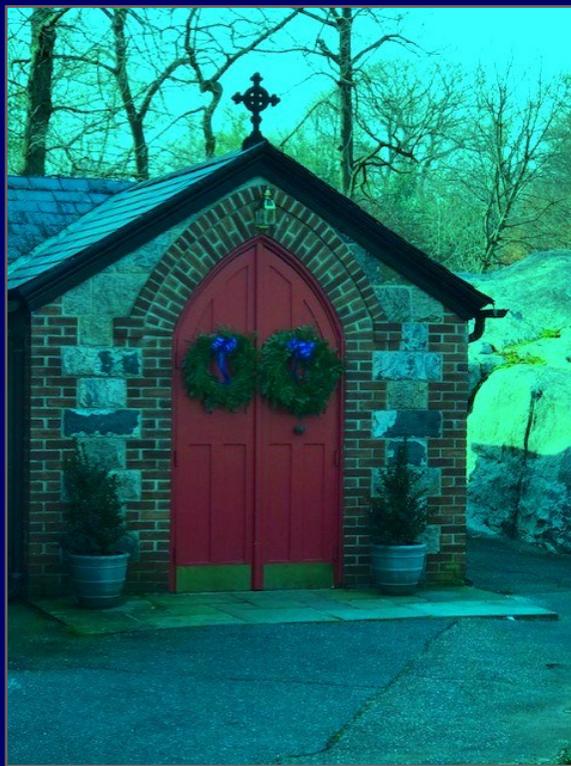


Soundings

THE NEWSLETTER OF CHRIST CHURCH

December 2018



Parish of Christ The Redeemer

Pelham, New York

1843 ~ 2018

Celebrating 175 Years

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Soundings is published by the parishioners of Christ Church to teach, provide information, promote events and parish life, to pass down the history of the church, and engage us in the life of the community.

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Soundings

The Newsletter of Christ Church

Episcopal/Anglican

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What's On Matt's Mind?

Pilgrimage



A Pilgrim's Reflections

Several mornings they rose well before dawn and went about the task of being pilgrims in the Holy Land at a brisk pace on long days with little in the way of down time.

Was it worth it?

In his blog post on Day 4 of the 10-day pilgrimage, Fr. Matt offered an early answer to that question, writing from Bethlehem: "No one has gotten the spark at every site, but everyone has been walloped by the spirit somewhere."

In early October, Soundings sat down with Fr. Matt and asked him about his experience as part of a group of 41 pilgrims drawn roughly evenly from our church and our former rector Randy Alexander's new parish in northern Virginia. With the benefit of hindsight, Matt still called it "a fantastic trip". But he did grant that the pilgrimage required not only ample amounts of physical stamina and bible study, but a reservoir of patience and an ability to envision a cleaner, quieter,

less congested Holy Land than the one that the group witnessed in August.

"Everyone was expecting all sorts of things in all sorts of places," he said, noting that often the reality fell short.

He hastened to add that pilgrims are not tourists and that they have higher ambitions than having fun and taking in pretty sights. He also pointed out that Jesus himself sometimes went off into the desert to pray alone, but that he often did so in large crowds. "The whole point of Christianity is that God is with us and he suffers with us," said Matt.

God is also present in our moments of joy. For our pilgrims, that came a number of

times in a variety of places, including an ancient cave dwelling in Bethlehem that is said to closely resemble the one where Jesus was born 2,000 years ago. In that



dark uncrowded place, our pilgrims' faith blossomed anew as they broke into Christmas carols, including "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Angels We Have Heard on High".

"We also sang "Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth..." Matt said. "These are the same words we sing in Church every Sunday, but there we did it in the exact context of the angels singing to the shepherds on Christmas."

Matt noted that no two pilgrims likely agreed on which sites they found most meaningful, moving, or even beautiful. But among his personal favorites was one place he visited twice, the Western Wall in Jerusalem. There reality far exceeded expectations.

"For one thing it's absolutely huge," he said. "There was a palpable sense of God there. It was painful, heavy, emotional and very unexpected."

In his blog that second day of the pilgrimage, he wrote: "I approached the Wall, placed my hand on it



The Western Wall

and got walloped by the presence of God in a way I've rarely felt. I began to weep."

He had a similarly moving experience at the Sea of Galilee, which he described as "one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen."

At other times, however, the heat, the hordes of people and heaps of trash made it hard to find, much less appreciate the holiness of the place. "The Jordan River was great except for the couches floating in it," he said. "People treat the Holy Land like a dump."

And then there were the light-hearted moments that smacked more of the simple pleasures of having a good time in an exotic place. One of those came on Day 9 when many of our pilgrims donned their bathing suits and went to the beach at the Dead Sea in the 103° heat and then ambled down the shore to what was billed as the lowest bar on Earth, for passion fruit smoothies. "You must do it," wrote Matt. "It's sublime."

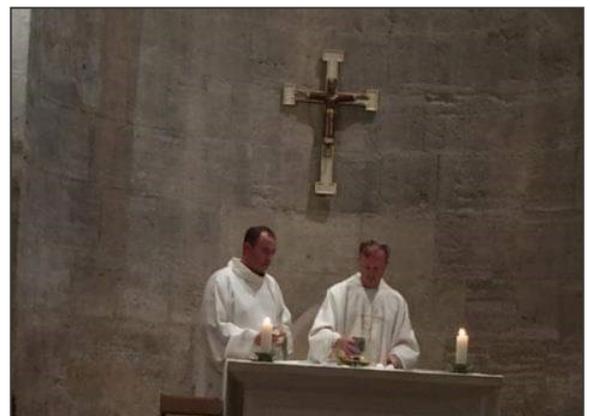
- As told to Erik Ipsen



The Sea of Galilee



The Judean Desert



Celebrating the Eucharist

Getting to Know The Reverend Canon Susan Harriss

By Carla Carroll



The Rev. Canon Susan Harriss loves Joni Mitchell. Her favorite color is green. Thanksgiving is her favorite holiday, and her nickname is Susie.

And there's so much more.

