



Christ Christ Church Chronicles

Volume 8 Issue 4, June 2017

316 E. High St. Pottstown, PA 19464

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Donna Yanalavage-

People's Warden

Class of 2020

Robert Gross—Rector's

Warden

Warren Holohan

Jan Morris

Miriam Spade

From the Rector

While the weather has been a roller coaster ride this year so far it is hoped that the summer season about to begin will bring calm winds and gentle temperatures to bless your activities and plans for the days and months ahead!

I will again profess that the Lord God is blessing the congregation abundantly. Even in the face of disappointment there is hope and a future under his Spirit and direction, do not doubt but believe and know that God "IS and WILL BE" master of all that you do. The search continues and the eyes of the committee are sharper now than ever before, the outcome will arrive on the wings of an Angel. In the mean time I am with you by God's grace and I pray that I will continue to serve our Lord as your interim.

There are many things ahead, the Pottstown Car Show on the first Saturdays and our work to feed the community, the continued work to support the community by service on Monday meals, the joint VBS with the other local congregations, the activities of Our Gang, the Second Saturday activity, a stewardship message next Sunday that will inspire you, our favorite son (soon to be Deacon) Lou will preach for us some time this summer, Fr. Andy Kline is to join us to share with you as preacher and teacher on Trinity Sunday the work of building the mission to the Hispanic members seeking to join us at Christ. And of course, my official ordination into the Episcopal Church on June 17. I am so excited that the bus is almost full and only a few seats remain.

This summer is shaping up to be a fantastic period of growth for the congregation. God is looking for your participation in the many activities that point to life, faith and vitality which is the hallmark of Christ Episcopal Church here in Pottstown. The exterior of the church is getting a face lift and preparations are in high gear to be ready through our mission and ministry for the new Rector, that will be chosen by God to serve this congregation.

Continue to pray and support the work of this congregation in every way. You are God's chosen, called to serve and proclaim the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. I implore you to be active in every way possible and not only will his blessings bestow grace upon the congregation but you will find him surrounding you with his blessings and comfort the months ahead as you enjoy the calm winds and gentle temperatures of the summer of 2017.

I lift you up in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am your servant in Christ,
Fr Bill Rex†



Finding God's Will

We often talk about and try to practice “discernment,” “finding God’s will,” “listening to the Holy Spirit,” and various other ways of describing figuring out what God would have us do in a particular situation. It is worth considering how we go about it.



This is not something unique to us or to Episcopalians in general. The Romans had augurs who dissected sheep and rummaged thru their entrails, or observed chickens behavior when fed to make decisions. Roman generals always checked for some god’s favor before attacking, although there are stories of general’s replacing their augurs until they gave the “correct” answer.

Some sociologists have said that one prime reason for the success of Christianity was that you escaped the tyranny of fate, the most worshipped deity in the ancient world. Arguably, it’s also the most worshipped deity in the modern world - we just have different ways of worshipping it. Example - do you know of ANY newspaper that doesn’t have an astrology column.

So the question arises, what’s the difference between pagan augury and discerning God’s will? Other than the obvious one that we don’t fondle sheep entrails any more. However, we often go to great lengths to discern what we should do.

It should be obvious, many modern bishops to the contrary, a) that we want to obey God rather than our own inclinations, and b) what we are inclined to is not automatically what God wants. Hence, we need to find out God’s will, somehow. (Now if you agree with modernist assertions on Christian behavior, the rest of this article will probably not suit you.)

The most obvious answer to the question is that we go about it differently. We don’t believe that God speaks to us in blatantly physical ways - putting Gideon’s fleece out at night just tells us whether it rained or not. Some Christians do things like that, but we are Episcopalians, after all. That’s not done.

In the interests of full disclosure, I once had Episcopal neighbors who did depend on such blatant displays, including for such simple issues as what to fix for supper. That’s where I learned that God has a

sense of humor.

We have many ways of discerning - most involve some form of prayer or meditation till we feel right. How we decide that varies, but in my experience, there is always someone whose feelings take precedence, whether in my local group or someone I follow.

There are some unconscious assumptions built into the common methods of discernment. The first is that there is only one valid answer. God is not that limited; if you pick the lemon, He can have you make lemonade.

The second is that His will is hidden from us, or is difficult to find. If God is, as we hold, a loving Father, does that thought make any sense? God does NOT hide His will.

