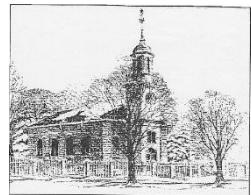


THE CROWN

The Newsletter of Christ Church Shrewsbury

Christ Church is a community committed to exploring the reality of God in today's world



Volume XXV Issue XII

December 2025

CHRIST CHURCH
ANNUAL *
HOLIDAY BAZAAR

380 Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, NJ

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

A Day Full of Holiday Cheer!



Photos with Santa!
Light Lunch & Snacks for Sale
Raffled Baskets of Prizes (Worth up to \$400!)
50/50 Raffle
Local Vendors
Fun for all ages!
Santa's Workshop
Kids' Craft Station!

Gourmet Baked Goods!

Bring your family, friends, and holiday spirit — it's the perfect way to kick off the Christmas season!

Hosted by Christ Church Shrewsbury

“What the mother sings to the cradle goes all the way down to the coffin.”

Henry Ward Beecher

Dear Friends,

Things are starting to happen. We have one week to go before the Christmas Bazaar, which has already started a case of the flutters – both around the Parish Hall and in the depths of my inner self. And although the Feast of the Nativity (commonly called Christmas) isn’t for a few more weeks, suddenly I can feel it drawing closer and closer. Which is what this particular season – the Season of Advent – is all about. The “closing in” of the most extraordinary event of One little child born in Bethlehem so long ago.

But I get ahead of myself. For we are first stepping into Advent, a time of watching and waiting. Preparing for the celebration of Christmas, certainly. But Advent is far more than that. Advent reminds us that we are a people who are waiting the arrival of the Christ, the Cosmic Christ who breaks into our world when we least expect it and shakes us up like nothing else.

I love this season. Perhaps because it is so easily overlooked by the rest of the world which is racing ahead to festive trees and yuletide cheer. I love it because of the dichotomy of it all: the sleepy little four-week season that packs such a powerful punch, waking us up to the possibilities of the Eternal in our midst.

The lessons for Advent are both beautiful and jarring, stories that still reach out and grab us with their complicated (and fairly unbelievable) storylines and their unusual characters. Zachariah and Elizabeth, who found they were expecting a child in their very old age (leaving Zachariah literally speechless throughout the entire pregnancy). John the Baptist, fiery prophet of the desert who ends up in prison and decapitated. The Angel Gabriel with the oh-so-surprising announcement to a young maiden named Mary, And the emotionally charged drama of how her betrothed husband Joseph dealt with the conundrum.

Which begs the question: why would *anyone* want to skip over Advent to go straight into Christmas? It’s like flipping through a book and going to the last page: how can you expect to understand it all without having read each and every drama-filled page?

Advent calls us to linger in the pre-story, the build-up, to ponder these important characters who made up the world to which the child will be born. They are not throw-away men and women: they set the stage for who this child will be and how he will be prepared for his God-ordained destiny. I can imagine these stories being told around the fire at their home in Nazareth and recalled in hushed tones at family gatherings. They will make Jesus who he is: this is why they are told to us.

Nineteenth century abolitionist and clergyman Henry Ward Beecher once said, “*What the mother sings to the cradle goes all the way down to the coffin.*” I don’t think he had the Holy Family in mind. I imagine he was thinking of the prejudices that we pass on to our children as well as the lofty values we share with them from their most tender years. But I think of all those who came before Jesus and the stories he learned at his mother’s knee. I wonder how those accounts of brave men and women who were willing to do God’s will – even when they didn’t understand it all – how that prepared him for what would come. From the cradle right to the cross, the grave, and beyond. I wonder.

I hope you are getting excited about Christmas. But first, I hope you are ready to welcome the Season of Advent, embracing it for all the excitement it brings. Let the stories of our Lord’s forebears inspire you, too. Be ready for our Lord to come to you in ways you cannot yet imagine, for coming he is. Breaking into our lives to bring the good news of God’s salvation. Then - but most importantly - now.

