Hall at 6:00 p.m. for Oktoberfest and move to the church at 7:30 p.m. to celebrate the Eucharist with Bishop Glasspool.

In addition to these, members of our Vestry are planning to offer a weeknight evening service in Advent this year. If you are interested in being a part of that or helping to add an additional worship service at some other time, please let me know.

JESUS SAID: “LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”

“Outreach” is the word generally used by Episcopalians to describe charitable work done by a church outside of the parish family. Our Michaelmas & Oktoberfest celebration on September 29 will conclude a Food & Supply Drive led by our Outreach Committee. We have asked for # 8 brown paper lunch bags, juice boxes, and individually wrapped desserts to support the Sandwich Ministry at Trinity Saint Paul’s Church. A large basket for food and supplies is in the Narthex. At the Eucharist on September 29 Bishop Glasspool will bless the donations. Supporting Trinity Saint Paul’s Church is a great way to practice outreach and to build up a relationship with one of our sister parishes in New Rochelle. They provide an outreach ministry that would not be possible or practical in Pelham Manor, but I know that our support is greatly appreciated. Several parishioners at Christ Church volunteer time in the Sandwich Ministry, so my hope is that we can build upon a foundation that is already present.

If you are interested in financially supporting similar charities around the entire Diocese, Bishop Dietsche has invited members of our parish to the Episcopal Charities dinner at the Cathedral on November 10. If you are interested in buying a ticket or sponsoring a whole table, please let me know. Episcopal Charities financially supports many charity programs around the Diocese of New York, including the Sandwich Ministry at Trinity Saint Paul’s.

Our Outreach Committee, co-chaired by Geoff Allen and Courtney McGrory and assisted by Marie Dumas who is the Vestry Liaison for Outreach, has scheduled a meeting on Sunday, October 16, at 11:45 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is threefold. First, we want to find out what Outreach efforts our parishioners are already doing. Second, we plan to figure out if, like the above example of the Sandwich Ministry, the broader Christ Church family can help support ongoing relationships and outreach efforts of our parishioners. If you volunteer somewhere we want to know if we can support your efforts. Third, we intend to form a larger Outreach Committee that meets quarterly. At those future meetings we can consider new outreach ventures. For now, let’s see what we are already doing, what relationships we already have, and discuss ways for the entire congregation to support those efforts.

**JESUS SAID: “LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME, AND DO NOT STOP THEM;
FOR IT IS TO SUCH AS THESE THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD BELONGS.”**

I believe that we have the pieces in place to be able to build up our family ministries in 2016-2017. One of those pieces is our new Seminarian, Michael Kurth. Michael is a second year student at the Yale Divinity School, and he is a Postulant for the Priesthood in the Diocese of New York. Michael will work directly under my supervision. He will preach once a month, take an active role in the pastoral and educational sides of parish ministry, and assist with all of our youth and family ministries.

This week a letter was mailed out to families who have Confirmation age youth (8th grade and up). That letter describes the class and invites all of the families to register their children if they have not already done so. We already have eight young people registered for the Confirmation Class and the group could be as large as seventeen if every family registers. Michael and Deacon Katie will assist with our class this year. Confirmation is a very exciting time for our young people who are beginning to take on more responsibility in the church and in our communities.

On Tuesday, October 18, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Christ Church will offer a Family Dinner & Youth Group Event. I hope that as many of our families (parents and children) with school age children (all the way through high school) will be able to join us (or at least send a representative or two from each family). We will gather for a dinner at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall and spend about an hour in dinner conversation. At about 7:30 p.m. we will break into three groups: parents, high schoolers, and younger children. Each group will have the opportunity to share with a facilitator their ideas and thoughts on Junior Youth Group and Senior Youth Group. We are asking a registration fee of \$20 per family to support the cost of the food.

**THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERYTHING,
AND A SEASON FOR EVERY ACTIVITY UNDER THE HEAVENS.**

There are a number of other events at Christ Church that I want to put on your calendar as we move through the autumn. Some are on Sunday, some are during the week, but all of them are worthwhile.

- Blessing of Animals, Sunday, October 2, at 1:00 p.m.
- All Saints' Day, Tuesday, November 1, Sung Eucharist at 7:30 p.m. with dessert reception following.
- All Souls' Day, Wednesday, November 2, Said Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. with blessing of the Garden of Resurrection.
- New Consecration Sunday, November 6 with the Rev. Nora Smith, Rector of Saint Barnabas' Church, Irvington, as guest preacher.
- All Saints' Sunday Concert at Huguenot Church, November 6, at 4:00 p.m. with joint Christ Church / Huguenot Church choirs.
- Episcopal Charities Dinner, Thursday November 10 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.
- Remembrance Sunday, November 13 with reading of the names of the departed.
- Thanksgiving Dinner & Silent Auction, Thursday, November 17, at 6:00 p.m.
- Pelham Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, Sunday, November 20, at 4:00 p.m.
- Thanksgiving Day Sung Eucharist, Thursday, November 24, at 10:00 a.m.

- Youth Event (TBD), Tuesday, November 29 in the early evening.
- Advent/Christmas Greening of the Church & Potluck Dinner, Sunday, December 4, at 4:00 p.m.
- Advent Lessons & Carols, Sunday, December 11, at 5:00 p.m.
- Christmas Pageant, Sunday afternoon, December 18, at 4:00 p.m.
- Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24: Family Eucharist at 4:00 p.m. (preceded by Carols at 3:40 p.m.; Midnight Mass at 10:30 p.m. (preceded by Carols at 10:00 p.m.)
- Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25, Sung Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. followed by bagels, lox, sparkling cider & champagne reception.

One event not listed above is the United States General Election. This campaign season seems to me to be longer, more divisive, and bringing about more angst than any I can recall. I believe that involvement in the political process is a civic duty that we all have, and I encourage you to learn as much about every candidate for national, state, or local office, and to cast an informed vote. Remember that we are called in word and deed, including how we cast our votes, to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Also, in the midst of this particularly anxious political season, I refer you the words of Saint Paul in his Letter to the Galatians in which he correctly states that the unity we have in Jesus Christ overcomes all of our worldly divisions. “In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” The groups noted by Paul could easily be updated to include today’s political parties or any number of groups that you or I identify with. Remember that we are one in Christ: one Body, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.

I close this Chronicle with two collects from the Prayer Book. The first is for a civic election. The second is one that we will pray at the end of October. I think both are particularly appropriate as we move into one of the busiest seasons of the church and civic year.

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges: Guide the people of the United States and of this community in the election of officials and representatives; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and merciful God, it is only by your gift that your faithful people offer you true and laudable service: Grant that we may run without stumbling to obtain your heavenly promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

In Christ and with fondest affection,



The Reverend Matthew Hossie Mead, Rector