

2018 RECTOR'S REPORT

“As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” Colossians 2.6-7

To be rooted and built up in Christ; this is the heart of any parish. We gather each Sunday to deepen our knowledge and fortify our faith that we may go out into the world to do all that God has called us to do.

This year our theme for Stewardship has been **“Into Good Soil: Growing Our Faith”**. In the midst of all we usually do in any given year, we have been especially focusing on how we are rooted, built up, and established in Christ Jesus. For you see, “Stewardship” is not merely about how each of us handles the money that God entrusts into our care; Stewardship is about how we handle *everything* God entrusts into our care: our bodies, our souls, our children, our civic duties, the well-being of our planet (and everything in-between).

We had a series of Home Eucharists during 2018 in which we explored these themes. Many thanks to the parishioners who opened their homes and to all who participated. Adult education included our Wednesday Peak of the Week which is led by Donna Devlin and addresses many subjects of spiritual interest. Education for Ministry, the best Adult Education and Formation program in the Episcopal Church, is led by me and my co-mentor Robin McKeever (of St. James, Eatontown). Adults also met monthly for what came to be known as “Circle of Friends”: discussing race and how it shapes our lives. Lent Madness hit our parish this year; members of the parish helped select the Golden Halo Winner for 2018: Anna Alexander (don’t know what saint this is? Google her!) Our Youth Group continues to meet; Georgette King and Walter Dein are my partners in leading the charge with our teens. Sue Napoletano and her team do a phenomenal job with our children, fostering a deep love of church and a growing devotion to the faith. And Donna Devlin engaged the entire parish with two dramas during Sunday morning worship: the Epiphany Pageant and a Rufus’ Quest, a play that looked at our part and responsibility to our environment.

To be rooted and built up in Christ. Education is a big part of that, but there were so many other things we accomplished in 2018 to help our parish deepen our roots and to continue building on the foundation of Christ, the prophets, the saints, and the Church. Here are a few other notable accomplishments for 2018 (many of which you will read about in the pages of this report:

- Completed the Handicap Ramp to the Parish House
- Graveyard Month in October – ***new annual event!***
- Restoration of many stones in our Graveyard
- Sponsorship of Queeni Caay, a college student in the Philippines
- Celebration of the ministry of Ann and Jim Miller
- Community Garden – ***new ministry!***
- Christ Church on youtube
- Ten Years of Martha’s Cupboard
- Self-Guided Graveyard Tours are here!
- St. Patrick’s Day Dinner – ***look for it again this year!***
- Instructed Eucharist and a new Maundy Thursday Agape Meal
- Welcomed a visit from members of the Diocesan Council

These bullets listed above? These are only things new or unique to the year 2018. Besides all of this, our parish does a tremendous amount of ministry here at home and out in the world. I encourage you to read the pages of this report to fully understand just who we are and what we do – and to find a place for you.....so that you can take root, and be built up in the Lord and established in the Faith.

Peace,
Mother Lisa Mitchell+