Peace,
Mother Lisa+

PARISH NEWS & NOTES

HOLIDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE



Sunday, November 30 - Advent I
9 am Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 7 - Advent II
9 am Holy Eucharist – St. Nicholas visits

Sunday, December 14 - Advent III
9 am Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 21 - Advent IV
9 am Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve
4 pm Holy Eucharist + Setting the Creche

Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day
10 am Holy Eucharist with reception

Sunday, December 28 - First Christmas
9 am Holy Eucharist with Lessons + Carols

Sunday, January 4 - Second Christmas
9 am Holy Eucharist, Holy Baptism

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED



For the sick and suffering, and those in any need or trouble: *Anderson Pedalino, *Bill Balmer, *Carolyn, *Cassie Reagan, *Denzel Donaldson, *Dianne Regiec, *Halina Nibbling, *Jim Miller, *Joan, *John Smalls, *Judi Buncher, *Julia Walsh, *Mimi Brown, *Pam Diamond, *Paul Murgio, *Richard Brugger, *Rod Webster, *Sarah Schmid, *Tom Cameron, Victoria Cuff, Arlene, Bob Bark, Doris, Heather Forrest, Jack, Jack Sauber, Jocelyn, John Veil, Linda Forrest, Jamie Marengo, Lynn McKittrick, Marjorie Durdack, Meriwether Schmid, Mignon Williams, Pam, Brother Richard Biernacki, Peddy, Roger Cuthbert, Sandy Abdelaziz, Tim, Todd Diamond

**Denotes members of Christ Church*

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

The Parish office hours are Mondays through Fridays, 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm. During the holidays hours may differ, so it's always good to call ahead if you're unsure that someone will be here.

ST. NICHOLAS VISITATION



Please join us in church on Sunday, December 7th for our St. Nicholas visitation. It's a beloved Christ Church tradition and a lovely celebration of this Saint. There is no church school on this day so everyone can join in on the festivity.

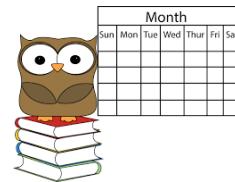
Faithfully, Sue Napoletano

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY



This year, **National Wreaths Across America Day** will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025. Join us in celebrating as wreaths will be placed on all the graves of veterans in our graveyard. Remember and honor the veterans who given their lives for this country.

CALENDAR CASHOUT



What is Calendar Cashout? You pick your favorite dates: anniversaries, birthdays, whatever date is important to you! \$5.00 secures each date with your name, and no one else can take it. At the Christmas Bazaar, we will draw out ONE date from the year. If it is yours – you will receive half of the total take! It's fun to play and easy, too. Look for the Calendar at Coffee Hours, Dead to Me, and other parish events.

CHRISTMAS GREENS MEMORIALS



The church will be decorated with Christmas Greens, including wreaths, poinsettias and a tree for the holiday season. Donations for the cost of the Christmas Greens would be appreciated. There will be pink envelopes marked Christmas Memorial Flowers and Greens at the back of the church as well as in the church office. Please put your donation (in the envelope), in the offering plate, or return it to the church office. Memorials must be received in the office by December 15th to be included in the Christmas bulletin.

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

To Help Those Less Fortunate During the Holidays



Each year, the parishioners of Christ Church have helped families from Monmouth County fulfill the wishes of children at Christmas. Many families have been hard hit this past year and need our help to provide toys for their children. Many families are out of work, have increased expenses and issues. Please help make a bright Christmas Day for many children again this year. Toys are needed for all age groups – babies to High School students.

Suggestions:

- Dolls of all sizes and types
- board games such as Candy Land, Monopoly, Battleship
- gift cards to Target, Burger King, McDonalds, Movie Theatres, Dunkin Donuts, etc.
- action figures , cars, fire trucks; dump trucks, etc.
- blocks, Lego kits, Nerf toys,
- Barbie, Disney Princess items,
- Hot Wheels products
- sports items such as basketball, soccer ball
- Transformers
- dress up clothing

- tea party sets
- Erector Sets; building materials
- play musical instruments
- puzzles
- art products and kits
- and just about any other toy you can purchase

Please do not wrap the toys, but include wrapping materials, gift bags and tape. . Please bring your donations to the church or office any time between now and December 6th.

