



Christ Christ Church Chronicles

Volume 8 Issue 2, March 2017

316 E. High St.
Pottstown, PA 19464

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From the Rector

Even the casual observer of history will testify to the fact that dedication to a faith communion can fracture a congregation or community faster than the speed of sound and light. What should unite often splits apart. Jesus took time to warn us that there would be times when families would divide over the gospel. As your interim rector I call upon you to keep focused upon the mission and call of Jesus our Lord. His purpose is to lead us toward the light not into darkness.

The events of recent history in this country and around the world have distressed many and have formed a line in the sand. I am pleased to note that here in Pottstown in a congregation called Christ, the Spirit of God has been allowed to form the opinions of the leadership and much, if not all, of the members of the congregation. The challenge before you is to keep the eyes of all on Christ and not on any line in the sand and the differences that would separate.

In a meeting with the Bishop the other day I called his attention to this congregation and his interest was very obvious. Christ, I said, is a small congregation but mighty in faith. It may never be noted as a record breaking congregation in size but its faith will move mountains. Like all congregations it has been contentious in the past but thanks be to God they are today a testimony to the love of Christ Jesus our Lord.

I also shared with him my desire to better understand my call to serve the Episcopal Church. He asked me why I was concerned. I related that some have asked the question, why is a Lutheran pastor leading worship in an Episcopal church? He said that we have an agreement between the two faith communities and I have his blessings by license to serve the Lord faithfully in the Episcopal Church. I also stipulated that, if it is God's will, I would be willing to seek formal ordination within the Episcopal tradition to better serve the Lord in his church. We agreed to pursue a course of discernment to better understand the voice of our Lord in this matter. I am so grateful for the devotion, leadership and faith of Bishop Gutiérrez and as a congregation I pray that you will find his leadership and faith commitment as an inspiration and constant support for the growth in grace here at Christ Episcopal Church. (cont. p.4)





HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



Palm Sunday (9 April)

- 8am Holy Eucharist and Liturgy of the Palms - Rite I
- 9:15am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour (nursery available)
- 10:30am Holy Eucharist and Liturgy of the Palms - Rite II



Monday through Wednesday (10-12 April)

- 9am Holy Eucharist (Chapel)



Thursday (13 April)

- 7pm Maundy Thursday Eucharist



Good Friday (14 April)

- 7pm Good Friday Eucharist



Easter Sunday

- 8am Holy Eucharist I
- 10:30am Holy Eucharist (Choral) II

What is Holy Week?

Holy Week is the last week of Lent, going from Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday. It is a time of recalling and reenacting the Passion and death of Jesus through various special forms of worship. It ends with the Triduum, meaning three days, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. That's four days long, but Holy Saturday is a sort of blank day - remembering Jesus silent in the tomb. There is no Eucharist and no communion then except for the sick and dying. Easter is the high point. The name in English traces back to proto-Germanic meaning "dawn" or "to shine." Most countries use a term derived from "pascha," tracing back to "passed over" or "protected."

STREETWISE

The over-arching question we explore in this column is how God acts to change the institutional church. Now in March 2017 it behooves us to notice how God may act to change secular institutions. Do we see similarities? Any differences?



We now have a new President of the United States of America. Some citizens hope that Donald J. Trump will lead our nation into a new era of prosperity. Others fear that he will undo what is good and proper for the wellbeing of the citizenry. We have been reminded by numerous commentaries that there is a *structure in the federal government* that prohibits rash decisions.

Likewise, the Episcopal Church (TEC) has a *structure in the government of the church* that inhibits sudden change. The 2015 General Convention established the direction that the 2018 General Convention will take.

Already we hear that large changes are afoot. Based on little factual information, I have heard individuals at Christ Church declare: “It is about time!” and “We don’t need a lot of change. What we have is good enough.”

We will get to the substance of the changes when more information is available. But we do know that the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) is proposing “four options regarding the possible revision of the *1979 Book of Common Prayer*.”

The Rev. Devon Anderson, who chairs the SCLM

Commission, has stated distinctly “*The Book of Common Prayer* is the fullest statement of our faith, and the deepest expression of our theology...” For this reason she declares that “SCLM must hear the voices of our people.”