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Canon Susan comes from a long line of Salvation Army officers, one that includes both her parents and grandparents. As an Army child,

she moved around a lot. She attended schools in South Carolina, West Virginia, and Maryland. At Denison University in Ohio, she majored in English with an emphasis on writing. Later she earned a master's degree from New York's Union Theological Seminary.

"I started thinking about entering the ministry when I was 13, but realized that the Salvation Army wasn't the path I wanted to pursue. I thought about a career in journalism or in the theater, but at Denison I decided to go to seminary."

"It was there that I became attracted to the Episcopal Church", she says. "I found the strong support base for Episcopal women to be what I wanted to be a part of."

Early on in seminary, Canon Susan also began to mentor women, and has written gender-neutral liturgies. Still, while she's looking forward to the looming revision of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, she has some reservations about changes made in recent years. "Look at hymns like "Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven", which has stripped away gender, stripped away the personal. I don't think we meant to do that." Another ongoing concern for Canon Susan is the struggle for racial justice. "It has been a major part of my life in the Episcopal Church since the beginning." She was ordained at St. Michael's in Manhattan, one of the largest immigrant parishes in the city. St. Michael's also boasts a strong gay community.

For Canon Susan, one of the best ways to combat racial bias is for people of diverse backgrounds to sit, talk and eat with each other. "We need more contact," she explains. "Since I've worked in the suburbs, I'm more surprised how few white people have black friends. Talking to a black friend about things like Black Lives Matter, when you're white – the understanding doesn't come out until there's a real relationship. That's vital."

In recent years she has co-chaired the Racism Task Force for the New York Diocese.

Canon Susan is married to Ken Ruge, the former senior minister for the Reformed Church of America in Bronxville. They have three grown children:

-Kirsten, 35, lives in Minneapolis, works in software and is an avid weightlifter. She is also a drummer in a heavy metal band.

-Edmund, 30, recently spent a year in Rio de Janeiro, studying Portuguese. He worked with the Peace Corps in Mozambique, and now hopes to go into government service.

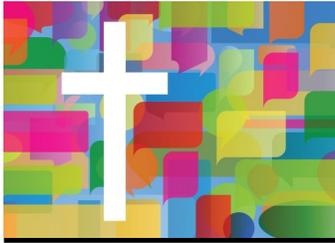
-Amanda, 26, lives in Los Angeles, where she will attend graduate school. She has worked as a childcare worker for foster children.

Canon Susan is looking forward for opportunities to "preach and teach" at Christ Church; she is eager to support and relieve Father Matt when possible. "I enjoy preaching, and I teach as I preach", she says. She has a strong interest in interfaith ministry and in late October she gave a talk in the library on "The Faith of Mohammed" emphasizing the common roots of Islam and Christianity.

And in case you still want to know more? Her favorite book is "A Wrinkle in Time" by Madeleine L'Engle, and she loves to be outdoors, hiking.

She's also a certified yoga instructor.

Parish of Christ the Redeemer
Fall 2018



Adult Christian Learning Ministry Fall Program

Join Us

Advent

Jesus, A Pilgrimage

POSTPONED TO A FUTURE DATE in 2019

The Annunciation and Birth of Jesus

Chapters 1-5 *Please read in advance*

Fr. Matt will lead this first of four visual book club presentations and discussions using this book by Fr. James Martin, SJ.

This very readable book is a mixture of Bible Study, travelogue, spirituality, and archeology. It served as a companion to our Pilgrims who visited the Holy Land in August. Our first session will focus on the Annunciation and the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

Lenten Retreat at Holy Cross

March 15 - March 17, 2019

Join Fr. Matt on a Lenten Retreat led by Fr. Martin L. Smith. Fr. Martin L. Smith is well known throughout the Episcopal Church and beyond for his explorations of contemporary spirituality through workshops, retreats, preaching, and widely read books, including *The Word is Very Near You*, *A Season for the Spirit*, *Reconciliation*, *Compass and Stars*, *Love Set Free*, and recently - with the Rev. Julia Gatta - *Go in Peace: the Art of Hearing Confessions*. He has over thirty years of experience in training and supervising preachers and spiritual directors. Now retired, he makes Washington, DC his base for a roving ministry of spiritual formation and teaching.

Cost per person is \$365. We have reserved 20 spaces at the retreat house – a nonrefundable deposit of \$100 is due to the Parish Office (check to Christ Church, note “Lenten Retreat”) to reserve your space.

More information at: <https://holycrossmonastery.com/events/lenten-retreat-with-martin-smith/>

Deacon's Letter

Pastoral Visits



In my training to become deacon, I had one year in which the focus was on pastoral counseling. I was trained by a priest at the hospital in Mt. Kisco. We were to go into a room, and if the patient wanted prayers, to pray with them. Sometimes they just wanted to express their fears and concerns so we were told to listen and not try to “fix” things.

Early on I entered a room and saw that the patient was on breathing equipment that made it impossible for her to speak. Instead I chatted with her husband sitting by her bed. I was touched by his stories of the many wonderful things in their life together. When our conversation ended, I asked if he would like to pray. Then I put one hand on his wife's arm and with my other hand, I held his. I prayed, then together we recited the Lord's Prayer.

Even though he quietly wept, I felt joy that I had been of some help and comfort to him. The following week, I went back to that room, but a nurse told me the patient had died. It is still with me--our conversation, the husband's love for his wife and the moment of prayer.

Many years later, as a deacon, I went to visit a parishioner at New Rochelle Hospital. When I asked for the room number of the person I had come to visit, a nurse standing nearby asked if I could help her. She had, in her care, a very young new mother who refused to leave the hospital with her baby until the baby had received a blessing. I accompanied the nurse to the

maternity ward where I saw the mother and an adorable infant in a crib. The mother looked so relieved to see me. There was a doctor and three nurses in the room. I asked if any were Christian, and they all said yes, so I invited them to come over to pray with us. I said a short prayer, and then we all said the Lord's Prayer and I put oil on the baby's forehead with the sign of the cross. For me, and I think for all of them, it was a particularly spiritual moment.

Most of my visits fill me with joy. I have learned to take Jesus with me. I have a picture in my mind of how he looks. I ask him to come with me and to stand by me and the person I am visiting.

