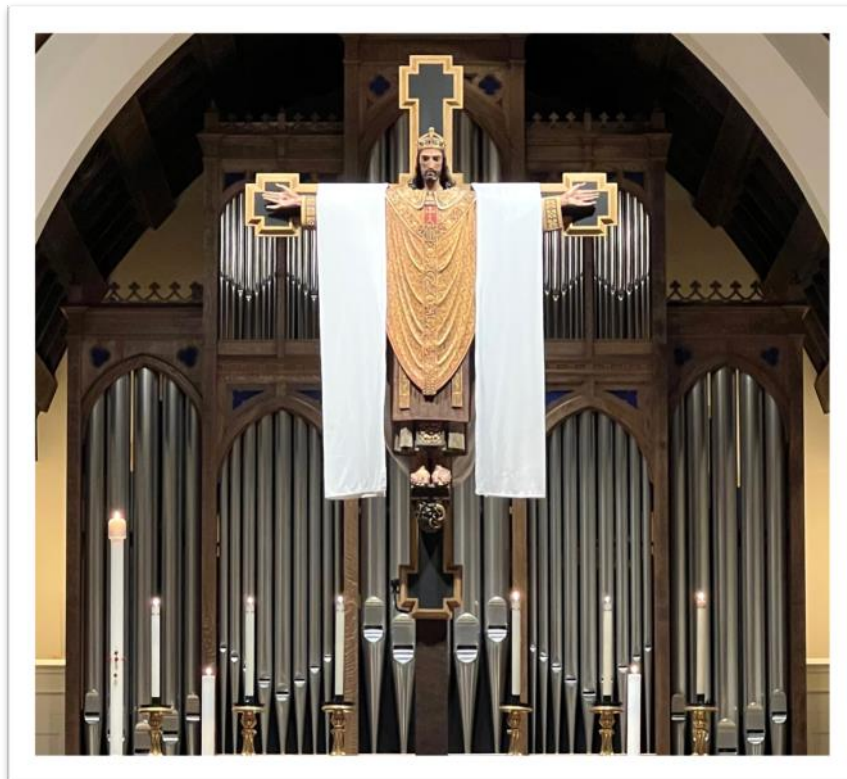
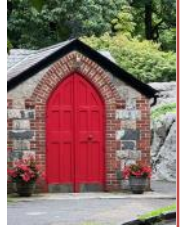


Soundings

The Newsletter of Christ Church Pelham

August 2024, Issue 15



Parish of Christ the Redeemer

1415 Pelhamdale Avenue ~ Pelham, New York 10803

All are welcome

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Producing *Soundings* is a labor of love. We thank you for your contributions and for taking the time to read it.

Peace,
The Soundings Team

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Soundings

The Newsletter of Christ Church

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From Father Matt: Growth in 2024-2025



Our last issue of Soundings was two years ago, and much has happened. In this issue, I want to focus on what we are doing to facilitate our Parish's growth and wellbeing.

Over the past two years we have had two major staffing changes. In mid 2023, I called Mr. Evan Felicetti as to serve as Director of Children's Ministries, a position that the parish had not had for more than a decade. In the first half of 2024, following an extended national search that yielded over 30 excellent candidates, I called Dr. Justin Bishof to serve as our new Director of Music. Also in 2024 we also began a much needed overhaul of our parish database and communications. This issue will include more information about our new staff members and their ministries, but I think it is important to share with you how happy I am with these changes and updates.

We are blessed and lucky to have Justin, and his title, Director of Music, reflects a change in the direction. Justin brings a desire, the talent, and track record to grow our children's music ministry, and he understands that children are essential to music at Christ Church. Similarly, he brings needed energy to revive our concert program. He has already programmed a robust concert series with several of the most sought-after organists in the New York area for 2024-2025 to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of our Juget-Sinclair pipe organ. Justin is, in his own right, a world-class organist and concert director who tours internationally, and we are fortunate that he will not only be part

of our concerts series each year, but playing the organ every Sunday – his improvisations, preludes, and postludes are marvelous. He has met with our choir members, and we are all excited for our upcoming choral season which begins on September 15 and how it develops throughout the year.

Justin and I are liturgically and musically on the same page, and I have enjoyed planning liturgy with him this summer as we move into the autumn. He is living on the parish grounds in the second-floor apartment of the old parish house, and he has already done much cleaning, updating, and reorganizing our music spaces. He has bonded with the staff and has made a great effort to meet and greet as many parishioners as possible in the past two months – despite the fact that he broke his foot a few days before he started and has been on crutches. If you haven't already done so, please stop and in and say hello to Justin. He is happy to welcome you into his office, have coffee or lunch, and get to know you. The music on Sunday mornings this summer has been glorious, and I am looking forward to our choir season which begins on September 15. Justin sent out a helpful letter in early July outlining some of his plans for 2024-2025, and it is republished in Soundings.

We are entering our second year with Evan as our Director of Children's Ministries, and I am thrilled at the progress we have made. Evan is again overseeing Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, the Christmas Pageant, and Youth Group. Evan has provided a number of helpful metrics and updates in this newsletter which I encourage you to read. Vacation Bible School (VBS) took place from

August 19-21, and our attendance right now is tracking about as full as last year. Our Sunday School year begins with Blessing of Backpacks and Registration on September 8, and Sunday School classes formally begin on September 15. Confirmation Class will begin in late September or early October. If you have children under age 18, Evan will be in more contact with you this year thanks to our database upgrades, and I ask that you make active involvement at Christ Church a priority for your family this year. Please let Evan know if you want to help out, or if you have any suggestions on how to make our children's and teens' programs better. Also, please thank Evan for his hard work and fresh ideas the past year.

Evan's presence and gifts have freed me up to do many things, including some around Youth and Teens including leading a group of parish teens to the Saint Michael's Conference in Connecticut. Our attendees all plan to return, and my goal next year's Conference, July 20-26, 2025, is to have ten teens from Christ Church. This newsletter includes some fun photos and info from the Conference.

A more mundane but no less important change this year is our ongoing transition to a new, unified communications, database, website, and online giving system for the church. Our old systems were cobbled together over the past 20 years and have all become outdated. The new system is much more accessible and useful for all of the staff and our financial team. The new database will allow us to keep much more up-to-date records and will greatly facilitate communication by staff and committee chairs with individuals, groups of parishioners, and targeted audiences (like Friends of Music or Youth Group). The new website will allow for much easier online giving and mass communica-

tion that works in concert with events advertised on the website. There are a lot of great features, including an app for our parishioners. By the time this Soundings issue is published, we should be in the midst of our roll out. This may not seem like the most exciting topic, but I'm thrilled. It will be a wonderful upgrade for the staff and should make a big difference keeping in touch with all of you.

Lastly a note of thanksgiving and celebration. Ed Blue has been Sexton at Christ Church for 50 years. We are planning to honor him with a stone/marble plaque in the Church (there is a similar plaque to John Harness who was sexton for 30 years). You can donate to the plaque (write a check to the church with the memo "Ed Blue Plaque"), and please thank Ed for his long and faithful service. I am grateful to work with Ed every day at Christ Church. I am also grateful for the service of Marie our Parish Administrator, Chisara our Deacon, and Walter our Verger and Assistant Sexton. We have the right staff and systems in place to thrive and grow in 2025 and beyond, and I am excited and so happy to be your rector in this next stage of our parish life.

