



Christ Church Chronicles

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From the Study

Dear People of God,

Welcome to the secular New Year ushering in 2016!! We have had a lot happen in this last year of 2015. I remind you that our Church New Year is the first Sunday of Advent. That was November 29, 2015 and will continue until November 27, 2016. We are currently in Lectionary Year C, of the Revised Common Lectionary, which means we are reading a lot of the Gospel of Luke. We are also in Year Two of Daily Readings.

One good habit is to read all week from the insert you get on Sunday, which will list an Old Testament reading, a Psalm, a New Testament reading and a Gospel reading, again, mostly from Luke this year. Each day you may find something you didn't see before, or get a new idea that may lead you to look up in the Bible what came before and what might come after, in our study.

If you look on the internet for www.missionstclare.com you'll find daily readings listed; or <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> for the Sunday Readings.

There are two other ways to read scripture: Reading 'The Bible Challenge' (www.thecenterforbiblicalstudies.org) is a program started by St. Thomas Church in our Diocese, and we have a group here that reads the 4 Gospels in a manner that compares the 3, Matthew, Mark and Luke, and then reads John – Nancy Yaskowski leads this group which uses the text only for learning, not commentaries.

These are good ways to begin or continue in a structured fashion the search for God through scripture. We also have our *Living Compass* wellness program as a focus for forum, and will continue that in the new year.

Reading a prayer in the morning, stopping at noon to refocus in prayer, and then perhaps choosing either an early evening time for Evening Prayer, or a just before bed time to read Compline will help each of us look for the sacred and the holy in our every day.

The journey we are on is to live out 2016 with a fresh understanding, every day, that we walk with God. Any of these ways to foster this promise will help us on our mission: To glorify God through worship, nurture and service.

Enjoy!

Faithfully,
Christina †

Streetwise



During the last few editions of Streetwise, I shared with you four messy lessons that I learned while a National Episcopal Church intern placed at Grace Church (Van Vorst), Jersey City, NJ during the summer and academic terms of 1960-1961. It was difficult to leave, but I was placed there to test through immersion in ministry whether God was calling me to a vocational life in the Church. The Rev. James P. Morton, my mentoring priest, Phyllis Townsend, the Director of the program designed to open women's roles in the Church, and I evaluated my performance as well as identified the nature of my call, if I had one. The process was rigorous. Jim and Phyllis affirmed their judgment that I had a strong call to minister to the disenfranchised in the inner city. In a moment of relief for having passed muster and of doubt for whether I was truly up to my vocation, my heart stopped because Phyllis said, "We (The National Church) have nowhere to send you to prepare you for your social justice ministry." My eyes filled with tears. Jim put his large hands around my clenched fists. "Trust in the Lord," he said. "God takes you where he wants you to go." Jim and Phyllis discussed possibilities, but I was not able to listen. They asked me a direct question. Do you want to study at Union Theological Seminary, which is non-denominational, or do you want to study at an Episcopal Seminary?" The question brought me back into the conversation and was easy for me to answer. Just confirmed while in college, I knew I needed an Episcopal education.

In three weeks' time, I boarded the train at Paoli Station that was to take me to Chicago, where I changed trains to Denver, and then on to San Francisco aboard the California Zephyr, a tourist delight. All I had beside a basic suitcase was a slip of paper with the address for St. Margaret's House in Berkeley and \$150 that Jim had given me so that I might enjoy some extravagances. The trip through the Rockies took my breath away. The man who shared the seat with me told me that I should get off the train in Oakland and should catch a cab to Berkeley. It would be much faster and cheaper. So I hailed a cab in Oakland with a driver who said he could take me to Berkeley. He got lost and wanted to return to Oakland. "No charge. No charge." He put me out somewhere. A gentleman noticed my confusion. "I know exactly where you are going. Will you trust me to take you there?" Against all I had ever been taught, I accepted his help. It turned out that he was the Dean at Pacific School of Religion, which was located right between Church Divinity School of the Pacific and St. Margaret's House, companion Episcopal schools.