The governmental structure of TEC is both local and broad-based. We at Christ Church are blessed by this. Nearby we have a delegate to the 2018 General Convention. The Very Rev. Dr. Koshy Matthews was elected at our 2016 Diocesan Convention to represent the Diocese of Pennsylvania at this upcoming General Convention. He will sit as a member of the House of Delegates. The other House is that of the Bishops.

Koshy is Dean of the Valley Forge Deanery. Deaneries are subdivisions of the Diocese. They are clusters or churches that are geographically close enough that congregations or their representatives can meet in person to consider local, diocesan, and TEC concerns and initiatives. Likewise, canonically resident clergy serving within the Valley Forge Deanery meet monthly as a Clericus, another TEC structure.

It seems to me that Christ Church would benefit by exploiting our advantage. Koshy is Rector at St. Peter’s, Phoenixville. SCLM Commissioner Anderson asserts that the Commission “must hear the voices of our people.” Christ Church is a congregation that is full of the voices of the people of God and of TEC. How might we work with Koshy to articulate the voices of the people of God in our Deanery? How might we educate Bishop Daniel Gutierrez who will be sitting and voting for the first time the House of Bishops?

Rev. Robin Robb, Deacon†

What’s the Future of the Prayerbook?

Asking that question of two Episcopalians, clergy or lay, will likely get you three highly-qualified answers. If you would like to observe the conversation among the people who will be the most influential, read or subscribe to the web page of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music - standingcommissiononliturgyandmusic.org. In particular, watch the discussion “Book of Common Prayer,” including the entry “Four Possible Paths for the *Book of Common Prayer*.” The General Conventions in 2018 will pick the path. If you would like to post comments or requests, instructions for getting set up are at <https://en.support.wordpress.com/post-by-email/>. Prayer would help, too.

Rector, cont. I also shared with him a request by a group who would like to establish a Latino presence at Christ Church. I relayed that we would like his blessing to pursue this opportunity and seek his help in making it possible. He has given his blessings and is willing to support us in this effort in any way possible. I reassured him that we would seek to better understand the faith communion, culture, background and circumstances that surround the request by this group.

The choices we make define us in the eyes of others. These choices can be Christ like or they can be made by reaction to personal self-interest. If they intersect they are most powerful and faithful but if they diverge and travel different pathways the outcome is confusion leading into the darkness. As a nation we must consider the choices we make just as in a congregation we must choose wisely the path we follow. As we make our choices will the end be a light shining in the darkness or will we add to the darkness? The world is watching, what will they behold in the decisions made by a country or a congregation? I hope and pray that the decisions that are made will be a lamp under our feet and a light that will forever shine in the darkness.

I am your servant in Christ,
Fr Bill Rex†

From Our Deacon In Formation



I am currently in my second year of General Theological Studies (GTS) and my Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program. The year so far has been both challenging and rewarding. My GTS work will begin again in February and run through till late April or early May. My CPE studies are at the Penn Foundation in Sellersville which I attend one night a week. My clinical work as a Chaplain is being done on Saturdays and Sundays at Grand View Hospital.

I find my work as a Chaplain very rewarding and each weekend brings a new insight into why I was called to the Diaconate program. At the end of May, I will then be placed into another Parish to continue my training. As of right now I am still on track to be ordained in June of 2018.

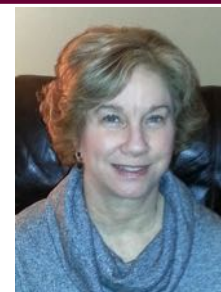
I thank you for the love, support and encouragement that has been given to me by Christ Church. You were and still are the foundation from which all of this has started.

In Christ
Louis K. Steffenhagen

From the People's Warden

Hola,

Mi nombre es Donna. I was elected to be the nuevo People's Warden for 2017. I am very excited to play a more intricate role at Christ Church. My primario responsibility will be to listen to our members and discuss your concerns with our Vestry and Rector. I am looking forward to welcoming a new Rector in 2017 and discussing all of the exciting ministries we have at Christ Church. Which, speaking about ministries, a reminder of our mission statement: "To glorify God through Worship, Nurture and Service".