“For where two or more are gathered in my name, I will be there.” *Matthew 18:20*

Wherever the visits occur, either at home or a hospital, when the person feels better, I know Jesus has joined us. When a person is at home or in a nursing home, I like to take a parishioner with me. It then becomes a church visit that truly lifts everyone up.

However joyful I feel after a visit; pastoral care cannot be taken lightly. Hospital visits should never exceed 20 minutes because, although most patients are happy to have company, they may tire quickly. Also, when I bring the Eucharist, I have to be sure my hands are sanitized and my communion kit is sanitary. Visiting and taking the Eucharist are part of the true joys of being a Deacon.

Blessings,

Deacon Katie

Ephesians 4:11-13 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

Buildings Committee Hits Roof

By Kari Black,

Chair of the Buildings Committee

In recent months it has been all about the church roof. After a very soggy start to September, our roofers took advantage of a good stretch of dry weather and shifted into high gear on the roof above the church. The project aimed to replace the flat roof, remove small amounts of asbestos, replace slate tiles on the north-facing roof over the altar and worn tiles elsewhere, replace downspouts, install two additional drains, and replace the lightning-protection system. Asbestos abatement and removal of the flat roof was performed by Guiliano Environmental, while Mariani Restoration and Roofing did the rest.

In addition to the roof work, the masonry part of the project was conducted by Jerome Celestino. His crew dismantled and rebuilt the original crenelated stone parapet and buttresses (the castle-like bits) under the supervision of Mariani. We are grateful for the professionalism demonstrated by these three companies. We also extend thanks to Russ Watsky, the diocesan roof expert. Russ managed the bid process, paving the way for the buildings committee and vestry together to choose Mariani as the finalist. He also made many trips to the parish to make sure the work was done in a timely and professional manner. Russ also provided recommendations when the need for additional work was discovered.

The completion of this project was a major step in restoring each of the roofs at Christ Church to good working order.

This meant that the roof over the Ranck Building (church offices, library and classrooms) became our oldest one. In early October, funding efforts took off when the Diocesan Property Support Committee agreed to chip in \$60,000 to help rebuild the 52-year-old roof and days later the Bedell Fund provided us

with a \$115,000 grant to complete the work.

The Buildings Ministry also oversees the budget for our annual buildings-related recurring expenses. Those include working with our consultants at Parish Property Management, as well as monitoring all alarms, and tracking boiler and air conditioning service, exterminator, and supplies.

One of the most joyful moments this year came with the reinstallation of the historic Roosevelt plaque,

which had been removed after leaks were found in the wall. With much gratitude, we thank the donation from an anonymous parishioner that allowed this plaque to be installed without additional impact to the buildings budget.

Other work completed this year included early spring projects that addressed water management issues at the Rectory (held over from 2017 plans): outdoor spigot replacement, installation of a new water main and interior shut-off valve for the garage spigot. The Rectory is also on tap to get a new washing machine soon.

The 2018 budget includes a number of other projects around campus that fall in to the repair category. These are not particularly glamorous items, but they need to be addressed in order to ensure the longevity of our buildings.

Looming large for the buildings committee in the final weeks of the year will be work preparing next year's budget, as well as securing bids for the Level 2 Capital Campaign projects.



We Had a Little Walk With Jesus

By Charlette Finch

One of the first things I did after arriving at Christ Church two years ago was to join the Bible Study Group to get a deeper understanding of my Christian beliefs. Later, when I saw the news of our parish's planned pilgrimage to the Holy Land, I saw it as a perfect opportunity to deepen my faith. What's more, the trip would be led by our rector, Rev. Matthew Mead along with his predecessor, Rev. Randy Alexander, now rector of Immanuel on the Hill in Alexandria, Virginia. Current and past members of both churches would be part of the experience. I quickly signed up. Preparation included many suggested readings. One of my favorites is Father James Martin's book, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, which cleared-up some of my misconceptions and offered valuable insights. Finally, after months of anticipation and a 10½-hour flight, we found ourselves fully immersed in exploring the land at the crossroads of the world's three great monotheistic religions, Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

All of us, I think, were awestruck to be traveling through the land where Jesus was born, lived, died and was resurrected. Along the way, we met priests who literally put their lives on the line to protect their Christian faith. We walked along in the rough terrain looking at the vast land taking in its mountains, deserts and deep valleys.

We had constant reminders that we were standing on land Jesus had traversed 2,000 years ago, even though many places had been radically changed over the centuries by wars as well as new construction. Today many "historic" structures are replicas of ones long ago destroyed. But through our Christian guide's

historical, cultural, social and political presentations, we learned much about the world in which Jesus had lived. In addition, at many sites we read stories from scripture set in those places.

Over the days, I also gained a deeper awareness of other religious groups, people whom we saw passionately practicing and defending their religion and the places from which it sprang. In Jesus time there was plenty of social, political and religious strife. Today it continues.

Jerusalem is the jewel in the crown of the Holy Land. For Christians, it is a place we connect with the last years in the life of Jesus. For Jews, it was enshrined in the hearts of believers as the site of Solomon's temple and more. And for Muslims, Jerusalem is the site of El Aksa, the point from which Mohammed ascended to heaven.

Our pilgrimage had different sorts of highlights, from the educational and the spiritual to the emotional and the social. We were based at the lovely St. George's Pilgrim Guest House. Its quiet courtyard was ideal for our two groups of pilgrims that by the end had become one. There we gathered and shared impressions and experiences of the day.

What also helped knit us together was that the day we arrived, each of us got a prayer partner and travel partner, someone whom we looked for at each site and made sure that they got back on the bus.

I will always remember how I woke up each morning looking forward to the activity for the day. I will also fondly recall our final hours, when we visited the Dead Sea and afterwards gave our travel partner a gift.



Baptisms

*You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism
and marked as Christ's own for ever.*

Amen. BCP

*Isabella Karis Davis Elliott
Baptized on July 1, 2018*



*Olivia Jane Lawlor
Baptized on September 16, 2018*



The First Day of Church School

By Scarlett Carroll

The summer had just come to an end, and the 2018-2019 school year was just beginning when on Sunday, September 16th we had the first day of church school in our parish. Twenty eight children registered for this year's classes, according to Eileen Hoffer, our current Church School Director.