I hope you had a busy and productive summer at church and with family. On a personal note, I am in the midst of sending my son Liam off to Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Please keep him and all our recent high school graduates and their parents in your prayers! I am hopeful that this will be a truly wonderful year!

-Fr. Matt

Welcome Justin!

On May 28, 2024, Father Matt announced that Dr. Justin Bischof had accepted the call as our new Director of Music, and Justin's first Sunday at Christ Church was June 23. Many thanks to the members the members of our Search Committee co-chairs Jeff Bodenmann and Margaret Young members, Andrew Des Rault, Stephen Dolan, Cherrie Greenhalgh, John Hastings, Alison Hinds-Pearl, and Martin Nash for their hard work and expertise running this search. Here are some photos from Justin's first weeks at Christ Church.

Justin knows our Anglican liturgy well. He has a deep appreciation for the sacred choral tradition that is cherished at Christ Church, and he understands how important children, families, and volunteers are at Christ Church. He is a gifted liturgical organist who knows and loves Episcopal hymnody and whose playing and choral leadership inspires congregational singing. He is an accomplished choir director who enjoys working with children, volunteer, and professional choristers so they can provide excellent and approachable music for the liturgy.

Additionally, Justin is a renowned concert organist who performs organ concerts and improvisation recitals around the world. He is also Artistic Director, Conductor, and Founder of the Modus Operandi Orchestra which provides the opportunity for some of the finest freelance musicians in New York City to perform the staples of the great symphonic and operatic repertory as well as contemporary works and world premieres with their colleagues.

Justin was born in Canada and earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Organ Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. He most recently served at Saint Mary's Church (Long Island City) as Director of Music and Organist. He has also served at the Church of the Epiphany (Gramercy Park, NY), the Church of Saint James the Less (Scarsdale), the Church of the Resurrection (NYC), and the Church of the Heavenly Rest (NYC).

Here are some photos from Justin's first weeks at Christ Church. Welcome Justin!







Welcome
Justin!

Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation

On April 14th, Christ Church welcomed Bishop Allen Shin, who administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to six young parishioners and received one new member into the Episcopal Communion. Prior to the service, Bishop Shin met briefly with members of the Vestry and joined a breakfast with those being confirmed and their families.

During the service, the congregation joined with those committing themselves to Christ in saying

the Baptismal Covenant and, after the Bishop laid hands on each one, welcomed them with joyous applause.

Confirmands were:

Reen Borger Dolan, Christopher Goring Ganpat Luca Genovese-Dalat Nguyen, Charles William McKee, Arianna Salvatore, and Madison Salvatore. Mary Ann Capossela was received into the fellowship of Communion.

Here, in their own words are their stories:



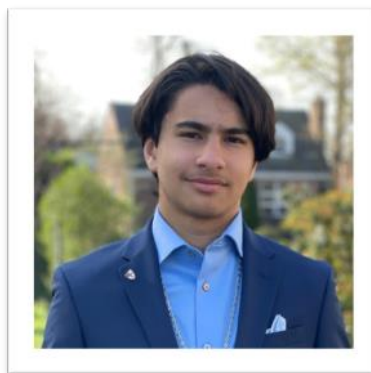
Reen Dolan

I am in the 8th grade at Pelham Middle School, where my favorite subjects are Social Studies and Math. I enjoy playing sports and am on

the lacrosse, basketball and tennis teams. I also play on a club lacrosse team. In my free time, I like to hang out with my friends and play with my dog Lemon.

My family and I have been parishioners at Christ Church since 2018. In that time, I have attended Church School and participated in the Christmas pageant.

In the Confirmation class, I have learned more about the Bible and the traditions of the church. Being confirmed has made me feel that I am more ingrained and a part of the church community.



Christopher Ganpat

I am an 8th grader at Pelham Middle School. Some activities I really like to do are hanging out with my friends, helping my Dad at his Gas Station, Manor Auto,

Boy Scouts, playing Guitar, and running track. My family and I have been at Christ Church for my entire life. My siblings and I were all baptized there and I attended Church school throughout elementary. I have attended many of the activities that Christ Church has hosted. I've been in the Christmas pageant at least six times: four times acting, and twice reading. Summer Bible school is really fun to do over the summer; we look forward to it every year. I am now a counselor but before I was like all the other kids, learning my way through God. Additionally, I have been an acolyte for many years, working with Walter.

Now I am much more confident helping the Church with the services.

When it comes to Confirmation - and what meaning it has to me, is that with God, my parents and mentors have guided me through the Christian world this far and getting confirmed shows Him that I'm ready and confident in myself to continue the journey on my own of learning through Him and with Him.



Luca Genovese

I am at Pelham Middle School in the 8th grade. My favorite subjects are Math and Science. My favorite pastimes are tennis and playing the guitar.

My family has been at Christ Church for eight years. In that time, I have participated in church school, the Christmas pageant, the Easter egg hunt and vacation Bible school. I am also an acolyte. To me, Confirmation means that I am blessed by God.



Charlie McKee

I am an 8th grader at Pelham Middle School. My favorite subjects are English, Social Studies and Art. Some of my favorite activities are hockey, lacrosse, video

games and hanging out with my friends. My family has been at Christ Church for about nine years, since we moved to Pelham. In that time I have attended Church School and taken part in the Christmas pageant and the Easter egg hunt. More recently I have been a part of the youth group and the Confirmation class.

Confirmation means that I have made a deeper connection with Christ and I feel much more knowledgeable about my religion and my faith.



Arianna Salvatore

My name is Arianna but everyone calls me Ari. I am an 8th grader at Albert Leonard Middle School in New Rochelle, like my twin sister Maddy. The class

I really enjoy is English Language Arts (ELA). My favorite pastimes lately have been reading and gaming.

My family have been parishioners of Christ Church for over 35 years, starting with my grandparents, my aunt, my uncle and my cousins. The activities I have done at Christ Church are the Church School, the Christmas pageant, the Easter egg hunt and the vacation Bible camp, as well as singing in the choir.

While I was studying in Confirmation class and when I was confirmed, it made me even closer to God.



Madison Salvatore

My name is Madison but I like to be called Maddy. I am an 8th grader at Albert Leonard Middle School. The classes I like best and find the most interest-

ing are Art, Science and Health. My favorite sports activity is track. In my downtime I love to draw.

My grandparents have been parishioners of Christ Church for over 35 years and they started taking my twin Ari and me to services when we

were five years old. At church I basically have done it all: Church School, the Christmas pageant, the Easter egg hunt and the vacation Bible camp, as well as singing in the choir. I have not yet been an Acolyte. Maybe someday!

Confirmation means to me that I am closer to Jesus – and I know I made my family extremely happy.

Mary Ann Caposella

I am from New Rochelle. I was introduced to Christ Church by my years-long friend Angela Lore Barone and I joined over three years ago. In that time, I have gotten to know many of the parishioners and enjoyed their great hospitality.