You may be wondering about my pitiful attempt of using a few Spanish words in my article. Well, I wanted to let you know that we are working on hosting a Spanish language Easter service in the afternoon. Aligning with our mission statement, we hope to provide this third service to our local Spanish speaking community in Pottstown. We are still working on the details, but there appears to be a need and we hope to fulfill this need and glorify God through our service. If you would like to be involved or have questions, please contact me via email or at Sunday church: donnaypw@gmail.com.

Gracias, Donna Yanalavage

New Rector?

Why isn't the New Rector here yet? We need some one to ~~fix~~ (oops, I meant **lead**) us.

Our *Collect for the Election of a Rector* includes the phrase "...equip us for our ministries..." We have used this for two elections, but I've begun to wonder about this particular phrase. I fear that it often means "do our ministry for us" or "give us something we don't already have."

We have, over nearly twenty centuries, come to expect our Rectors to be a disguised version of Jesus, to expect them to solve our problems, to expect them to know best (they are called "Father," after all,) and to make everything better, if not perfect. This mindset is often unconscious; our minds think it but our mouths say just the opposite.

The result of this mindset is that we tend in one of three directions. First, and easiest, is, like the Laodiceans, not to care. We'll just go along quietly wherever we are lead.

A second option is anger when the new guy doesn't live up to expectations. If we've been around long enough, we may not even wait to see them fail, as, one way or another, they always do. I have an excellent book called *When Sheep Attack*, which discusses exactly this problem. It's well worth reading for anyone.

The other is clergy worship. Some have a glorified view of what it means to be clergy, and can see no wrong in anything priests do. You can hear the adoration as they refer to "Father." Unfortunately, since priests are human and there is a very thin line between love and hate, this will likely eventually turn to anger.

None of this is necessary. A Rector is neither Jesus nor the Devil, but one of us with a particular assignment. True, some are better or worse than others, but they are human. Give them a chance. Hold them accountable, but be reasonable and honest. Remember, it's OUR ministry, not just the Rector's.

And be sure to pray. Pray for the new Rector and pray for us in our joint endeavor to glorify God through worship, nurture, and service.

Bob Gross, Rector's Warden



Lenten Quiet Day at St. Gabriel's

1188 Benjamin Franklin Hwy

Douglassville, PA 19518

March 25th, 2017

8:30am-2:30pm

Hosted by the Angelus Chapter of the Daughters of the King

Let Yourself Be Loved: Transforming Fear into Hope



The Rev. Dr. Phillip Bennett, author, will be giving the program. He is a psychologist in private practice in Philadelphia and is Associate Priest at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral.

This is a book for all who desire love but also fear it. In its pages, readers are likely to recognize feelings within themselves: the part that is longing to be loved; and also fears within themselves: fearing vulnerability, judgment, loss of control and the part that holds back. The book is a joyful and liberating invitation simply to be loved: to recognize the presence of God that is always here, ready to embrace us despite our fears and resistance.

RSVP: (610-385-3144) Suggested Donation \$10.

Effortless Fundraising

We continue to offer two ongoing fundraisers - the **Giant Gift Cards** and **Redner's Receipt Program**. The purchase of Giant Gift Cards has dwindled over the past year and we are at risk of losing this opportunity. Please note that even if you do not do your grocery shopping at Giant, the gift cards can be used to purchase their gas. We receive 5% return on the Giant Gift Cards. For Redner's shoppers, remember to place your receipts in the box outside the ladies choir room and we will receive 1% back on the purchases. Goodness knows, everyone at Christ Church loves to celebrate with food so let's capitalize on these opportunities!



Thanks to Erma Magee, Debby Metz, and Jean Davidheiser for their commitment to these programs.



Serving Our Local Communities Since 1970

YOU ARE INVITED

April 8, 6pm

**To Second Saturday Neighborhood Night
Movie and Popcorn**

Christ Episcopal Church
316 East High Street, Pottstown, PA 19465,
610-323-2895



All Are Welcome

**Bring your family and friends! Share in the food and fun!
Entrance in rear off Queen Street parking lot**

Last August, the banking giant Citigroup and the communications giant AT&T agreed to end their two-month-long legal hostilities over AT&T's right to have a customer service program titled "Thanks." Citigroup had pointed out that it holds trademarks for customer service titles "thankyou," "citi thankyou," "thankyou from citi" and "thankyou your way," and had tried to block the program name "AT&T Thanks." [NASDAQ.com, 8-25-2016]

Our Gang enjoyed another enjoyable visit to Steel River Playhouse in December where we saw *It's a Wonderful Life*. We all agreed that it was another winner and gave it a two thumbs up! After the show, we all went to Potts and Penn Diner on High Street for something to eat. We always have a good time together and invite other adults to join us.