Mrs. Hoffer noted that there were seven in the pre-k through kindergarten class, and they spent their first lesson discussing the Creation. Four-year-old Kenzie Munro loves to supplement the lessons with arts and crafts, and said that her favorite thing to do in Church School is to hear bible stories.

Her brother, seven-year-old Aiden, also spent the first Sunday of Church School drawing pictures in class, and added that "my favorite person in the bible is the baby Jesus!".

Pat O'Byrne teaches first through third grades,

and said that she welcomed 15 kids to her first class. "We spent the first day getting to know each other, and we talked about the baby Jesus and what's in a name - what his or her name means, and what it symbolizes."

She added that each Sunday School lesson parallels the Gospel lesson that each child's parent learns about in church.

Annual events which are beloved by all students include Christmas ornament making, tree decorating with Jack Kraft, the Easter Egg Hunt and Seder, the Halloween party, and making cards for Mother's and Father's Day.

Shannon Corley and Curtis Chase also are dedicated teachers for this year's Church School.

Registration is still open for children aged pre-k through seventh grade, and volunteer teachers are welcome.



Blessing the Backpacks

A Party 175 Years in the Making

By Erik Ipsen

Finally! One hundred seventy-five years and sixteen days after the consecration of Christ Church, the party to mark that milestone kicked off on the far side of the Shore Road at the New York Athletic Club on a warm early autumn evening. On hand to serenade the 165 guests, stood four parishioners dressed in period, mid-19th century costumes--the Boltonaires, musical descendants of our church's founder Rev. John Bolton. Across the way was a long table filled with silent-auction items from restaurant meals to Yankees tickets.

In the dining room Father Matt, our 15th and current rector introduced numbers 14 and 13, Rev. Randy Alexander and Rev. David Hoag, as well as Amy Paulin, who represents Pelham in the NY State Assembly. She praised the church as a "famous institution".

Praise also flowed for the event's tireless organizer, Cherrie Greenhalgh and her committee co-chair, Claire Allen. Those thanks did not reach their peak, however, until special-guest auctioneer, parishioner Michael Moynihan took the floor to find bidders for three special items: a diamond necklace, a week in a parishioner's upstate lakeside home, and dinner for eight prepared by a Daniel Boulud-trained Master Chef.

Turning to Cherrie, he placed a faux crown on her head announcing: "I proclaim you Queen of the Gala," a move which won rousing applause.

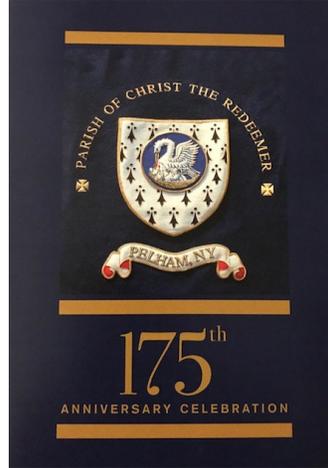
Later Michael managed to find not one but a surprising two sets of buyers for the catered dinner at a price of \$5,000 each. All in all, the live and silent auctions netted nearly \$20,000 for the Church's ongoing capital campaign.

By the end of the night, a good time was had by all, including the dozens who took to the dance floor after dinner. As Cherrie summed things up: "We recall our history; we celebrate our present; and we look forward to and plan for our future."

The commemoration of the church's founding continued on Sunday morning with the reverends Hoag and Alexander joining Father Matt at the altar, and with Rev. Patty Alexander (Randy's wife) in the front pew.

In his introductory remarks that Sunday, Fr. Matt noted that the weekend's celebrations focused only "partly" on the church's historic home. More importantly he described it as "a celebration of the people who have found God in this place. It is the people who are precious to God."





The Verger's Corner

The Pilgrimage



In August I went on the Holy Land Pilgrimage. It's something I'd thought about doing many times. Now with Fr. Matt and Fr. Randy leading this one, I knew I had to go, and I am glad I did.

At the very outset, I decided I would not have any preconceived notions of what I was going to see and do. Instead I would take things as they came. I just didn't think the uniqueness of the experience would hit me as soon as it did.

Point 1

We departed from Newark Airport in darkness on a 10:50 flight. In the dimly lit cabin most people tried to catch up on sleep or watch movies, until next thing I knew we had flown into a new day. With the light beginning to stream in, I noticed movement. Hasidic Jews were putting on Prayer Shawls and gathering by the exit rows where they started bowing and praying. Many non-Orthodox Jews stayed seated but began to pray also. I had never seen this on a flight. I had no idea some Jews prayed at the crack of dawn every day. But then I had never been around Hasidic Jews at that hour. I recalled that Saint Paul was a Jew, and I remembered Thessalonians 5:16-18:

*Rejoice evermore.
Pray without ceasing.
In everything give thanks:
for this is the will of God in
Christ Jesus concerning you.*

What I was witnessing was a tradition, unchanged for well over 2,000 years.

Point 2

Yes, the tensions between Jews and Arabs are very real. In a conversation with an ex-Israeli soldier, I thought he nailed it when he told me: "Religion rules in Jerusalem." How true that was, for better and for

worse. The wall that separates Israel and Palestine is one proof of that.

Point 3

As we went from place to place, we always read scriptures that related to that location. For me the list of incredible moments marrying holy texts with my surroundings was awesome.

- We stood in the fields near where the shepherds stood when the Angel Gabriel appeared and told them of the Birth of Christ.
- We stood in the Judean Desert and celebrated a Eucharist at sunrise.
- We said prayers at the Western Wall.
- We prayed in the garden of Gethsemane.
- We drank water taken from Jacob's Well.
- We walked along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, waters Christ calmed and also walked upon.
- We floated high in the Dead Sea.
- We saw the remains of the walls of Jericho.
- We actually walked the real!!! Stations of the Cross.

Point 4

During the week, we said Morning Prayer in English in the Chapel in the Cathedral of St. George in Jerusalem as our guide, Bishara, in the background recited it in Arabic (the contrast sounded pretty cool).