Why tell you these details? First, I was nervous, excited and scared to death, but felt sure I was headed in the direction God wanted for me. The experience of walking out in faith, walking away from all that I knew, was a liberating lesson in following the Holy Spirit. Second, I was about to participate directly in experiencing how God changes history, the history of the institutional Church. I do believe God is changing history right now. The institutional Church as we know it today is once again under siege, under the siege of change, under the siege of resistance and openness to change.

Through the 1950's, women volunteers without formal training served in Sunday Schools. But in the 1960's the professionalization of women church workers became a focus of the National Episcopal Church. It came about because of the decline in the number of deaconesses, along with the closing of small churches in favor of larger parishes that could employ professionally trained, salaried women. These were the chief impetus in the Church's seeking Directors of Christian Education. In fact, Deaconess Training Centers were taken over by the national church as training centers for professional Christian Educators.

At the end of my internship at Grace Church (Van Vorst), I was a participant in the beginning of this change. The only path open to me as a woman was to *matriculate* at St. Margaret's House. The path for a man was to *matriculate* at CDSP. Matriculation leads to a degree.

(Continued on page 5)

New Year's for Christians



Happy New Year! For Christians? Interesting thought. Shortly after the celebration of one of the major Christian festivals (with Easter and Pentecost) we have the celebration of what may be the least meaningful holiday of the year.

Think about it – what important event, principle, or person is New Year's associated with. No, it's not football. New Year's came first; football's association is an accident of college holiday breaks. Besides, since the NCAA instituted the College Football Playoffs, the big game isn't on New Year's any more.

We often say that we have our own New Year, the first Sunday in Advent, but we really tend to think of it (correctly) as the lead up to Christmas rather than as the start of a new year. The liturgical calendar restarts, but we don't even change the year number.

In fact, there is no particular reason, other than Julius Caesar's ego, for the year to start on 1 Jan. In much of the world, the start of a new year changes every year. How you decide depends on your definition of "year," whether its twelve lunar cycles or one solar cycle. The lunar year is far easier to track than the solar year as you don't need to care about the complex rules for leap years.

The first time that 1 Jan. was New Year was in 45 BC (or 46 depending on how you count,) when Jul-

ius Caesar promulgated the eponymous Julian calendar. He got the New Year to 1 Jan. by adding some 80 days to 45BC. It seems that he chose January because the Roman god Janus had two faces, looking both forward and backward.

Rome kept that rule, as did the Church, but hardly anyone else did, including many Catholic countries. For many, use of the Julian calendar did not include 1 Jan. as start of the new year. In fact, in the US Jan. became the new year in 1752. 1751 started on 25 March and lasted 282 days.

1 Jan. is a Christian feast day, but not to celebrate the start of a year. Rather it is a feast celebrating the circumcision of Jesus eight days after his birth, when he was formally given his name. For obscure reasons, the *Feast of the Circumcision* has the more sanitary title of *Feast of the Holy Name*, but they are the same feast.

We hold the Christmas season to be 12 days long, ending at Epiphany, and the Feast of the Holy Name is an integral part of that. It celebrates the fullness of Christ becoming incarnate; not only does he become human, he also becomes part of the covenantal relationship with us and God. Unfortunately, it has become a hidden and ignored feast day, replaced by sports and partying to excess (check the highway fatality count).

This feast puts together the completeness and cost of God's incarnation as a Jewish boy. It reminds us that God **really** was here to be with us, as one of us. We lose something important if we forget that part.