If you have any questions or would like to help with this charitable activity, please contact Elaine Feyereisen at: 732-742-1227.



Through Christmas season we are asking you to help decorate the Christmas tree with new gloves, mittens, hats, socks, etc. Any size or color will do! These “ornaments” will then be donated to various charities to help those less fortunate over the cold hard winter months.



We are collecting gift cards for Covenant House, as they continue to help the youth in our community who are experiencing homelessness. Many of those they help are 18-22 years old. Please consider donating a gift card to Amazon, Uber, Shoprite, Target, Walmart, McDonalds, WaWa, Dunkin, Marshalls, Taco Bell, Popeyes or anywhere else that may provide relief in their difficult time.



We are collecting new or gently worn coats. If you would like to donate, please bring them to the Parish Hall. We will find them a good home!



Blessing of the Stockings

*Experiences of the Holy
for Parent and Child*

Saturday, December 13th

10:00 am

December is a very special time for Christ Church:

We cannot keep it to ourselves!

**You are invited to join
us for this very festive event
for the community.**

*Help decorate the Christmas Tree
Bring your Christmas Stocking for a Special Blessing
Decorate cookies for your own home*

Bring your child or grandchild. Invite your friends and neighbors. This is a wonderful way to introduce a layer of the true spirit of giving and love into the Christmas Season.

**To assist with this event, please contact the Church Office.
theparish@christchurchshrewsbury.org
380 Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury
732-741-2220**

Wreaths across America will follow at 11:00am.

PEAK IN THE WEEK - YE GODS AND LITTLE FISHES!

My mother-in-law used to say, “Ye gods and little fishes” a lot. Another one was “Run up an alley and yell fish”. I never understood the fascination with fish or the meaning, hidden or just plain missing, but the hokeyness kept these in my repertoire (better than a lot of the other “sayings” making the rounds today). And so, “ye gods and little fishes!” Is it really time for the December 2025 Crown piece about Peak in the Week?! Francesca says it is so—

Peak in the Week at Christ Church, Shrewsbury began a study of Psalms in November. We’re reading them, talking about them, thinking about their effect on us, hearing them anew in the words of different translations. Since the months of November and December. If you would like to join us for a closer look into the beloved of Psalms join us on Wednesdays at 9:30 for an informal Eucharist in the parish house followed by Peak or come at about 10:15 for the discussion. All you need is a Bible. Any translation of the Bible is fine.

Our book for January will be a Not For Women Only look at biblical living--guaranteed to “knock your socks off”! Keep Wednesday, January 7th open so you can join us.



High School Students will meet for their second meeting on Sunday, December 8th following the service. Do grab a snack at the Coffee Hour and Mother Lisa will meet you in the library. Bring whatever homework you have with you – and be ready for a spirited conversation!

In addition, if you are an adult who has not been confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church (if confirmed in another denomination) speak to Mother Lisa about attending these classes.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Anyone wanting to welcome the Baby Jesus and celebrate his birth this year is invited to join in rehearsals after church service on December 7th, 14th and 21st in preparation for singing carols at the

Christmas Eve Service at 4 pm on the 24th. Our choir director would love to have you share in the music. Mrs. Nap

THE GATHERING HAS SOME EXCITING NEWS!



We met with Monmouth County ARC, and we have scheduled our first Gatherings. The first Gathering will take place on Thursday, December 11th, at 6:00 pm for participants residing in group homes. The second Gathering will take place on Wednesday, December 17th, at 11:00 am for participants attending day programs.

We could use your help! Are you interested in helping with this exciting new ministry? We need people who are available during those times to help make **The Gathering** a success. Please send an email to tiatthegathering@gmail.com if you are interested, and let her know if you have a preference for a particular day or if you can help with both days. We will have an informational meeting on Sunday, December 7th, after church.

We appreciate your willingness to help make this ministry for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities a success!