On Sunday we went to St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Ramallah. The Eucharist was so familiar, the Acolytes were in red, the frontals on the Altar were Green (Pentecost), but the Eucharist was in both English and Arabic.

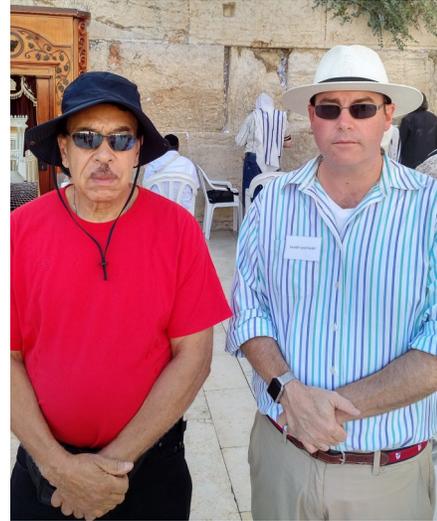
Point 5

Many times during the day and evening I went into St. George's Cathedral alone to pray. I confess that once as I knelt at the High Altar, I noticed the Frontal was crooked. The verger in my bones made me go up, reset the Altar and straighten the frontals. Whew!

Point 6

I am still trying to process this pilgrimage. I have

walked (and floated) in Holy Places and touched Holy things. It's all pretty astonishing.



The Vergers' Conference

A couple of weeks after I returned home, I went to the 30th annual conference of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church, at Saint John's Cathedral in Denver. It is an opportunity to learn more about the verger ministry and spend time with vergers from around the US and the world. Our Keynote Speaker was Nadia Bolz-Weber, the founder of *House for All Sinners and Saints* in Denver and author of *"Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People"* (Convergent, 2015) and others.

Serving our Lord Together,
Walter, Verger

Outreach for Animals

One of our outreach drives this fall was in honor of the feast of St Francis of Assisi and the blessing of the animals. Once again our parishioners were generous to our furry friends in need.



Donations to the Mount Vernon Animal Shelter.

Did You Know?

The Garden of the Resurrection

By Barbara Nelson

I have long been intrigued by our Garden of the Resurrection and its atmosphere of tranquility and repose and wondered about its history. Very few people know much about the history, so in addition to asking around, I consulted the 1942 vestry meeting minutes, read a couple of historical pamphlets, and toured the columbarium several times. This is what I learned.

On April 12, 1942 Rector Robert Taggard called a special vestry meeting to announce a \$500 offer from an anonymous donor to build an outdoor altar and columbarium walls on the rocky knoll behind the church. Three vestrymen, from the gardens and the buildings committees, were assigned to oversee construction. At a meeting a month later, the vestry voted to limit interment rights in the newly named Garden of the Resurrection solely to Christ Church members.

The \$500 donor turned out to be Hildegarde Whitaker Gause, wife of vestry member Edmund Gause. She made her donation in memory of Mary Sargent Gause and Roland Southworth Hubbell.



By June of that year, the Garden's first 68 niches were already nearing completion. More were added in 1950 and 1961. And in 1988 Rector David Hoag had additional spaces carved out of the wall that runs along the backside of the parish offices.

Today we have four levels of niches: two lower ones outside the wrought iron gate, and two upper ones inside the gate. The oldest section is on the top level



near the green marble altar and simple wooden cross. The Saint Francis statue with two birds (located slightly above the middle of the second level) came in memory of Hilliard Courtland Birney who died in 1945.

The praying angel to the right outside of the gate was a gift from Emily Kane in 2008 in honor of Jill Driscoll, long-time parish secretary. She is interred on the first level niches near the rectory driveway. Emily's parents and her husband, George, are all interred in the Garden.



A large part of the Garden of the Resurrection qualifies as a columbarium (walls with niches for urns containing ashes of the dead). Each niche bears a bronze plaque with the name and dates of birth and demise of the person interred. Many relatives like to leave flowers, stones or Christmas wreaths. Nancy Marvel's plaque to the left of the altar is frequently surrounded by her beloved frog figurines left by friends.

Past or present membership in Christ Church remains a requirement for interment. Currently the columbarium is home to 338 people and more are added every year. Space in each niche allows one to three urns with ashes of loved ones. For more information, including details on purchasing a niche, contact Marie Main in the Parish Office, (914) 738-5515 ext. 105.

Aside from a columbarium, the garden itself is some-

times used for baptisms and Easter services. The beautiful white marble baptismal font is thought to have come from Christ the Redeemer Church in north Pelham after its merger with our parish in the late 1970s. Years ago baptisms were regularly performed at the font on Memorial Day, weather permitting. This summer we had several baptisms there.



At Easter time the lighting of the “new fire”, often done by Jack Kraft, takes place at twilight on the top level near the altar. There you’ll also find the choir singing as they tightly clutch their music to keep it from blowing away.

Alice Dean and the Grounds Committee do a wonderful job of maintaining the Garden. Why not take a leisurely stroll through this tranquil spot and see for yourself? The easiest way to get there is through the door between the Sacristy and the Vestry (aka, your

first right after leaving church headed towards the parish hall). Once you are outside, turn left and walk up the short flight of stairs.



Women's Connection

By Etta Gumbs

On October 28, the Women’s Connection held a potluck luncheon co-chaired by Angela Barone and Charlette Finch. The luncheon drew nearly fifty parishioners who supplied an amazing array of dishes. During lunch the attendees had time to catch up with one another and make new friends. The featured speaker, Canon Susan Harriss, shared her path to the priesthood and spoke about her family history in the Salvation Army as well as her experiences growing up in a Salvation Army household. The attendees learned many fascinating aspects of the Salvation Army, its ministry and women’s role within it. As members of the Salvation Army, her parents, both brigadier generals, preached the gospel and lived a life of service that provided a foundation of faith for Canon Harriss. Canon Harriss also discussed her path to the Episcopal Church, her journey from Denison University to Union Theological Seminary and her eventual ordination. Canon Harriss’ talk closed with an appreciative round of applause from the attendees who were very grate-

ful to Canon Harriss for sharing her story and thoughts.