My hobbies are Bingo, going to the casino, a little knitting, word games, Bible study, belonging to the Sisters of the Poor (charitable functions and donations). I also have joined Seniors at Pelham

Center on Fifth Avenue. I just love being a busy lady.

Having been received at Christ Church, I am so happy to have such a loving and caring parish to belong to and I am looking forward to many years to come. I am blessed.

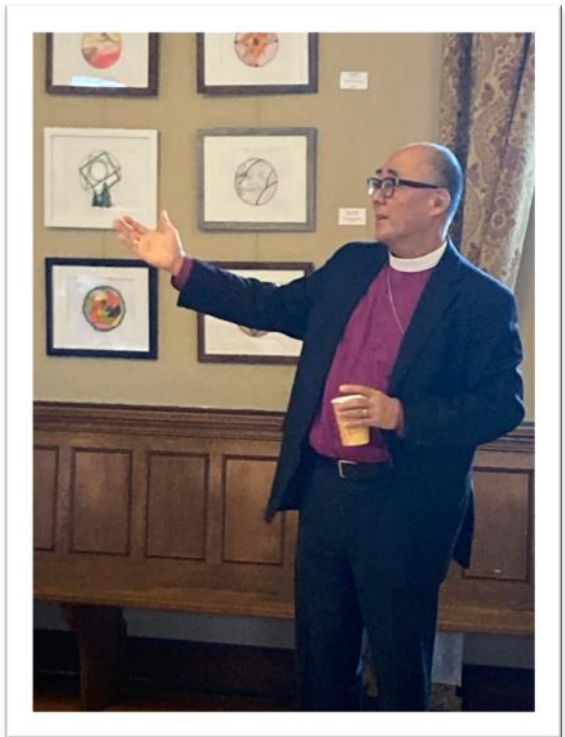


“I will with God’s help”.





Bishop Shin Visits With Confirmation Class



A Letter from Justin

Dear Fellow Christ Church Parishioners,

Greetings! I am both honored and thrilled to be your new Director of Music & Organist! Christ Church has a stellar reputation in the diocese as a parish blessed with a great Rector in Father Matt, fantastic lay leadership and a distinguished history.

My vision for the Music Program for Christ Church is one of engagement, excellence, and growth. Our music program should and will play a large role in our life together by creating a sense of community and giving to others. Music is a unique and powerful way to worship God as a community whether it be singing a cherished hymn together, witnessing our Choirs sharing their gift of song, or attending a Friends of Music concert being transported by His voice through the pens of the great composers.

I am excited to announce that we are establishing a Youth Choir for Grades 2-5 that will meet every **Thursday from 4:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.** followed by pizza dinner shared with the Youth Group from **5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.** We will work on classic hymns and fun children's anthems while learning about music fundamentals. The Youth Choir will participate in the 10 a.m. Sunday Service once a month where they will present an anthem in place of the psalm and share in leading our hymns. Our first rehearsal will be **Thursday October 3rd.** To register your child please be in touch with me ASAP. They should tell their friends as well – all are welcome! A wonderful way for your child (and their friends) to meet me and have fun singing is by attending Christ Church's Vacation Bible Camp August 19-21 9:00 a.m. –

12:00 p.m. which will include time dedicated to music.

What is my ideal Parish Choir? It is composed of dedicated volunteers and four skilled professionals who lead worship week after week with love and skill. They sing works from Palestrina through gospel and everything in-between. As well, they have the opportunity to collaborate with a world class chamber orchestra at Christmas and Easter. They are a fun and focused group that worships God through music and enhances the life of their church in so many ways. We will be living into this vision beginning with our opening rehearsal on **Saturday September 14th 3p.m. – 4:00p.m.** followed by a festive BBQ. The Choir will meet every Sunday at 9 a.m. to rehearse before the 10 a.m. service and then from 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining the Parish Choir, please be in touch to set up a painless and quick audition.

Finally, I am happy to report that we are creating a **Friends of Music Concert Series.** This will be a series of annual concerts that will celebrate our exceptional Juget-Sinclair pipe organ as well as feature my Modus Operandi Orchestra (MOO). This season marks the 5th anniversary of the installation of our organ, and we will have four organ concerts featuring internationally acclaimed concert organists with global careers who also all happen to be New York City area Episcopal organists (yours truly being one of the four). As well, MOO will present a concert for chamber orchestra including Beethoven's iconic Symphony No. 7. This series will be outside of the regular church budget and will rely on the financial

support of parishioners and friends. You will receive more information in the coming weeks regarding the various concerts and how to become a supporting member of the Friends of Music. These concerts will be a great vehicle to share our great church with the larger community far and wide. Our budget for our first year is \$35,000.

This is going to be an exciting year! Please do not hesitate to introduce yourself in person, or via

phone or email. I look forward to meeting and getting to know you.



Dr. Justin Bischof
Director of Music & Organist
Christ Church Pelham Manor
justin@christchurchpelham.org
(646) 206-7638



Friends of Music Concert Season 2024-2025

Save the Dates!

Five concerts celebrating the 5th Anniversary of Christ Church's Juget-Sinclair organ.
Four internationally acclaimed concert organists who are also leading New York City area
Episcopalian organists.

A wine and cheese reception will take place after the concerts.

Ticket information including season packages will be announced in early September.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend of Music to assist in the underwriting
of these historic concerts please contact our Director of Music Justin Bischof at
justin@christchurchpelham.org or 646-206-7638.



Wednesday October 9th 2024
7:00 pm - 8:15 pm
Justin Bischof, organ
Director of Music & Organist
Christ Church Pelham Manor



Wednesday November 13th 2024
7:00 - 8:15 pm
Jeremy Filsell, organ
Organist & Director of Music
Saint Thomas Church 5th Avenue



Wednesday January 29th 2025 7:00 - 8:15 pm
Modus Operandi Orchestra MOO—Justin Bischof, artistic director & conductor
David Enlow, organist



Wednesday May 7th 2025
7:00 - 8:15 pm
Stephen Tharp, organ
Artist-in-Residence (2015-2024)
St. James Madison Avenue



Wednesday March 26th 2025 7:00 - 8:15 pm
David Enlow, organ
Organist & Choirmaster
Church of the Resurrection
(74th and Park Avenue)

Artful Enterprise In Hoag Hall Pays Off

Hard to believe, but the Art Ministry at Christ Church will soon hit a remarkable milestone. Come October it will mark the second anniversary of its colorful makeover of the Church's Parish Hall into the site for a monthly series of displays of paintings, drawings, photographs, mandalas, quilts and other hanging artworks for sale from local artists, including parishioners. To date we have logged sales of seventy four items, grossing \$10,865, thereby netting over \$2,200 for the Church's outreach efforts. What's more, in September we facilitated a silent art auction of twenty eight parishioner-donated works that raised over \$1,140.

We do not charge the artists for the use of the hall, which is very unusual in the art display world. Instead, each of them agrees to donate 20% of their sales to the church. To date eighteen artists have taken us up on our offer. The shows not only brighten up Hoag Hall; they also attract non-parishioners to visit our church.