Bob Gross, Rector's Warden

Fund Raising With Redner's Tapes—How Does It Work

When you shop at Redner's, use your Redner's **Pump Perks/ 1% Save-A-Tape** card. Each time you purchase at Redner's your receipt will be designated as a 1% Save-A-Tape customer receipt. Turn in your tapes at church in the Redner's box. When we have enough tapes for a meaningful rebate, they will be turned in to a local Redner's manager. Please don't save them up; tapes over two years old become invalid. In about eight weeks we will receive a check for 1% of the total amount of the tapes submitted. *Note: you must swipe your card at the time of purchase or the tape will not be valid for the rebate.*



Serving Our Local Communities Since 1970

And the Angel said “Fear Not”



Here we are about to embark on another chapter in the life of Christ Church. Are we afraid? A little. Are we hopeful? Definitely. Do we trust in God to strengthen us in keeping our small body of Christ vibrant and meaningful? Of course!

So – can we just sit back and watch all good things come to Christ Church? No!

In the next month, a new Vestry will be formed, one composed of the serious, hopeful and energetic people God has chosen to lead us. They will struggle with big decisions around leadership and purpose. They will pray and be guided.

A statement regarding who we are and who we want to be, called a profile, will be crafted and sent out to find the heart of the one person out there who can best join us in our journey.

We may begin new ministries this year, we will

surely strengthen some old ones and, probably, we will abandon some. In all these things we will come together with one purpose – to worship God and nurture and serve each other and our community. We will measure our activities against that purpose and judge which are worthy and which are not.

We will pass a budget with expenses exceeding projected income, trusting that God will provide. We will continue careful care of our building, in the sure belief that we are maintaining for future generations. We will come together weekly, as a family, to share.

So – afraid? Yes. Hopeful? Yes. Trusting? Yes

Happy New Year – all will be well.

Did you know...

2016 is the 190th anniversary of the founding of Christ Episcopal Church, Pottstown and the 140th anniversary of our building. Lots of faith, lots of trust in those 190 years!

Sue Furman, People's Warden

Confirmation Class Feeds the Homeless

Our Confirmation class provided the evening meal for our homeless shelter on 28 December. Amy Yanavalage, Greg and Heather McFadden, and Rachel Bricker cooked dinner and served.

Assisting them were Jim and Judy Shelly, Jen Brickel, Bill and Donna Yanavalage, Lou Steffenhagen, Candace Woessner, Warren Holohan, Keith and Suzanne Bricker, and Elissa Lewis.



Fund Raising With AmazonSmile

How to Help With No Effort

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.

How do you do it?

1. Instead of [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), log in at smile.amazon.com, with your usual username and password.
2. On your first login, you should find “Select a Charity”. Enter “Christ Episcopal Church” and scroll down a few lines to the one in Pottstown, PA.
3. Click “Select” and you’re done. You can change the selection at any time.

From then on, go to smile.amazon.com and you will support the church with your purchases.



A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible -- Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the verse. Little Bobby was excited about the task, but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Bobby was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my shepherd . . . and that's all I need to know!"

(Continued from page 2)

Streetwise (cont.)

In one of our first classes, The Rev. Massey Shepherd clarified for both men and women students that having a seminary degree has no direct bearing on ordination. Ordination for men depended on their relationships with a bishop who wanted to ordain him. It was bishops that required seminary education. Women were not eligible for ordination.

Shep explained that any person may *enroll* in any Episcopal seminary, may take any course or even complete any full course of study. However, at that time, no woman could *matriculate* and earn a degree from any Episcopal seminary, even if first in the class. But any man could matriculate and earn any degree offered by the seminary.

There was no reason for a woman to earn a Seminary education except that it provided a theological basis for the woman's employment as a lay Christian Educator. Women *matriculated* at St. Margaret's in order to be granted a degree, a Master's Degree in Christian Education, and earning the degree depended upon being *enrolled* in a prescribed curriculum of seminary courses.

Ordination for women was not in view in the 1960's. Therefore there was the expectation that a woman student would not have anything but a lay relationship with a diocesan bishop, nor would she ever have a liturgical ministry. However, on July 29, 1974, 11 women were irregularly ordained at the Church of the Advocate in North Philadelphia. The church was entering a new period of change.