Our Gang is a social group of seniors who are looking for friendship and activity. If you feel like that's you, please join us for any of our events. We usually have an activity every month. There's no pressure or stress with Our Gang; we just enjoy getting together. Don't worry if you use a walker or cane or any other device, we have others who use them, too, or if you need a steady arm for support, there's always someone who's willing to lend a hand.

In January, we revisited having lunch at the Greek restaurant on North Charlotte Street. First time we had to cancel, so we tried again.



If you would like to know more about the group, please get in touch with Barbara Ackerman (early service) or Sue Rhoads (late service).

Greetings From Our Gang!

ECS Workforce Development

Episcopal Community Services has an awesome FREE workforce development program called



R.I.S.E. RISE stands for Resources Independence Success Employment, offering 10 weeks of programming to 18-25 year olds to support them in their employment and educational goals. Participants receive snacks and lunch, transportation assistance, and incentives (up to \$250) for accomplishing goals.

They have access to the ECS computer lab, Wi-Fi, printing, and support with increasing their skills and help strategizing about how to overcome barriers. Special events provide opportunities for our participants to engage with and form relationships with professionals in their fields of interest.

All this and so much more is FREE. Interested individuals are invited to an information session at 225 S. 3rd Street at 11am Mondays, March 20th, 27th or April 3rd.

For details, see ecsphilly.org/programs/the-rise-initiative/ or reach out to Tamika Holder, Program Coordinator, Youth and Workforce Initiatives at: 215.351.1443, via email at tamikah@ecsphilly.org.

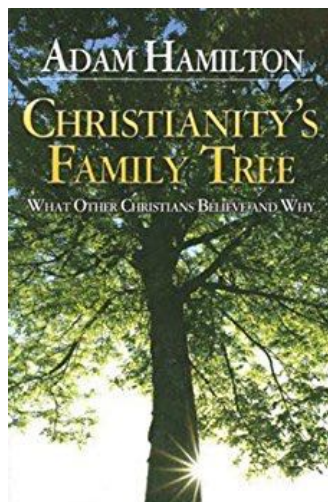
Monday Book Discussion

After Lent we will study *Christianity's Family Tree: What Other Christians Believe and Why*, by Adam Hamilton. Call Judy Shelly

(judyshelly@comcast.net) to order or get it on Amazon at

[smile.amazon.com/Christianitys-Family-Tree-Participants-Guide-ebook/dp/B00AKJYNUE/ref=sr_1_1?](http://smile.amazon.com/Christianitys-Family-Tree-Participants-Guide-ebook/dp/B00AKJYNUE/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1490046382&sr=8-1&keywords=Wh)

[ie=UTF8&qid=1490046382&sr=8-1&keywords=Wh](http://smile.amazon.com/Christianitys-Family-Tree-Participants-Guide-ebook/dp/B00AKJYNUE/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1490046382&sr=8-1&keywords=Wh) at+Other+Christians+Believe+and+Why



Dr. Paula Owens Parker led the Roots Matter Seminar on 18 March, with 52 registrants, one of the whom is the National Director for Youth for Christ, Burundi, Africa. His organization runs orphanages and schools for young children. He is in this country visiting supporting churches and heard about the conference.

A number of the registrants are Christian counselors, and we had nine registrants from a church in Lebanon County.

The seminar was designed to study historical trauma from different times and cultures, with the goal of helping participants to:

- Recognize and break patterns of negative behavior and attitudes caused by traumatic events that have been passed down in families
- Point out the good, helpful and practical ways families have overcome these circumstances and continue to succeed
- Offer an environment of support and sharing

Using the genogram, a family tree mapping out family history, we explore our family stories. Knowing our history can answer many questions and cast relationships in a new light.

Through this process we:

- Gain understanding of the lasting effects of trauma
- Recognize the importance of family and cultural

history and how history influences the present

- Appreciate the resiliency of the human spirit and the healing power of faith and prayer
- Participate in a healing service that mourns losses, and celebrate the achievements of families and communities



"Think less of what the future will bring us and more of what we can bring to the future."