We can't make it happen without you.
– The Gathering Committee

The Gathering Ministry
Belonging in Faith, United in Love

CHRISTIAN ED HAPPENINGS



We’re moving along on our journey through the Old Testament. This month we met David (shepherd and king), Jeremiah, Daniel, and Jonah. With that the branches on Jesus’s ancestry tree are getting filled up and the prophets are coming out too. The takeaway of these lessons is that despite each of these people being flawed and exercised poor judgment, they were ultimately favored by God

because of their deep faith and obedience. As we come into the Season of Advent we will be setting the stage for the Nativity through lessons, crafts and music. Please join us!

In addition, the Epiphany Pageant will be held on Sunday, January 11th, 2026, with a new director on hand. Thanks, Lisa Marino, for agreeing to take on this traditional activity.

Faithfully, Mrs. Nap

IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT POSSIBLE SCAMS

Periodically, scammers attempt to contact parish members by pretending to be Mother Lisa or others from our church. Please **always double-check** the phone number and email address of any message asking for help or money.

- Mother Lisa will **only** contact you from her known phone number.
- Emails from our church will **only** come from Rector@ChristChurchShrewsbury.org or TheParish@ChristChurchShrewsbury.org.

If something feels unusual, or you are unsure, please **contact the church office directly** before responding.

“IT TAKES A VILLAGE”

*Phoenix and Julien Canoy are Philippine students Christ Church supplies a scholarship for college.

*Queeni Caay lives in the Philippines and Christ Church sponsored her college education.

“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”

- Proverbs 11:25

Good day to all of you, the Christ Church Shrewsbury Family and Members,

I hope you are doing well. Especially to Mother Lisa, may you always remain an inspiration. On September 8, we officially began our second semester. During that day, all tourism students attended a departmental meeting to elect a new batch governor who would represent and lead our group throughout the semester. On September 16 and 18, 2025, we took our midterm examinations,

and I am pleased to share that I successfully passed all my subjects. Subsequently, on October 7 and 10, we completed our final examinations, marking the end of the first term.

As we transitioned into the second semester, our academic activities became more focused on research work, which required dedication, collaboration, and critical thinking. On October 12, a strong earthquake struck our area, leading to the suspension of face-to-face classes and a shift to online learning to ensure the safety of everyone. Around the same period, we also settled payments for our intramurals t-shirts as part of the preparations for upcoming school events.

On October 22, we successfully conducted our title defense, which marked a significant milestone in our research process. We are now preparing for our outline defense, tentatively scheduled for October 30, while receiving guidance and instructions from our instructors on October 27. Our preliminary examinations are scheduled for November 4 and 6, followed by the midterm examinations on November 25 and 27, and finally, the final examinations on December 16 and 19. However, these schedules are still subject to change depending on school activities and events.

I am grateful for all the support and guidance extended to me throughout my studies. I remain committed to improving my performance and ensuring that the assistance I have received becomes truly meaningful as I work toward successfully completing my academic journey.

Forever thankful,
Julien

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED



Please consider signing up to host, everyone really enjoys the time spent together with fellow parishioners. We are looking for hosts for December. You can sign up on the bulletin board in the Parish House or send us a message and we'd be happy to add your name to the list.



Shrewsbury Historical Society Presents:

Quilts Tell A Story Vintage Quilts Exhibit

The more than 75 quilts in the exhibit tell of the maker's talent and stories of the 19th and 20th century quilt making. They are a unique showing of sewing techniques, pattern selection, chosen fabrics and stitches, all of their own personal expression. Quilt making, once a necessity has become a creative art form and today remains an integral part of our heritage past and present.

NOW OPEN!