Etta Gumbs is the vestry liaison for the Women’s Connection. Please reach out to Etta if you would like to host an event or have an idea for a future Women’s Connection event.



In the photograph, Canon Susan Harriss shares two framed images (one of which is held by Carol) in telling about her family’s history.

ISRAEL

Forty One Pilgrims

By Etta Gumbs

In August I visited the Holy Land as one of forty-one pilgrims, 19 from our parish and 22 from Father Randy Alexander's in Virginia. To prepare us for our journey a recommended reading list was circulated. As our departure date neared, Christ Church pilgrims started checking in with each other with a host of questions and concerns: Did you finish "Jesus: A Pilgrimage" by Martin (everyone did); Can I download the Bible (yes); Are you bringing a prayer book (some did); What is the luggage weight limit (uh oh).

On arrival in Jerusalem, we checked in at St. George's Guest House, a quiet oasis with grapefruit, lime and olive trees in its inner courtyard and a tabby kitten welcoming us at the door. All forty-one pilgrims were finally together. Our first evening we prayed together, gave thanks for our safe journeys, and shared our first meal. Over the next ten days, we would share our meals, our prayers and experiences.

That first evening we were asked two questions: What do you hope to leave behind; and what do you hope to gain from this pilgrimage? We were also asked to draw a name of a fellow pilgrim from a bag and keep that person in our prayers over the course of our travels.

The experience of walking and praying in places where Jesus walked, prayed and taught is extraordinary. The Holy Eucharist at St. Andrew's Anglican

Church said in Arabic and English in Ramallah was one of many highlights. It was a reminder that on any given Sunday the worldwide Anglican Communion is saying the same prayers no matter what the language.

A pilgrimage is at times a solitary journey of faith, discovery and refectation. However, as we climbed Herodium, walked Jerusalem's Old City, travelled to Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee, prayed the Stations of the Cross, prayed at the Western Wall, at Calvary, at the Edicule of Jesus' tomb, renewed our baptismal vows at the River Jordan and celebrated the Eucharist, this pilgrimage also became a collective journey. Each Holy site we visited, each Eucharist we shared connected us.

Our last day was a free day. The group I was with walked the Old City for the final time before deciding on a place for lunch. Unsurprisingly, most of the other pilgrims found their way to each other by picking that same place.

Our pilgrimage started with two questions:

- What do you hope to leave behind?
- What do you hope to gain from this pilgrimage?

I would guess that all of us moved a little closer to leaving behind the things we mentioned. As for gaining all we hoped, I pray that everyone gained far more than they expected.





Tenor, Michael Imbimbo

By Erik Ipsen



When the music director at Michael Imbimbo's church in Middlebury, Connecticut suggested that he try out for one of the nation's top choirs, his parents leaped at the idea.

As Michael remembers it: "I just kind of went with the flow and before I knew it I found myself in boarding school." The school was for boys in the renowned Men and Boys Choir at Saint Thomas in Manhattan. Michael was just nine years old when he arrived, joined a class of four boys and began singing at seven services a week, hundreds each year. "I sang church music, church music and more church music," he says. Not only that, he did so at a church whose headmaster had held that post at London's Westminster Abbey, and whose rector was Reverend Andrew Mead, father of Matthew.

When Michael left four years later to enroll at Choate Rosemary Hall, a Connecticut prep school, one of the first things he did was to join their choir. In it he again did well, albeit with a far broader range of music, not to mention academic work.

Oddly enough, it wasn't until 2003, when he went off to college at McGill University in Montreal and took voice lessons two days a week that as Michael puts it, "I learned how to sing properly." At McGill he also founded the Opera da Camera, a company which aimed to expand awareness and appreciation for opera.

After a brief stint inserting music in video games from "Rock Band" to "Boogie Super Star", he moved to California. There he attended the San Francisco School of Music, sang in several operas, and struggled to make a living. Back in New York City he signed on with IMG, a huge talent agency to see how artists line up big roles. He quickly discovered he liked the business but not the bureaucracy and decided to found his own firm.

Six years later 9Muse represents 50 clients working in TV and on Broadway in shows from "Jersey Boys" to "Difficult People."

In 2012, Michael saw a post on Facebook by someone looking for a tenor section leader. It ended: For further information email Jeffrey@christchurchpelham.org Several weeks later he signed on to be one of our four professional choristers and has settled in happily. "We do more interesting and varied works than most choirs and the volunteer choristers are really strong," he says. "Everyone holds their own."



Today he and his partner Jason live in Mount Vernon with their cats Al and Max, a mutt that Michael found in Montreal and hikes with in local parks as far afield as Bear Mountain. As for his house, a mid-century fixer-upper, that he found via parishioner Didi Hayduk's daughter, a real estate broker, "I'd never heard of Mt. Vernon, but I love it."



Our Fabulous Section Leaders

Christ Church Kids and Counselors Celebrate Vacation Bible School

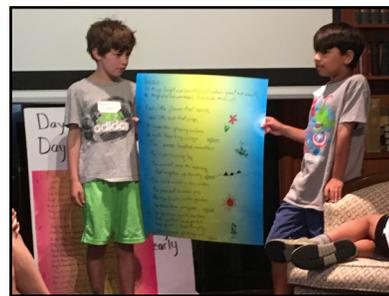
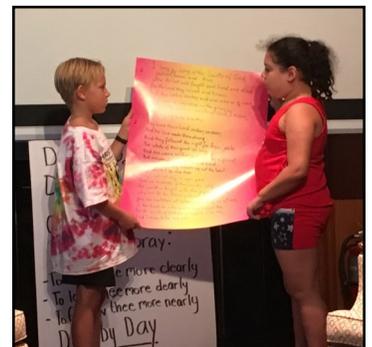
By Carla Carroll

Twelve campers and 10 teenage and adult counselors gathered for three fun-filled mornings from August 21-23, to participate in Christ Church's Vacation Bible School (VBS) summer camp.

The first VBS to be held in our parish for many years, this year's camp was filled with engaging and downright enjoyable activities. They included a morning sing-along and bible lesson led by Margo Hastings; designing and making tie-dyed camp shirts with tie-dye specialist Scarlett Carroll; pony rides provided by Michael Moynihan; outdoor water play on the Slip and Slide, a kickball tournament plus snack and story time, and a daily music lesson taught by Jeffrey Hoffman at day's end.