In May, we had another first, a show featuring photos from our youngest artist ever, ninth grader

Sidereus Preftakes. Sidereus sold ten works. (See photo of him closing a sale with J.D. Calder.) We will be looking for good things from him in the future!

Our current exhibition is "I Love Christ Church". It features artists: Louis Altieri, Tara Garcia, Patrice Fitzpatrick, Marilyn Leone, Davie Perez and Anne Zahner. This exhibit will be up through the summer months. Everyone is invited to bid. We will accept the best offer.

All are welcome to display their god given talents. Please spread the word.

The Art Ministry is always looking for new things to show. If it can hang on the wall, we can hang it! If interested, please contact Patrice Fitzpatrick at (914) 393-1885 or patric23@optonline.net

- Patrice Fitzpatrick, Art Committee chair





New Youth Ministry Era

On Sunday, June 2, students, teachers, parents and friends celebrated something novel, the final day not just of Sunday school, but of the first year of a whole new era for the Church's Youth Ministry.

Powering the charge, a young director with a bundle of fresh ideas, a rotating roster of over a dozen new teachers and aides...plus fresh funding from the Diocese, and three congregation families. He is Evan Felicetti, whose day job is Development Coordinator at the Westchester Parks Foundation, Mount Kisco.

He is a graduate of Fordham University, and of Pelham Memorial High, where he earned the rank of Eagle Scout in his final year with a project to repair sections of the Colonial Greenway trail in New Rochelle, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

Evan on Evan

Without the friendship and support that I received from some amazing parishioners and clergy as I grew up from childhood in Christ Church, I wouldn't be in the position that I am today. It's a role I'm truly excited about. Our remarkable parish has always given my faith plenty of room to grow. To me, Christ Church is a

place where everyone can be themselves unapologetically, and all are encouraged to bring along all their baggage, good and bad.

The 2023-24 school year began with a lot of excitement around our youth ministry. For Sunday School, we had an enlarged, dedicated team of teachers working hard to inspire both our younger children, as well as pre-teens with the power of our faith. Beyond that we had a confirmation class of seven, including one adult (it's never too late to take that next step in committing to, challenging, and deepening our faith).

As for extracurriculars, our youth group, made up of primarily middle and high schoolers, met every other week on Wednesday evening. My goal for all these experiences is for the youth of our parish to learn more about the faith we hold dear; all while feeling heard, as well as having fun. Being young can be a confusing time for many. It was for me. But, if we all work together, we can make Christ Church the kind of place where our kids feel comfortable, and can come to know the joy we have through Christ.

- Evan Felicetti, Director, Youth Ministry

New Era Scrapbook

Vacation Bible School

Late August (Mon. – Wed.) 9:30 a.m. to noon

Campers: 18 each day on average

Counselors: 6 – 8 on average

Highlights: depends on who you ask, but in the running were: Slip'n Slide, Bouncy Castle; bread baking; tie-dye t-shirt making; singalongs piano-side; meet & greet with a van-load of farm

animals (including two large sheep, Strawberry and Chocolate); one donkey; and a trio of handsome goats: Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar.

Camp wrapped up with an outdoor, picnic-basket service at the stone altar in Garden of Resurrection featuring camper-made communion bread, hymns including "All Creatures Great and Small" ... and camper Jason Ganpat's recitation from

memory of the first names of all the kids present, before all adjourned to the driveway for grilled burgers and dogs, plus a final helping of fellowship to get more familiar with our faith, and why we cherish it so much.

Sunday School

Sundays from 10 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

Nursery (ages 1-4) hands-on activities and games
 Younger Scholars (ages 3-9) in main Montessori classroom: bible lessons and craft projects as kids learn more about faith, and the bible
 Rising Scholars (ages 9-12); in Library: lessons and discussions, focus on faith and history of the church, and the critical thinking that is important for every believer to hone as they grow older.

Confirmation Class

Six students, age 14-15

Met: once a month on Sundays from 4 to 7p.m.

Instructors: Father Matt, Deacon Chisara, and Evan Felicetti

Aim: Offer opportunity for young people to formally and publicly commit to their faith, and to ask the challenging questions that all believers must confront.

Through this experience, six young people and one adult built a more adult relationship with

Christ, and his community and were Confirmed by Bishop Shinn on April 14, 2024.

Youth Group

Our aim is to meet twice a month on Wednesday evenings, led by Father Matt and Evan Felicetti; a group specifically designed for middle and high schoolers, giving them an opportunity to have fun, make new friends, and learn a little more about their own personal faith journey.

Most meetings will include dinner, an activity, and an opportunity to share with each other the triumphs and struggles that define adolescence. The overall aim is to create a community space for the young people in our parish to feel at home outside of the traditional Sunday service.

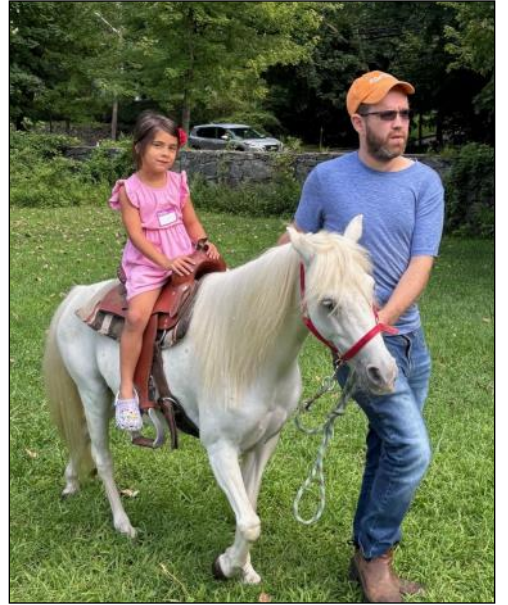
In its first outing, on Saturday, October 14, several group members visited the Global Mission Fair, run by the Episcopal Diocese of New York at Trinity Wall Street in Lower Manhattan. In our final get together on April 24th, we met in the church library, watched the 1998 movie "The Truman Show" and enjoyed each other's company, not to mention large pies from Four Corners Pizza.

- Evan Felicetti, Director, Youth Ministry



Vacation Bible School - August 19-21, 2024





Fun in the sun





Vacation
Bible
School





Sunday School

Bible stories, Christian concepts, arts and crafts...



Sunday School



Youth Group Car Wash



Eagle Scouts at Christ Church



Homecoming Sunday

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS OF CHRIST CHURCH
FROM NEAR & FAR!



September 15 is our big Kickoff Sunday for 2024 - 2025.

Whether you were here last week or if it's been a while,
we welcome you and your loved ones to Homecoming Sunday!

Please join us for the 10 a.m. Eucharist as Sunday School and
Choir seasons start back, and stay for a casual picnic
on the Lawn after church!

Parents and kids are invited to play in the
1st Annual Christ Church Flag Football Game!

Picnic: \$10/Adult - Kids Free

Picnic RSVP marie@christchurchpelham.org or (914) 738 - 5515



In **Abdicated Intelligence**, Victor Kisob's selected poems on global societal issues, readers are invited into a world where intellect meets empathy, where policy intersects with passion, and where a visionary legacy unfolds against the backdrop of global challenges.