--- Rabbi Shraga Silverstein

Simnel Cake

The Simnel cake is an Anglican tradition from the Middle Ages, eaten on the 4th (*Laetare*) Sunday of Lent as a relaxation from the Lenten fast. The origin of the name is obscure, possibly from *semila*, Latin for fine flour. One tradition however, has it named after Lambert Simnel, 10 year old pretender to the throne of Henry VII, who was pardoned and put to work in Henry's kitchen where he invented the cake. In Victorian England, it became the tradition for by servants to take one home to their family for the *Laetare* holiday. *Laetare* (Latin for "gladden/rejoice",) is the first word of the Introit for the day – "*Laetare, Jerusalem...*"

Laetare Sunday has several other names. In England it is known as "Mothering Sunday," from the tradition of attending the "mother" church of the diocese (cathedral), not a reference to the servants' mothers or the Virgin Mary. It's also "Refreshment Sunday" for the relaxation from the rules of Lent, and "Sunday of the Five Loaves" from the traditional gospel reading. Another Medieval name is "Rose Sunday" for the blessing of golden roses sent from the Pope to Christian queens. (Rose color for vestments is used as an emotional lift at the half-way point of Lent and Advent (*Laetare* and *Gaudete* Sundays) and is not related to the golden roses or to the Blessed Virgin.) The confusion of terms (e.g. multiple meanings of "rose" and "mother" is traditional in liturgies.

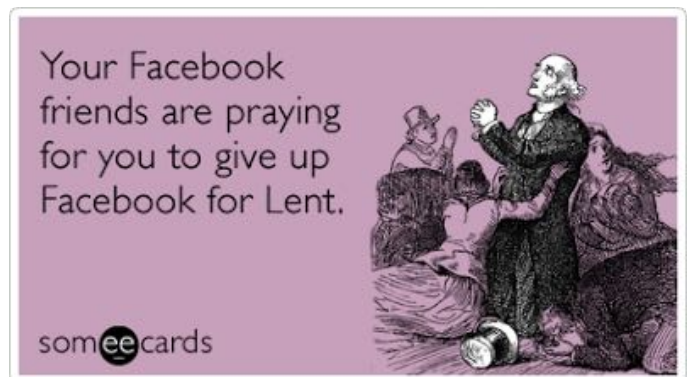
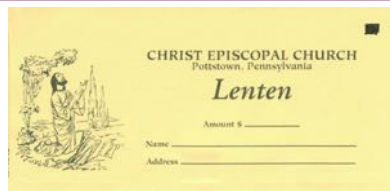
The cake is a sort of light pound/fruit cake, colored yellow with saffron and covered with marzipan (almond paste). It traditionally has eleven marzipan balls around the edges representing the eleven true Apostles (no Judas), and is decorated with candied flowers. Our cake bears a modest resemblance to the original recipe.

Laetare, Jerusalem...Rejoice, O Jerusalem: and come together all you that love her: rejoice with joy, you that have been in sorrow: that you may exult, and be filled from the breasts of your consolation.



Lenten Giving

Lent is a season of penitence and preparation for Easter. Many people practice the penitence by giving up something of importance to them. As one form of penitence, or in addition to whatever discipline you use, is giving what you may save from it. Pick a type of expenditure to "fast" from and give that to church an/or your preferred charity.



The two most joyous times of the year are Christmas morning and the end of school.
Alice Cooper

Search Committee

The Search Committee has had Skype or phone interviews with several candidates. They have been on two visits to candidates' parishes.

Stephanie Laidig
Search Committee Chair

Collect for the Election of a Rector

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on Christ Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall call our new rector, that we may receive from you a faithful pastor, who will care for the people of this congregation and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Commitment Box and Stewardship

We offer Commitment Cards in the pews, to be used by parishioners at any time, year round, to confidentially offer their own personal promises of prayer, service and/or resources to God. The cards may also be used as pledge cards if desired. The Stewardship team feels that the fact that giving normally exceeds pledges supports the concept that planning should be based instead on known and projected expenses versus an estimated income that reflects actual income of recent years.