Meanwhile, a scavenger hunt gave our campers an opportunity to look for unusual and hard-to-find features both inside and outdoors ("find a gold doorknob in the shape of a lion's head, find a statue of St. Francis, ring the church bell"). Camp counselor Liam Mead was surprised to find that a photo of himself was one of the requirements!

Running and playing and learning can make a kid hungry, so the final day of VBS was reserved for a cupcake/ice cream party, which was followed by a graduation ceremony, where each camper received a Certificate of Achievement from VBS director Carla Carroll.



Time Well Spent

Mildred Johnson Kicks Up Her Red Cowboy Boots

By Erik Ipsen



When an Afghan airliner pulled up to the gate at Kennedy International Airport in the early 1970s and the entire crew—including captain—announced they wanted asylum, it was Mildred Johnson who ultimately found them housing. “I’d call up churches and talk with their priests

and ask if they had any room for refugees,” said Mildred, recalling the years she spent working at the Episcopal Church headquarters in Manhattan helping to do just that. And as she recalls, most parishes found it hard to say “no” to “that nice young woman calling from 815”, a reference to the diocese’s street address on Second Avenue by which it is known to this day.

Born in 1938 in El Paso, Texas, the daughter of a Chinese printing-company owner, Mildred has gotten around. As a graduate of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, then a women’s Baptist school built largely for the daughters of local ranchers, she went on to teach high school art and history. She also watched as several of her students died in combat in Vietnam shortly after graduating, an experience that moved her to pay her respects to them at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC.

Around that time, she met Alfred Johnson, a lawyer turned Episcopal priest in Houston, who specialized in handling delicate racial issues for the church. Several years later, the couple married and moved to New York where Alfred had been offered a job at 815. Shortly thereafter, Mildred began teaching art at a high school in Harrison, New York. There she worked until 1973, 44 years after she had begun in Texas.

Not long after her husband died, Mildred began a new life at a new parish, Christ Church in Pelham. There then rector, David Hoag asked her to lead the youth

ministry. She quickly put together a program so popular that two other churches joined in. Through the years, Mildred continued to show her love of young people by furnishing our confirmands with corsages and boutonnieres. Parishioner Janet Kornfeld still remembers Mildred, wearing shiny red cowboy boots, leading the churches’ adults in line dancing lessons.

Early on she also turned her attention to the overgrown flower beds along the Ranck Building as a self-appointed garden committee of one. “On the first day, I showed up with plastic bags and garden tools and the police saw me and thought I was trying to vandalize the building,” she recalls. Later she moved on to the weeding and planting of the Garden of the Resurrection. With the help of parishioner Hildy Munch’s husband Frank, they replanted Easter lilies from the altar that still bloom every summer.

For many at Christ Church, though, Mildred is best remembered as the long-time head of the Hospitality Committee, crafter of innumerable Sunday breakfasts and organizer of countless events—and just as many clean-ups. “I did that for years and years, until (Father) Randy came and gave me Jackie (Kraft) as co-chair.” In the early 1980s Mildred also served on the vestry for the first of two terms, the first woman of color to do so.

Today Mildred still helps out around the church. Parishioner Missy Kisob, fondly recalls the breakfast that Mildred made for the choir last year, one for which she even remembered to include some gluten-free dishes for those choristers who are allergic.

A longtime resident of Portchester, Mildred shares her house with her two rescue dogs, Cinnamon and Sugar, and with a Hmong family of four whom she took in five years ago.

Blessing of Animals

“Blessed are you, Lord God, maker of all living creatures. You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air and animals on the land. You inspired St. Francis to call all of them his brothers and sisters. We ask you to bless [these] pets. By the power of your love, enable [them] to live according to your plan. May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation. Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures! Amen.”

Source: <https://www.franciscans.ie/blessing-of-pets-2/>



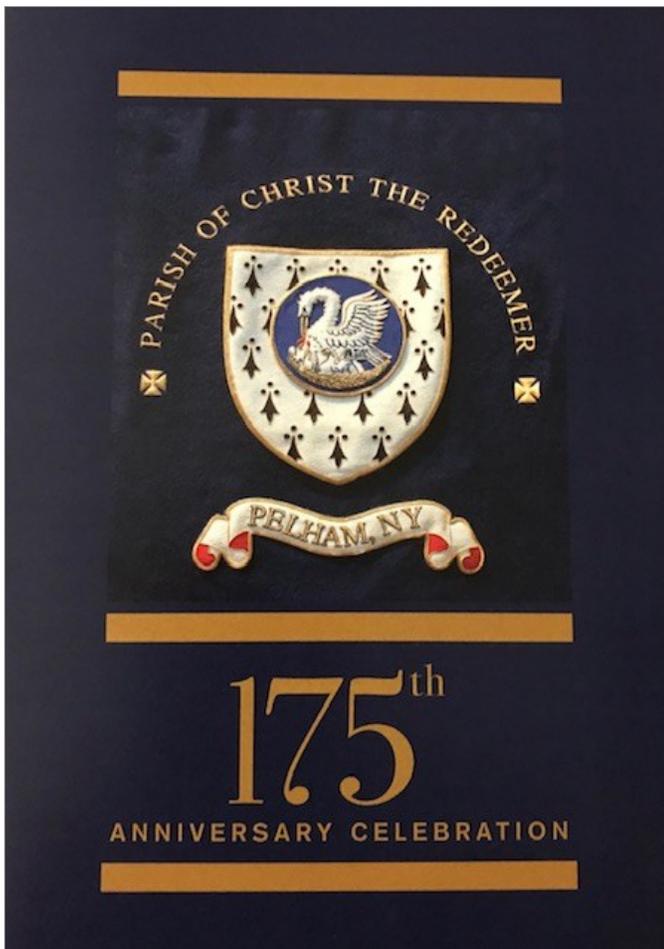
How to Celebrate Our 175th

By Claire Allen

When Father Matt assembled a committee to discuss potential activities around the anniversary year, it was with great enthusiasm and excitement that Cherrie Greenhalgh and I accepted the challenge of co-chairing the 175th anniversary celebration of Christ Church. With our love for the parish and parishioners, it didn't take long for us to commit. Once we all agreed on the New York Athletic Club as our lovely venue, everything started falling into place. Our very own quartet, The Boltonaires, set the tone for a lovely start to the evening in their period attire, and Center Stage Orchestra band (recommended by a parishioner) provided fabulous entertainment throughout the evening.