Available on Amazon: Abdicated Intelligence <https://a.co/d/00UaY2Em>

*Victor is the husband of parishioner Missy Kisob and father of Achidi and Jabzy Kisob,
faithful former acolytes.*

The Deacon's Letter



Choosing the Right Path

One of the things that I pray for as a deacon is that God use me to do things both big and small. I ask God to strengthen me to step out of my comfort zone to do things in service and to the

glory of God, to be open to all possibilities.

I find inspiration in the faithfulness of pets to their owners. Pets can remain loyal to us in good times and bad. A rescue dog may even labor at the risk of its own life to bring help to its owner.

That example sets me to thinking about how I live out my life as a child of God. Do I pick and choose what's convenient for me, or do I consciously step out of my comfort zone to do things to glorify God? Do I dedicate time to be in God's presence, or do I give excuses for not doing so? Do I put God first in any setting I am in, or do I choose when to put God in the back seat? These are some of the questions that I reflect on for spiritual growth.

I am grateful that my time as deacon at Christ the Redeemer gives me many openings to proclaim God, interact with people in Godly ways, and be in

God's presence. The opportunity to deliver a sermon presents both a challenge and joy to me. Prayer ministry enables me to pray for the needs of others, and for my own needs in the company of other praying hearts. Pastoral care gives me the chance to share God's love with children of God in need, and food ministry provides me an opportunity to care for those in need. Meanwhile, the Order of the Daughters of the King empowers me to engage in prayer, service, and ministry as a daughter of the King of kings, Jesus Christ.

It warms my heart to pray with people of faith, serve in ministries with people with similar calling, and talk about God without reservation, inhibition, and fear of being judged, amid seekers just like me. As we find ways to strengthen our relationship with God, let us look at the world around us; let us look to nature and things that God has created because we have a lot to learn from them too. And let us continue to strive to do better in our service to God, knowing that our Lord Jesus Christ did it all for us, and has already made the way to God's kingdom for us. Amen.

- Deacon Chisara Alimole

Volunteers Needed



Visits to the Parish of Saints John, Paul & Clement in Mount Vernon to Bag food items on the First and Third Thursday of every month.

Please Contact Deacon Chisara at calimole@msn.com if you would like to volunteer.

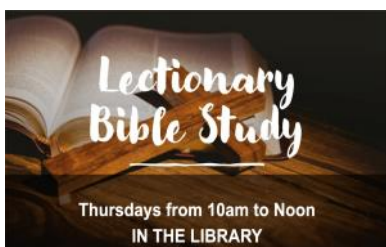


BIBLE STUDY WITH THE RECTOR

Father Matt's Bible Study will resume in September.

Father Matt's Bible Study meets every Thursday at 8 a.m. The Rector's Bible Study takes an academic tack as we examine the historical background and theological point of view of the texts we read, and how those texts were understood in their original context, in the early church, throughout history, and in the present day.

Join using the [Zoom Button](#) on our website or below (PW "BOLTON"). Each Bible Study will be recorded and posted to our YouTube Page, so you can catch it later if you miss the live version. [Click here for a the full list if the Rector's Bible Study](#)



IN PERSON BIBLE STUDY

Every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Our group is led by Michael Moynihan and Missy Kisob and occasionally guest leaders Father Matt or Deacon Chisara. Each week we gather to discuss the prior week's

sermon and look ahead at the coming Sunday's Scripture (Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel) in the lectionary assigned by the Church. The conversation is free flowing and fun.

I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

- Colossians 2:2-4

The Verger's Corner



Rising Acolytes

One of my favorite roles as verger, is working with our acolytes as they help out around the altar during services. The good news in recent months is that two young members of the parish

have volunteered to join our corps, which has held steady at around 14. The new acolytes are Christopher Ganpat, and Aiden Rose.

Mastering the art of Holy Smoke and more

Courtesy of the 35th Annual Conference of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church, I can finally say that I have been to San Diego, California. Our four-day meeting there kicked off with 90 vergers from around the country, not to mention a handful from abroad late last year.

Most of our events were held at Saint Paul's Cathedral, downtown. It's not nearly as big or as old as our own Cathedral of St. John the Divine, where the Vergers met a year earlier, but it's beautiful, standing across the street from Balboa

Park, site of the famous San Diego Zoo, among other things. Nearby is the bay and the homeport for the Navy's Pacific Fleet, not to mention the Midway, the World War II era aircraft carrier turned floating museum.

On the first day, I spoke with David Deutsch, a verger, and retired director for the PBS News-Hour. He has written a paper on the recent history of Vergers in North America, with the tell-all title: "Walk Softly and Carry a Big Stick—In Love". Other than our stick, or staff, one other thing most people associate with vergers is incense, AKA Holy Smoke. Some folks hate it; some love it. But most agree that getting the amount right can be tricky, and even a bit scary. As it turns out, one of the classes gave us a deep dive on that very subject. We were told to swing the censer, the ornate silver vessel on chains that securely holds the burning incense, in a civilized way. No over-head, 360-degree twirls we were told firmly.

- Walter Roberts, Verger

Serving our Lord together



Praying Together

The Holy Eucharist is celebrated every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

The Holy Eucharist / Evensong are offered Sundays at 5pm as announced.

The Holy Eucharist is celebrated on Holy Days as announced.

The Holy Eucharist is celebrated Wednesdays at 5:15p.m.

Evening Prayer is offered on Zoom on Mondays at 8:30 p.m.

Morning Prayer is offered on Zoom on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

Growing Together

Treasurer sees strength in our pews

Nearly two years ago, with Christ Church still in the shadow of Covid, when asked to become treasurer, I was grateful for the opportunity. My work experience gave me the financial skills needed. My love of our church and the whole community gave me the urge to pitch in.

I grew up in Webster Groves, a St. Louis suburb much like Pelham, and went to University of Missouri. In 1977, two weeks after graduating, I moved to New York City to pursue a career in Advertising. It was an unbelievable summer. The Son of Sam was killing women, a helicopter crashed on the roof of the Pan Am (now MetLife) Building and we had a major Blackout. My mother kept asking when I was moving back “home” – I’m still here. The first 20 years of my advertising career I managed teams that managed spending for major national clients. The next 20 years I spent selling media time, ending up at The Tennis Channel, a fun place to work. I got to travel to amazing places, from Paris to Palm Springs, entertaining clients.

I have worshipped at an Episcopal church all my life. I married my husband Jeff in Manhattan at Trinity Wall Street. When we moved to Pelham, finding a church that we felt comfortable in was important. Christ Church was the perfect community for us. We moved when our daughter, Grace, was 3 months old, and she was baptized here. Over the years I have served on the Stewardship

committee, sung in the choir, and taught Sunday School.

Today our church is in a good place, and I can confirm that one of its greatest assets is the strength of our congregation. It takes a lot of people to keep the church going, much less growing, and I am proud of all the members who help it thrive.

We saw evidence of that back in the spring, when Bishop Shinn presided over the confirmation of six young parishioners; and afterwards, in a Q&A in the crowded parish hall, described our parish as “thriving.” Seeing the Car Wash in full swing on a recent Saturday to raise money for Vacation Bible School was also fun, it was great to see so many kids pitching in. We are thriving, and with everyone’s help we will continue.