Finally, are we really looking for **God’s** will or some variation on ours? Are we really willing to accept it if it varies from our own? If we prayed for particular results in an election, how do we handle a loss?

There is an Internet cartoon with one of Campus Crusade’s Four Spiritual Laws - “God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.” The picture is of Christians facing lions in the Coliseum. This may appear to be sarcasm to us, but it’s gospel to vast numbers of Christians in the Middle East and Africa.

Anglicanism (and some of Protestantism) had at the start a fundamental statement about this. In the 1979 BCP, there is a section on the 39 Articles. One of first is that, essentially all you need is already available in the Bible (Article VI. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation. p868.)

Obviously, we need to apply what is said in Scripture to specific events, but attempting to discern God’s will has to start with what He has already said, not with what we wish He had said.

We must also remember that we are designed with intelligence and some free will and that God expects us to use our brain. St. Augustine said “Love God and do what you want.” If we recall that “love” as he uses it is not just “feeling right,” then if we do the former, we cannot fail to have the latter turn out for good.

Bob Gross, Rector’s Warden

From the People's Warden

Just a few highlights on what Vestry has been working on or approved so far this year:

We have approved the following money towards the 10% Tithing Grant:

\$10,000 to the House of Restoration-The Harris Family Ministries

\$10,000 to the Birthright of Pottstown

\$10,000 to the Habitat for Humanity in Pottstown

\$10,000 to the Pottstown Cluster - To go to the community meal pantry's for feeding the members of the community

The Rectory has unfortunately needed many necessary repairs. We approved \$10,768 for removal of asbestos and mold from the basement, removing and replacing of leaking oil tanks, and installing a drainage system to prevent further water in the basement.

We passed an exception to the Bylaws to permit payment of a Vestry member, in this case Georgine Takach, to temporarily be paid as a nursery attendant. We are still in need of a paid nursery attendant for Sunday mornings, approximately 9:30-12:30. If you know of anyone, please contact me, Bob Gross, or the office.

Our afternoon Spanish Service continues each week with varying numbers of attendance. We are building trust with our Spanish attendees and we hope this will grow. The attendance has been as high as 21, averaging 13. The Altar Guild and Chalice Bearers have a schedule to cover this service. Father Andy is coming from Norristown every week to conduct the service. So far, we have only been paying his mileage.

The Stewardship committee is evaluating the financial impact of their campaign. Our envelope income is down, but so is our attendance for many varying reasons. We will further evaluate and give an update at an upcoming congregational meeting. On June 4 Darryle Tillman will be giving his personal "Temple Talk" during both services.

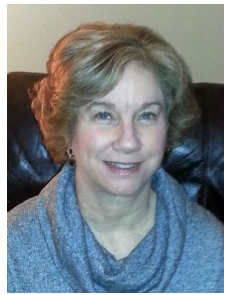
June 4 is Pentecost Sunday. We will have cake during the coffee hour. It is also our congregational meeting, which we will discuss the next step in looking for a new Rector, again.

VBS is June 25-29 in the evenings at the First Baptist Church. They are still looking for volunteers and supplies. Check with Edie Shean-Hammond on what is needed.

Donna Yanalavage (donnaypw@gmail.com) People's Warden

Donna Yanalavage

People's Warden



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 Gang Summer Activities



June 20....Picnic In Towpath Park – East Coventry - 12:00 Noon....Hamburgers And Hotdogs Provided.....You Supply The Sides Salads Or Desserts.....Small Fee To Cover Costs.....Sign Up Sheet On Bulletin Board

July 7....Meet Us For Lunch At Railroad Restaurant In Linfield....11:30

August 2.... Meet Your Friends At Christ Church For Catered Lunch..... 11:30Games With Wendy



Rector Search Status

Earlier this month the Search Committee unanimously selected Fr. George Wong as the preferred candidate. In initial discussions, he indicated that he definitely liked Christ Church and was inclined to come here if offered a position. Unfortunately for us, just before he was to meet with the Vestry, he decided to accept a position in the Diocese of Newark. We continue the search.

Fr. Wong's email declining is below:

"I hope this email finds you and your family well.

As we discussed, mostly by God's grace, I have been fortunate to have a number of call options emerge. After much prayer, discussion, and analysis and then more prayer, I have decided to move into final negotiations with a parish in the Diocese of Newark.