Our honored guests included esteemed clergy, local politicians, and several out-of-town folks who all seemed genuinely thrilled to celebrate this momentous occasion.

We would like to give a heartfelt thanks to our committee members who donated their time and talents to the event, especially Marie Main. The efforts were clearly a labor of love for so many people connected to our parish and, for that, we are truly grateful. Let's hope that twenty five years from now we will be singing, dancing, toasting and celebrating the 200th anniversary of this beautiful, spiritual place, Parish of Christ the Redeemer.









*175th
Celebration*



Around the Parish



Jazz in Hoag Hall



Halloween 2018



St. Nicholas Visits Bible Study



IN MEMORIAM



Father of all, we pray to you for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen.*



Charles C. Gadsden, Jr. of Mount Vernon, New York, passed away on Wednesday, August 22, 2018 at the age of 71 years. He was the eldest of the six children of former parishioners Charles and Marie Gadsden.



Andrew J. Zambelli

September 1, 1948 - October 26, 2018

The former Chief of Staff to Gov. Mario Cuomo and top advisor to his son, Governor Andrew Cuomo, died October 26 at the age of 70. Before turning to politics and public service, Zambelli worked as a neurobiologist. "He was of another era, a gentleman, humble, devoted, and selfless," said Andrew Cuomo. "He spent his life helping make this state a better place and always gave it his all." He is survived by his wife, retired Judge Barbara Zambelli of the Westchester County Court, a longtime Christ Church parishioner; as well as by son, Drew, and daughter, Katie.

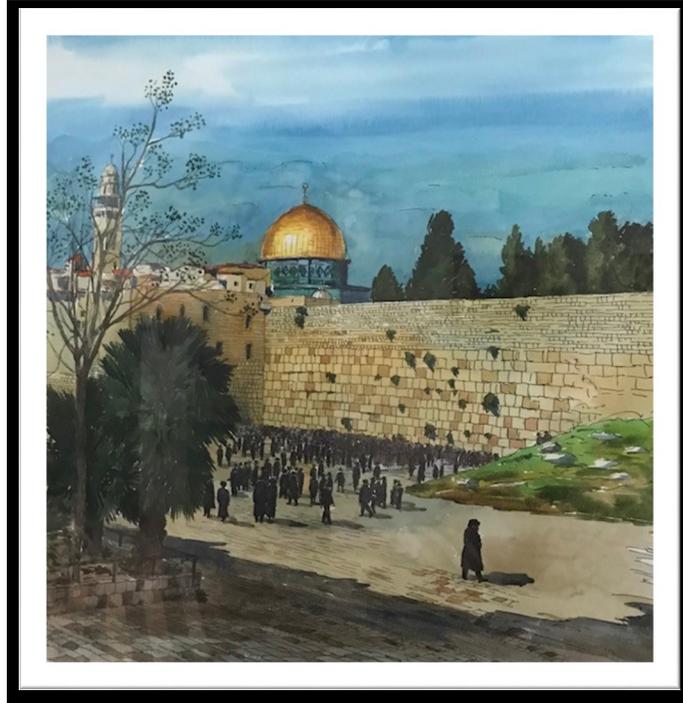
December 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Advent 1	3	4	5	6 10 am Bible study	7	8
9 Advent 2	10	11	12	13 10 am Bible study	14	15
16 Advent 3 8am Rite 1. 8:45am Prayers for Healing. 10am Rite 2. 10am Church School Christmas Carol Practice. 11am Prayers for Healing	17 10am Morning Prayer	18 10am Morning Prayer	19 10am Morning Prayer 4:00pm Children's Choir Rehearsal	20 10 am Bible study	21 Saint Thomas' Day	22
23 Advent 4 8am Rite 1 8:45am Prayers for Healing. 10am Rite 2 10am Church School, Bible Movie. 11am Prayers for Healing	24 Christmas Eve 4pm Family Eucharist 10pm Midnight Mass		26 Saint Stephen's Day	27 10 am Bible study	28 Holy Innocents' Day	29
30 8am Rite 1 8:45am Prayers for Healing 10am Rite 2 11am Prayers for Healing	31 New Year's Eve					

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BBLP—Brown Bag Lunch Program at Trinity St. Paul's Church New Rochelle		1 Holy Name & New Year's Day	2 4pm Children's Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Men's Groups sandwich making for BBLP	3 9am BBLP at Trinity St. Paul's 10 am Bible study	4	5
6 Epiphany 8am Rite 1. 8:45am Prayers for Healing 9am Men's Group Meeting. 10am Rite 2 10am Family Sunday 11am Prayers for Healing	7 7:30pm Girl Scout Leader Meeting, Library	8 10am Morning Prayer	9 4pm Children's Choir Rehearsal	10 10 am Bible study	11	12
13 Baptism of Jesus Christ 8am Rite 1.8:45am Prayers for Healing 10am Rite 2, Church School. 11am Prayers for Healing. 4pm Confirmation Class & Movie. 5pm Come as you are Eucharist	14	15 10am Morning Prayer	16 4pm Children's Choir Rehearsal	17 10 am Bible study	18	19
20 2 Epiphany 8am Rite 1. 8:45am Prayers for Healing 10am Rite 2, Church School Children's Movie. 11am Prayers for Healing	21	22 10am Morning Prayer	23 4pm Children's Choir Rehearsal	24 10 am Bible study	25 Conversion of Paul	26
27 3 Epiphany 8am Rite 1. 8:45am Prayers for Healing 10am Rite 2. 11am Prayers for Healing	28	29 10am Morning Prayer	30 4pm Children's Choir Rehearsal	31 10 am Bible study		



Pilgrimage

צליבות

2018