- Allison Bodenmann, Treasurer





Three New Vestry Members Report In



It is an honor and privilege to be allowed to serve on the Vestry once again. It is also much different. On my first tour of duty, in 2006 - 2012, Vestry meetings tended to be long, drawn-out affairs as the

Church grappled with a host of challenges related to the state of the building, and the less than healthy state of our finances. Back then meetings often extended to 10 p.m. or later. Today, with many of those challenges having been addressed, we manage to conclude business far earlier.

The news is not entirely good, however. If there is one concern of the Parish in this Year of Our Lord 2024, it is that we are missing a key constituency – families with kids. Particularly those with children in the 8 to 14 range, arguably the most important age for young people to attend and get involved with church life. This was a concern even before the pandemic hit, and it remains the greatest lingering damper on our Parish family. For these reasons, my prime concern in the year to come is to revive our outreach to families – whether through more Family nights, teaching Sunday School, or trying to find more events for parents and children together. I read a lot about how families feel themselves to be under tremendous, even overwhelming pressures in this day and age, and I truly believe that the right kind of church—definitely Christ Church Pelham among them--can provide a lot of answers to the problems families are facing. As a result, it is my hope that 2024 will see an ever-escalating series of “homecomings” as more

of our Parish family emerges from their hobbit holes and celebrates together in joy and inspiration.

- Curtis Chase



Well before I joined our Vestry, I received a thick packet giving me a good sense of everything from its duties and committee structure to its recent actions and projects now in progress.

Trust me, there was a lot to take on board, so much so that initially, I reckoned I'd just be doing a lot of careful listening.

One thing that I quickly came to value is how much work the church's committees do (each with its own vestry liaison on board and how thoroughly they do it. We get their reports before each meeting, and they are so well detailed, and put together that we can fit a wide range of discussions into a meeting's usual hour, or hour and 15 minutes. By the time we get to the meeting we have absorbed most of what we need to know to make decisions.

The church's finances are a good example of this. But in that area we are also blessed to have in Father Matt, someone who is very budget conscious, and our treasurer, Alison Bodenmann, who has a good command of our financial details.

In my old Parish in Mount Vernon, Trinity, I served on the vestry for several years, including some as senior warden. We all worked very hard, and we held on as long as we could, but in the end

it was heartbreaking.

Here, what impresses me is all the work in place, the support of the rector, and our shared vision for the future.

- Charlette Finch



I began attending Christ Church fifteen years ago. It has become an important part of my life. Early on I began to usher on Sundays at the 10 a.m. service. Years later, my daughter Gia, who was baptized here, joined me as an usher.

Joining the vestry has been interesting. There is so much going on, and everybody has to be on board with our decisions. If we don't agree, we have to convince the other side, and find a solution. We all want the church to survive for the good of the community, and that means that we have to run it like a business.

As a tax accountant and serial entrepreneur I have experience running firms and also helping others. I like working behind the scenes. I would love to see the church in high standing in the community and on stable financial ground to help its longevity. I just love what the church stands for in the community and beyond.

Growing up on Shakespeare Avenue in the South Bronx, I got into fencing, and ended up competing in matches all over the country.

That was my escape. Later on, as a tax accountant and serial entrepreneur I worked with all kinds of people.

Bringing in a new music director was exciting, and complicated. There were a lot of candidates. Justin Bischof was certainly the best. Now we are looking at other opportunities, maybe even having a car show this fall. I've got several old cars, ranging from a 1930 Ford Model A, to a 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle.

- Robert Boyer

New Database



Our new database can do a lot, including making it a little easier for us to meet visitors, keep in contact with parishioners, and

accept donations from worshippers. Try to scan each code below and see what happens. You can update your contact information, whether you are new or a long-time member. You can also make a donation to the church on your phone by scanning the code. Additionally, you have the option to donate by text: just text a dollar amount to 914-351-2001.

In the coming weeks and months we will be rolling out a new website and an app for you to use... all of this is through a wonderful (and affordable) company called Breeze that works with churches.



+

Christ Episcopal Church of Pelham

CLASSIC

CAR SHOW

Nov
2nd

\$20
Show cars



1415 Pelhamdale Ave, Pelham, NY
Top 10 Awards, 50/50, Food Truck
10am-4pm

\$ 5 for Spectators, Rain Date Nov-9th

WE'RE STILL HERE, WAITING.

 **ADOPT A
FRIEND**

Sunday, October 6th, 2024 12PM-4PM
Sponsored by SPCA Westchester &
Christ Episcopal Church of Pelham

Enter at the lower level of Christ
Church, 1415 Pelhamdale Ave (at Shore
Road) through the glass doors.

For more information, call 914-738-5515

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ST.
FRANCIS OF ASSISI, THE
PATRON SAINT OF
ANIMALS, WHO SAID; "ALL
THINGS OF CREATION ARE
CHILDREN OF THE FATHER
AND THUS BROTHERS OF
MAN... EVERY CREATURE IN
DISTRESS HAS THE SAME
RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED."



Saint Mike's 2024!

Christ Church had five attendees (including Father Matt) at this year's Saint Michael's Youth & Young Adult Conference for Young People ages 14 to 21. When they were teens Fr. Matt, Nicole DeCoursy (now Mead), and a number of their friends attended St. Michael's, and the conference is still going strong.

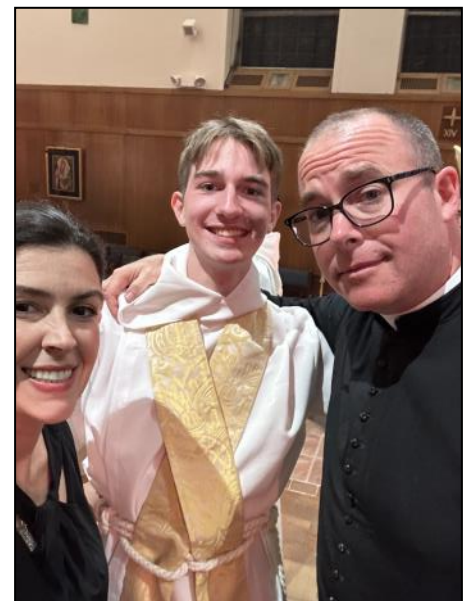
These photos are from the Conference and give a nice sample of what the Conference is like: Christmas in July Party, Square Dance, Pageant, Discussion Groups, Outdoor and indoor games, Evensong and Mass (with singing and incense). All five of us had a great time and plan to go back next year and we hope to double our group to ten Christ Church Michaelites. Saint Mike's 2025 is one week-long and will take place July 20-26 in West Hartford, CT. It's a great place to connect

with other Christian teens who grew up in the Anglican and Episcopal traditions.

Sunday, September 29, is the Feast of Saint Michael & All Angels (Michaelmas). Christ Church will offer Congregational Evensong (with incense) that day at 5 p.m. with a guest preacher, Fr. Vitet, from Saint Michael's Conference. We are inviting "Michaelites" from churches in NYC, LI, CT, and NJ to join us - kids and teens singing Evensong is amazing. There will be food afterward and an opportunity to learn about St. Mike's from some of the senior staff at the Conference. All (high school and college young adults, parents, parishioners, visitors, friends of Christ Church from near and far) are invited to this fun event.