J. Robin Robb, Deacon †

Christ Church Chili Cook-Off / Basket Auction

Looking for a fun way to spend a winter evening? Come to the Chili Cook-Off and Basket Auction **Saturday, 23 Jan.. starting at 4:30.** We'll begin with chili tasting where you can experience the culinary talents within our parish. A Basket Auction follows the tasting.

What's in the baskets? Just about anything—Chocolate lovers basket, coffee lovers basket, hobby themed baskets – knitting, scrapbooking supplies in a storage bin, wine and cheese assortments, golf balls and gift certificate for green fees, flower seeds, gardening stuff in a sprinkling can, and all sorts of other goodies. Each basket has a ballot box and you can purchase as many tickets as you like. You stuff your favorite ballot box (or spread the tickets out) and breathlessly await the drawings.



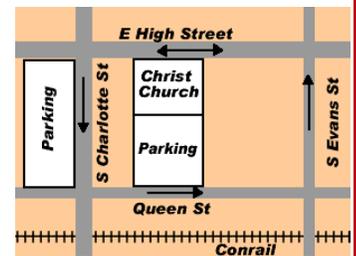
Donations for the chili accepted to cover costs.

What's in the chili? Your choice of any and all of hot and spicy, mild and wimpy, vegetarian and others. There's cornbread and other things to cool the tongue if necessary. You're the judge.

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
(rear of church)*

316 E. High St., Pottstown. 610-323-2895



Our Gang

Our Gang enjoyed two special events in December. We went to "White Christmas" at the Steel River Playhouse followed by dinner at Grumpy's (who by the way is very nice). We all gave it two thumbs up and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. The next weekend we took the Pottsgrove Manor Candlelight Tour (unfortunately, no pictures allowed) and experienced Christmas with the Pott's family during the 18th century. It was delightful and of course we ended the day with dinner out at Red Lobster.



Plans are underway to attend *Fiddler on the Roof* at Steel River in May. More to come on that. The group got off to a great start in June and has attended many events in the area; at least one a month. We'll regroup in January and make new plans for the upcoming months.

Our Gang is open to all adults in the church. Please join us! For more information, contact Barbara Ackerman (early service) and Sue Rhoads (late service) [su-san_rhoads@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_rhoads@yahoo.com).



The Shelter at Christ Church

This year, Christ Church has been the home, during December, for approximately 22+ individuals who find themselves without a place to live. Christ Church partners with Still Waters Ministry to shelter these individuals.

The Shelter Committee begins planning in October - hosts are assigned and the large calendar is prepared. Announcements start in November and dates begin to be filled in by those willing to prepare a meal for our guests. Brian Mitchell provides boxes and boxes of paper products -plates, bowls, napkins, and cups. We use a huge amount of these items and this gift provided by Brian is a wonderful addition.

The hosts from church arrive about 7:30 to set up and make the coffee. The shelter staff arrives around 8:30 and the doors are opened at 9:00. Our guests arrive to a warm welcome by the hosts, a warm, safe place to be, and the smells of a home cooked meal. -Dinner is usually served around 9:15. We have found this year that our guests, even if they have had a meal earlier in the evening, are hungry. We seldom have leftovers.

When we first began sheltering these individuals, we thought it would be a good idea to invite people to come in and visit with our guests in the evening when they arrived. We have realized, over the years, that by 9 PM the folks are tired and want to get settled in for the night. Being homeless is hard, tiresome work.

Usually after the meal is served, our guests pull out the mats, gather their bags, and prepare for bed. The hosts help to clean up after the meal and usually head home by 10:00. Each evening as we leave, wishing them a good night, we are met with "Thank you!" "God bless you" coming for the room.

It is an honor, a privilege, and a blessing to be involved in this ministry.