Exhibit Hours

Sundays & Tuesdays 11AM-2PM

419 Sycamore Avenue

November 2025 - April 2026

By appointment (732) 530-7974

ShrewsburyHistoricalSociety@gmail.com

Groups are welcome

THOSE WHO SERVE - DECEMBER

December 7

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell Deacon: Reverend William Balmer
Acolytes: Joshua & Matthew Dunford, Denzel Donaldson
Lectors: Dash Cassidy, Laura Stroebel
Ushers: Peggy James, John Callaghan
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Judi Buncher, Tia LaPiana, Madna Aubry
Coffee Hour: Walter & Friends

December 14

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell Deacon: Reverend William Balmer
Acolytes: Judi Buncher, Edgar John, Denzel Donaldson
Lectors: Connie Goddard, Peggy James
Ushers: Walter Dein, Connie Goddard
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Cindy Webster
Coffee Hour: Cassandra & Abigail

December 21

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell Deacon: Reverend William Balmer
Acolytes: Dexter, Kodi & Abe Craven, Tia LaPiana (CB)
Lectors: Elaine Feyereisen, Carl Alfano
Ushers: Judi Buncher, George Edwards
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Colleen & Mark Roth
Coffee Hour: Host Needed!

December 24

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell Deacon: Reverend William Balmer
Acolytes: Dexter, Kodi & Abe Craven, Joshua & Matthew Dunford
Lectors: Dashiel Cassidy
Ushers: Elaine Feyereisen, Bramley Maber
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Cindy Webster, Judi Buncher, Collen & Mark Roth, Tia LaPiana, Madna Aubry

December 25

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell
Acolytes: Tia LaPiana (CB), Denzel Donaldson
Lectors: Water Dein, Denzel Donaldson
Ushers: Walter Dein
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Cindy Webster, Judi Buncher, Collen & Mark Roth, Tia LaPiana, Madna Aubry
Coffee Hour: Host Needed!

December 28

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa Mitchell Deacon: Reverend William Balmer
Acolytes: Josie Borden, Tia LaPiana (CB), Denzel Donaldson
Lectors: Robert Maber, Bob Van Valkenburgh
Ushers: Bramley Maber, Christine Maber
Organist/Choirmaster: Fiona Smith Sutherland
Altar Guild: Judi Buncher, Tia LaPiana, Madna Aubry
Coffee Hour: Host Needed!

DECEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Office Hours:</u> Mon. – Fri. 2:30 – 5:30			<u>9:30 - 11:15 am</u> Holy Eucharist Peak in the Week	<u>10 am</u> Choir Rehearsal		<u>9 am – 3 pm</u> Christmas Bazaar
7	8	9	10	<u>9:30 - 11:15 am</u> Holy Eucharist Peak in the Week	<u>10 am</u> Choir Rehearsal <u>6 pm</u> The Gathering	<u>10 am</u> Blessing of the Stockings <u>11 am</u> Wreaths Across America
<u>9 am</u> Holy Eucharist	15	16	17	<u>9:30 - 11:15 am</u> Holy Eucharist Peak in the Week <u>11 am</u> The Gathering	<u>10 am</u> Choir Rehearsal	20
<u>9 am</u> Holy Eucharist						21
<u>9 am</u> Holy Eucharist	22	23	24	 <u>4 pm</u> Christmas Eve Service	 <u>10 am</u> Christmas Day Service, Reception following	26
<u>9 am</u> Holy Eucharist with Lessons + Carols	29	30	31			

Christ Church Shrewsbury

380 Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702

www.ChristChurchShrewsbury.org + theparish@christchurchshrewsbury.org + 732-741-2220

Follow our Social Accounts on:



"Be friends with Christ Church Shrewsbury" and then invite your friends to be our friend so we all can be informed and connected to events in our community.

**SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.
BRING SOMEONE TO CHURCH WITH YOU.**

The Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell, Rector

The Reverend William Balmer, Deacon

Denzel Donaldson, Seminarian

Fiona Smith Sutherland, Organist/Choirmaster

Francesca Parker, Office Administrator

Halina Nibbling, Sexton

VESTRY 2025

Elaine Feyereisen - Senior Warden

Peggy James - Junior Warden, Stewardship

Stephen Craven - Treasurer

Lynn Marengo - Asst. Treasurer

Madna Aubry - Stewardship, GFS Representative

Julie Sinn Cassidy - Youth Ministries

Walter Dein - Property

Sue Napoletano - Church School

Bob Stewart - Graveyard

Susan Sellers - ECW Liaison

Dianne Regieci - Food Insecurity

Nancy Stewart - Vestry Clerk