Please join us!







Juneteenth 2024



On June 16, the parish celebrated Juneteenth. At coffee hour, Father Matt spoke about the importance of recognizing and learning about the country's newest federal holiday. Those that were able to stay for coffee hour enjoyed a special lunch organized by the 10 a.m. bible study group, replete with traditional red foods.

Excerpted from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture website.

On "Freedom's Eve," or the eve of January 1, 1863, the first Watch Night services took place. On that night, enslaved and free African Americans gathered in churches and private homes all across the US awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. At the stroke of midnight, all enslaved people in Confederate States were declared legally free.

Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas and announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as Juneteenth.

- Etta Gumbs





Doorkeepers at Christ Church

"I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness." - Psalm 84:10

Whose is the first welcoming face a visitor to Christ Church sees? The usher standing at the door to the house of God.

These days Christ Church has fourteen dedicated ushers whom you will see standing in the Narthex on Sunday morning, distributing bulletins and weekly events calendars with a "good morning" and a warm smile for veterans and newcomers alike. This dedicated group faithfully serve at the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services on Sunday, as well as at funerals and memorial services, not to mention special services during Holy Week, at Christmas, and on other special occasions.

The ushers assure first-time visitors they are welcome to sit anywhere, and invite them to join us for coffee, conversation and a bite to nibble in the church hall afterwards, with clergy and our parishioners.

The ushers also assist those with special needs, opening the doors to accommodate walkers or wheelchairs. Once the processional hymn begins, ushers monitor the doors from the Narthex to make sure that a door hastily flung open by a late arrival does not bowl over a chorister or two.

Special services such as baptisms or memorials often attract a crowd of people new to Christ Church. In those cases, the ushers determine who the family members are and escort them to reserved pews in the front of the church.

During the service, ushers contribute to the smooth progress of the worship service, leaving the clergy and congregation to concentrate on their devotions. Among other things, the ushers make a quick headcount, and during the singing of the offertory hymn, pass around the collection plates, then process toward the altar to present them to an acolyte. During the communion, they direct people row-by-row to the front of the church.

After the service, the ushers count and record the offerings they collected, enter the amounts in the record book, and place them in a pouch for storage in the office.

Before COVID we had a roster of as many as 27 ushers. Since then, some have retired; others have moved away; and a few have been "promoted" to serve as acolytes. Meanwhile, one other former usher--Evan Felicetti—now heads the Church's Youth Ministry.

Today, we have two 14-year-olds leading a new generation of ushers, serving at the 8:00 a.m. service.

As the head of the ushers ministry these last four years, I welcome anyone interested in joining our group to contact me at gruenerjean@me.com

- Jean Gruener

Outreach: Love in Action

In this age of uncertainty over everything from food and warm clothing, to our emotional and spiritual condition, Romans 12 offers a shining definition of what church outreach means for us. We are instructed to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, to do humble service in the body of Christ. It is all about putting our love for others, our love for our neighbors, into action.

For the outreach Committee that means helping with such longstanding efforts as Trinity St. Paul's Brown Bag lunch program in New Rochelle, as well as collecting parishioners food pantry donations and sharing them with three other churches that provide free groceries to those in need.

This year our outreach work has also taken a few new turns. In the spring we dedicated all funds raised by our annual Easter Appeal to benefit the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese in Jerusalem. In addition to passing the hat for cash donations, during coffee hour on Palm Sunday we staged an auction of home-baked desserts. Parishioners supplied their delicious homemade baked goods and Father Matt whipped up the bidding as our auctioneer! The Appeal, raised a total of \$6,092 to benefit the Princess Basma Children's Hospital in Jerusalem, currently facing a flood of children injured in the Israel/Gaza conflict.

Closer to home donations from our parishioners of gently-used or new clothing items for those in need in the Bronx and Westchester, netted an astonishing 500 winter coats for recipients in the Bronx, where our donation partner was NYC Cares.

Our newest initiative was a partnership with the Sharing Shelf of Westchester during National Menstrual Health Awareness Month in May. The group provided feminine-hygiene products to help fight "period poverty" and give dignity, comfort and self-esteem to girls and young women in our area. Many of them have missed school or work for lack of funds to purchase such products. There is a pink donation box inside the double glass doors at the lower parking lot, where parishioners are encouraged to place unopened boxes of menstrual pads and/or tampons.

If you are interested in what you've read here, please consider joining the Outreach Committee, or proposing other projects that you would like to see us support.

Thank you so much for your time, your donations, and your prayers as we strive to provide Love in Action.

- Carla Carroll, Outreach Committee Co-Chair



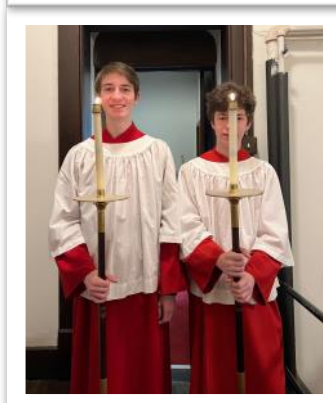
Around the Parish in Photographs



Tom with grade school classmates, Angela and MaryAnn



Tom's 80th!
 Long time parishioner, Tom Salvatore, recently celebrated his 80th birthday.
 Tom and Janet celebrated this milestone birthday at church surrounded by friends and family.



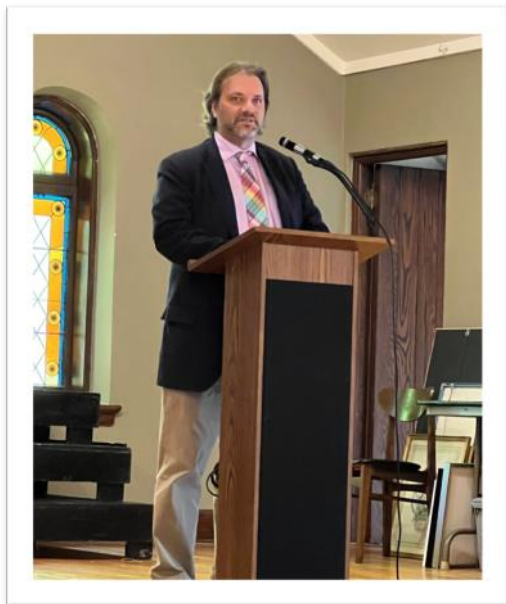
Fare Thee Well Jeffrey Hoffman

Choir Director & Organist



Christ Church bids a fond farewell to Choir Director and Organist Jeffrey Hoffman after over sixteen years of faithful service and making beautiful music. Even during the pandemic, the music never stopped.

Godspeed Jeffrey, may the Lord bless you and keep you, always.