Faithfully,
Ginny Slichter
Shelter coordinator



Prayer Chain

**James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another,
and pray for one
another so that you may be healed. The effective
prayer of a righteous man can
accomplish much.**



If you are not already a part of the Prayer Chain, and would like to regularly pray for others, and to know specific needs for prayer, please send your name and e-mail address to Stephanie Laidig at stephanielaidig@aol.com or via our parish e-mail address, church@christpottstown.com

Useful Links

Episcopal Questions and Answers

<http://stgeorges.wordpress.com/seekers-and-visitors/episcopal-q-a/>

Diocese of PA Parish Events

<http://www.diopa.org/parish-events>

Diocese of Pennsylvania <http://www.diopa.org>

Episcopal Church in the US

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/>

Online *Book of Common Prayer*

<http://www.bcponline.org/>

Anglican Communion

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/>

SPCK—Society for Promoting Christian

Knowledge <http://spckusa.org/>

Bible Gateway <http://www.biblegateway.com/>

Liturgical Calendar

<http://www.lectionarypage.net/CalndrsIndexes/Calendar2016.html>

Anglicans Online <http://anglicansonline.org>

Alpha <http://www.alphausa.org>

Anglicans Online USA

<http://anglicansonline.org/usa>

Daily Prayer and Worship Resources Online

<http://oremus.org/index.html>

Episcopal Veterans Fellowship

<http://evfellowship.org/>

Habitat for Humanity

<http://www.habitatmontco.org/>

Recycling in Montgomery County (including hazardous waste)

<http://www.montcopa.org/index.aspx?NID=637>

General Convention Reports

<http://library.episcopalchurch.org>

Society of Archbishop Justus

<http://justus.anglican.org>

Project Canterbury (Anglican History)

<http://anglicanhistory.org>

Anglican Communion News Service

<http://www.anglicannews.org/>

SAMS—Society of Anglican Missionaries and Senders

www.sams-usa.org

Episcopal News Service

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/ens>

Christ Church, Pottstown

<http://www.christpottstown.com>

Don't forget your Giant 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 Re-

wards Points, which can be redeemed for gas or food discounts. As an easy fund-raising mechanism, it's hard to beat. They are available from Debbie Metz between services.



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Christ Church Newsletter

January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:00 am Homeless Shelter Bible Study	2 Homeless Shelter
3 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 9:15 am Parish Meeting and Coffee Hour 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School 12:00 pm Confirmation Class	4 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	5 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group 7:00 pm Property Committee Mtg	6 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	7 12:00 pm Cluster Delegate Mtg	8 9:00 am Bible Study	9
10 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School	11 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	12 9:00 am Finance Committee 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group	13 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	14	15 9:00 am Bible Study	16 9:00 am Daughters of the King
17 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School 12:00 pm Confirmation Class	18 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	19 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group	20 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	21 7:00 pm Vestry	22 9:00 am Bible Study	23
24 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School 4:30 pm Chili Cook-off and Basket Raffle	25 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	26 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group	27 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	28	29 9:00 am Bible Study	30
31 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School 12:00 pm Confirmation Class						

Christ Church Newsletter

February 2016

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	1 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	2 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group 7:00 pm Property Committee Mtg	3 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	4 12:00 pm Cluster Delegate Mtg	5 9:00 am Bible Study	6
7 Annual Meeting - 1 Service 9:00 am Eucharist 9:00 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:15 am Annual Meeting and Lunch	8 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	9 9:00 am Finance Committee 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 4:30 pm Pancake Supper	10 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday	11	12 9:00 am Bible Study	13
14 8:00 am Holy Eucharist - I 9:15 am Adult Forum and Coffee Hour 9:15 am Nursery 9:15-11 10:30 am Holy Eucharist - II 10:45 am Church School 12:00 pm Confirmation Class	15 Community Meal 6:30 pm Girls' Friendly Society 7:30 pm Bible Study	16 10:00 am Tuesday Book Study 5:45 pm Exercise Group	17 8:00 am Thrift Shop 9:00 am Eucharist & Healing Service 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	18 7:00 pm Vestry	19 9:00 am Bible Study	20 9:00 am Daughters of the King
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