This has not been an easy decision or one I take lightly, because I am convinced that Christ Church is a parish blessed with rare gifts, exceptional ministries and many faithful members. Christ Church has been a perfect, lovely host and candid conversation partner on my visits to the church. But out of prayer and the movement of the Spirit directing me to the place of best fit for my gifts, I have been led towards another call. Given this development, I wanted to convey my intention to withdraw from the CC search process. I have also copied Bishop Gutierrez.

Christ Church will be in my prayers, and know in my heart that you will continue to be faithful disciples in many important ways.

Yours in Christ,

George+”



YOU ARE INVITED

June 10, 2017, 6:00pm

to **Second Saturday Neighborhood Night**

Join in the fun with

Bunco and Popcorn

A fun game for all ages.



Enjoy a lively evening with neighbors, family and friends!

All are Welcome!

Christ Episcopal Church, 316 East High Street, Pottstown, PA 19465, 610-323-2895
Entrance in rear off Queen Street parking lot.

Parish Pictorial Directory

Our new pictorial directory is nearing completion. Jen Brickel has finished the photography and we are about to go to final production. The directory will be issued in loose-leaf format for easy update. We should be ready sometime in June. Donations to cover costs would be appreciated.

Nursery Help Needed

Due to the departure of Linda Nabozny to accept a full-time job, we are in need of added nursery help. For the time being we are looking for volunteers. We would like more than one volunteer to rotate duties. Please contact Georgine Takach if you are willing to help.



Children's Music Program



With Phyllis Mitchell

Instruments and Music Provided
Every Tuesday @ 4 p.m.-5 p.m.

Christ Episcopal Church
316 East High St., Pottstown, PA 19464
(Entrance and Parking on Queen St.)

Free for All Kids K-12

Contact: Edie Shean-Hammond, Director of Education
Christ Episcopal Church @ esheanhammond@gmail.com or
call the church: 610-323-2895 & leave a message



Vacation Bible School



Who: Christian Children from Christ Episcopal, First Baptist, St. John's UCC, Saint Paul's UCC, Trinity Reformed UCC and Zion's UCC explore Christian Fellowship with children from Peru.

When: 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. beginning Sunday, June 25 through Thursday, June 29



Where: First Baptist Church, 301 King Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

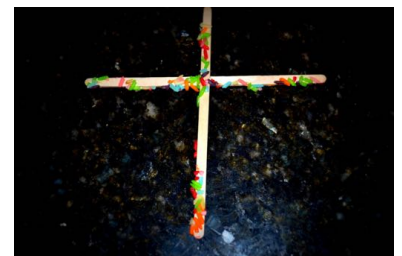
Why: Have a blast exploring how God's Love is shared throughout the world and right here in Pottstown.

HOW: Registration forms available from Edie Shean-Hammond at esheanhammond@gmail.com , at the church office and at Sunday School.



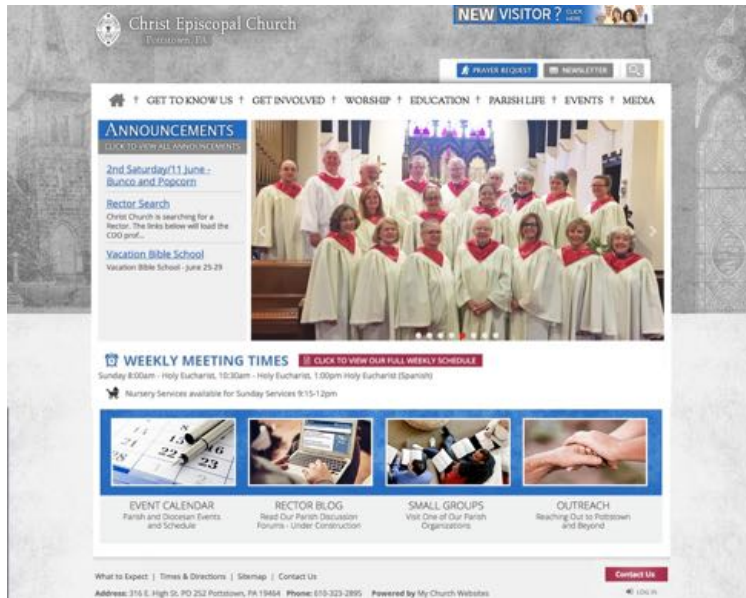
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

PLEASE CONTACT EDIE
(484) 624-3659



New Website

Christ Church is about to have a new website, starting in a couple of weeks. The current site is at www.christpottstown.com, the new one will be www.christpottstown.org. After a few weeks, both addresses will point to the new site and the old one will be shut down.