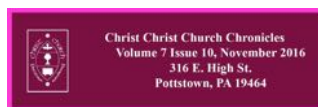
You can put your Commitment Card in the box at the bottom of the steps below the choir.



NEED SOME HELP!!!

Our newsletter editor needs a bit of help. If you would be willing to proof-read the newsletter while it's being written, please let me know. I'd like 2-3 more people. All you need is an e-mail address and a few minutes each month.

Bob Gross - Editor, abecedarian@verizon.net



Tithe News

Several months ago, the Vestry agreed that we should use part of Bob Connitt's bequest as a thank offering, a tithe, given unconditionally outside the parish with no expectation of return or control. That turned out to constitute about \$130,000.

Thus far we have given three gifts, one of \$50,000 to First Baptist Church of Pottstown to help with their building disaster. We also loaned them \$40,000 without a rigid time frame for repayment. They have recovered and have repaid the loan in its entirety.

We gave \$15,000 to the Seaman's Church Institute, an organization we have supported frequently in the past.

Finally, we gave \$10,000 to Ministries at Main St. (Kork Moyer, Pastor) to assist with their mission, beyond housing and feeding the homeless during the month of December.

We are not finished, and are open to suggestions for other outreach gifts. If you know of one, please contact a Vestry member and we will research and review it.

Vestry Retreat

Last month your Vestry, including new members Warren Holohan, Jan Morris, and Miriam Spade spent the weekend at St. Mary of Providence Retreat Center. The object of these retreats is to get new and old members accustomed to working together, to set goals, and to deepen our spiritual life.

We elected Robert Gross to continue as Rector's Warden and Donna Yanalavage to be People's Warden. Sharon Johnson will continue as Accounting Warden as the position is not contingent on being a Vestry member.

We also decided to begin increasing our pledge to the Diocese (to \$1,500 per year,) to continue our regular worship hours with adult forum instead of switching to summer hours, and to pursue the idea of offering a Spanish language service (no details yet.)

The biggest topic was discussing various aspects of church life, leadership, and management as we hire a new Rector.



Useful Links

Episcopal Questions and Answers

stgeorges.wordpress.com/seekers-andvisitors/
episcopal-q-a/

Diocese of PA Parish Events

www.diopa.org/parish-events

Diocese of Pennsylvania

www.diopa.org

Episcopal Church in the US

www.episcopalchurch.org/

Online Book of Common Prayer

www.bcponline.org/

Anglican Communion

www.anglicancommunion.org/

SPCK—Society for Promoting Christian

Knowledge spckusa.org/

Bible Gateway

www.biblegateway.com/

Liturgical Calendar

www.lectionarypage.net

Anglicans Online

anglicansonline.org

Anglicans Online USA

anglicansonline.org/usa

Alpha

www.alphausa.org

Habitat for Humanity

www.habitatmontco.org/

Recycling in Montgomery County (incl.hazardous waste) www.montcopa.org/index.aspx?NID=637

Society of Archbishop Justus

justus.anglican.org

Project Canterbury (Anglican History)

anglicanhistory.org

Anglican Communion News Service

www.anglicannews.org/

SAMS—Society of Anglican Missionaries and

Sender www.sams-usa.org

Episcopal News Service

episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/ens

Christ Church, Pottstown

www.christpottstown.com

Christ Church (website in development)

www.christpottstown.org

Daily Prayer and Worship Resources Online

oremus.org/index.html

Bishop's Bible Challenge

www.diopa.org/bishops-bible-challenge/

Generous Orthodoxy

www.generousorthodoxy.org/

Glossaries

www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary
and www.epicenter.org/church-terminology/

AmazonSmile

Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases to Christ Church if you register your account as an AmazonSmile account. There is no change to your cost, and, except for the initial setup, no effort on your part.

Just go to <https://smile.amazon.com/gp/aw/ch/about> to get started. Pick Christ Episcopal Church as your



Don't forget your Giant Gift Cards

When you buy a Giant gift card at church, you get the whole value of your purchase, and Christ Church receives 5% of your cost. It does not expire and purchases with it earn Giant Rewards Points, which can be redeemed for gas or food discounts. As an easy fundraising mechanism, it's hard to beat. They are available from Debbie Metz between services.



Thanks to Houck and Gofus - Sponsors of the Newsletter



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