Bible Study on Retreat at The Center at Mariandale, Ossining NY



Thank You Christ Church

SEV Foundation is a 501(c)3 charity founded by Sr. Jackie Atabong, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus in Cameroon. The Congregation was founded in 1963 to serve the needs of the church, raise the dignity of women and attend to the needs of marginalized people in society. The Sisters serve the church and society through education, health care and socio-pastoral works. As the Congregation grows internationally, we look to extend our services globally. With over a decade of experience working with local women, initiating micro-finance groups that get women out of the web of poverty, SEV looks forward to spreading such initiatives to other parts of the world. Empowering women and the girl child in areas where the education of girls is still looked upon as unnecessary is a prime concern for SEV Foundation. SEV seeks to work with interested parties in pursuit of these goals and to offer equal opportunities to all. We partner with individuals, organizations, parishes and dioceses to realize these projects.

Over 200 children have returned to school through our programs and 50 girls have been provided with shelter since 2019 with 15 currently in residence this year. They are sent to school or taught a trade. We also provide for their psychological and medical needs.

There are so many children in need as the conflict in Cameroon rages on, so we thank you for your support, it brought joy and hope to many children.

The children in our care did very well at school this past year and they are very grateful for the donations from Christ Church. It feels good to be acknowledged. Most of the gifts you sent have been distributed while the rest will be given out at the beginning of the academic year in September.



We would like to establish long term projects which, if supported, could be sustainable for the long haul. We currently rent a small house in the city for internally displaced girls and women who do not have the tools to earn a living. We would like to build our own center in a more spacious area and offer training to empower them.

Since my return to Cameroon, I have started a project for training of trainers. I am currently training ten people who would collaborate with me in this job. I live with one other sister and the displaced girls in the rented building. It is a wonderful experience though challenging.

Yours in Christ,

Sr. Jackie Atabong, SpD, RN, Psy.D
 Doctor of Clinical Psychology,
 Trauma Specialist



In Memoriam

*Father of all, we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer:
Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them;
and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power,
work in them the good purpose of your perfect will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Elise Finch, beloved daughter of parishioners Jimmy and Charlette Finch, died on June 16, 2023. Elise is survived by her husband Graig Henriques, their daughter Grace; her parents; sister Kiya Ann Roberts and her husband Champ; nieces, Amira Finch Johnson, Breah Roberts; her nephew, Champ Roberts, III and a host of family, sorors, friends, her colleagues in the newsroom, and those dedicated viewers who were touched by her grace each morning.



Susan Morris Hoag beloved wife of Fr. David Hoag, our Rector Emeritus, died peacefully on June 8, 2024, at the age of 84. Born Susan Jane Morris on July 14, 1939, in Queens, New York, she was the first child of Percy and Annabelle Morris. Susan and David were married in 2004. Together, they traveled extensively and built a beautiful home and life in Florida. They shared stories, and enjoyed each other's humor and company for twenty years. Susan is survived by her loving husband, David Stewart Hoag, and her children, Joseph, John, and Anne. She also leaves behind her three sisters, and seven grandchildren. Susan was a great source of unconditional love and support. She was beautiful inside and out and her smile lit up a room. Susan Morris Hoag will be deeply missed by all who were fortunate enough to know her. Her memory will live on in the hearts of her family and friends, and her legacy of love and kindness, will continue to inspire us all.





*Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of comfort:
Deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn;
that, casting all their care on you,
they may know the consolation of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Parishioner Patricia Sweeney, devoted member of our fellowship and Bible Study groups, died on February 22, 2024 at the age of 72. Born on September 18, 1951 in Antigua to Denzil Hill and Maudlyn (nee Mason) Hill, she was the second of three children. Patricia is survived by her brother Basil Hill; son Tarik Sweeney, her daughter Erin (nee Finch) Fidaleo, and her son-in-law Mauro Fidaleo; her ex-husband Arnold Sweeney, with whom she remained close friends until her passing; her grandchildren Jaida, Amiah, and Kashad Sweeney and Gabriel Fidaleo. She is also survived by many nieces, nephews, cousins, and many friends with whom she enjoyed taking day trips and attending bible study.



Parishioner David Hoffer, beloved husband of parishioner Eileen Peluso and father of parishioner Tori Hoffer, died on August 7, 2024. David was born on December 17, 1961 to the late Charles and Mary (David) Hoffer. He will always be loved by his wife, daughter, sister-in-law Michele Cassidy, niece Patricia and her husband Connor Cooney (their daughter Beatrice); and along with all his in-laws: Butch and Vanessa Strickrodt, Richie and Debbie Strickrodt, Juliana and Tony Aquilino and all the in-laws' children and grandchildren.

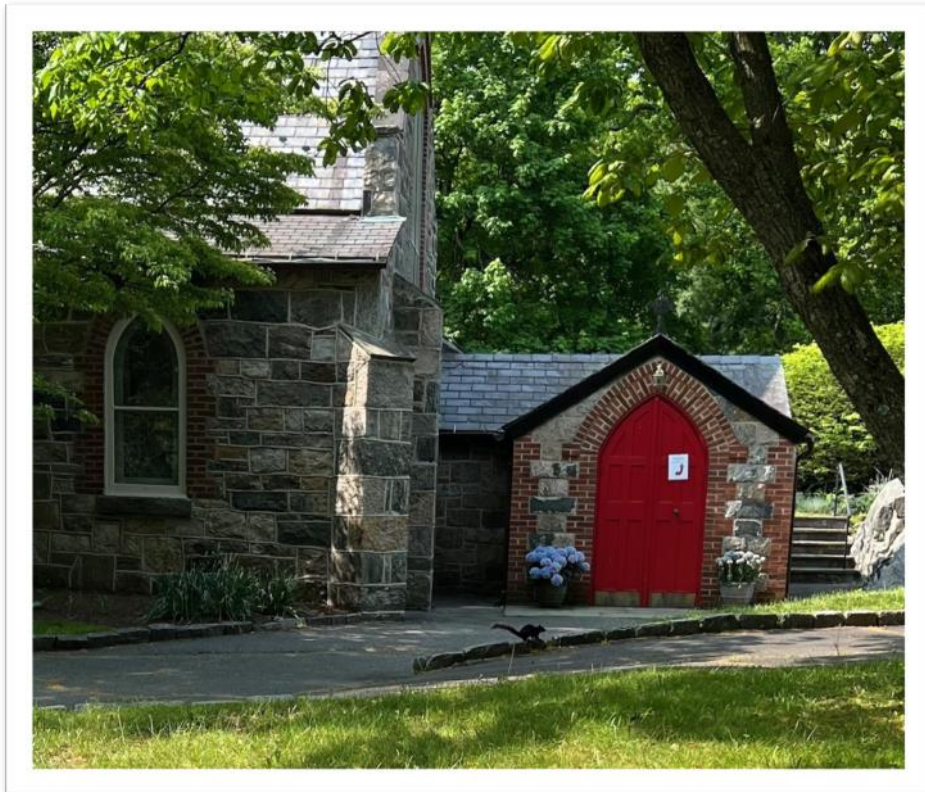


Andrea Sears, beloved wife of parishioner Mary O'Shaughnessy, died on Thursday August 8, 2024. She is survived by her wife Mary O'Shaughnessy, son Jonah and her beloved motorcycle club the Sirens.



*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord; And let light perpetual shine upon them.
May their souls, and the souls of all the departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen.*





Christ Church

Parish of Christ the Redeemer

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