The new site will have a number of special features, some of which are still in development.

The main page will have a seasonal slide show with pictures of various events and places, plus the latest announcements. Just click on one to get details. In addition, it will have popup emergency information for closings, etc. This will not replace emergency phone calls, but will provide an added means of providing important information.

Under “Get to Know Us” you will find photos and biographies of the staff and Vestry.

“Get Involved” will have all the various service schedules, including those for worship, Altar Guild, Vern’s Vision, etc. You will also be able to print them if you want’

There is detailed information for visitors, service schedules, and information and contacts for all the Parish ministries.

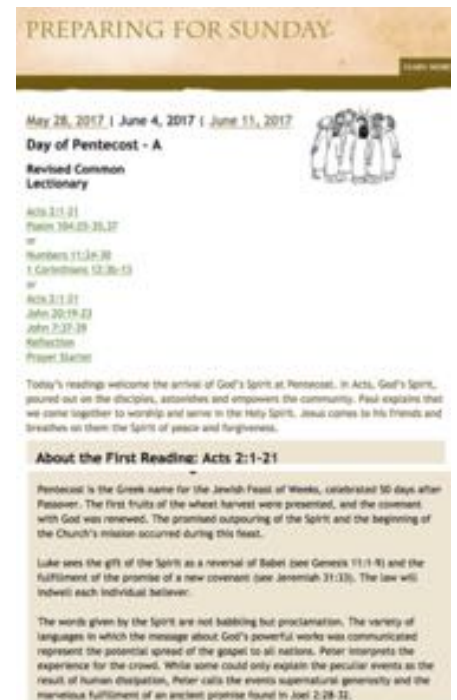
You will be able to submit Prayer Requests and directly contact ministry leaders and staff.

Our former weekly newsletter had all the readings and prayers for the upcoming Sunday; under Worship you will find the same information for last Sunday and the upcoming two Sundays. The readings section also includes a brief reflection and a prayer starter.

One of the most significant features of this site is the ability of various people to manage sections, without the need for knowing how to program or manage web sites. To do this, it includes the ability to have accounts on the site. If you have a need for an account, look at the bottom right of the main page and click “Log In” then click “Create Account” on the pop-up window. This will send a notice to the Webmaster to set up the appropriate permission and capabilities for your account.

The Parish Directory will be included under “Media” where you will be able to see photos of Parish members. If you have an account, you will also be able to click the photo and get contact information for that person, if they have allowed it. Don’t worry, we are still going to have a print version of the directory.

Coming up later - the Facebook version of the site, regular blog comments by the Rector and others, recordings and sermons, etc. Please check it out. If you have any feedback, criticisms, or suggestions please contact the Webmaster, Bob Gross, at church@christpottstown.com.



Monday Meals

Every Monday a different church in town provides lunch for people in need in Pottstown. The meal is always at Christ Church, so we are not in the regular rotation, except on 5th Mondays, when our team, shown below, provides the meal.



If a religion isn't different from the surrounding culture--if it doesn't critique and offer an alternative to it--it dies because it's seen as unnecessary. --- Tim Keller

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.

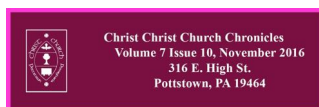
You can put your Commitment Card in the box at the bottom of the steps below the choir.



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



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

I Can't Get In To Church

The front door of the church will be closed for several weeks while the stonework repair is going on. During that time, the side entrance with the handicap ramp will be open. Please use that entrance instead. We will also have limited access to the Memorial Garden. This will make for some minor problems for the Car Show sales, but the Show will go on.



Unfortunately, there are very few contractors that do this work, and scheduling is dependent on their availability.



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/

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 organization.



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



Houck & Gofus Funeral Home

55 N. Charlotte St.

Pottstown, PA 19464

(610) 323-8220

Fax (610) 327-1187

