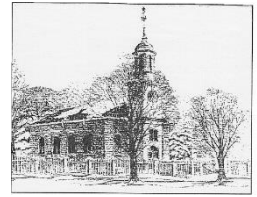


THE CROWN

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



Volume XXIV Issue I

January 2024



Let the Pageantry Begin!
Epiphany Pageant January 7
Annual Parish Meeting January 28

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Dear Friends,

What scripture is this? You may be asking. You can stop scratching your head; this isn't from the Bible at all! It came out of a fortune cookie I recently broke open, and *had* to lay it aside for you. I don't know what is up with fortune cookie factories these days, but what I usually get is a far cry from a fortune. This one however, actually sounded a bit sage. Worth saving. And sharing.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. I hope that it is true. I pray that whenever I open my mouth, that I say flows from the abundance of God. I know that is not always the case. I have been known to gripe and complain. To utter words of frustration and impatience. But I hope that is not who I truly am. One thing I know, it is not who I want to *be*.

A new year is upon us. Always a little bittersweet, we say goodbye to the year that has flown by so quickly and we greet the one to come. We make earnest resolutions, hoping that God will be in all we do. We pray that we will continue on in our spiritual journey of growing closer to our Lord and to each other.

I don't know what your plans for 2024 may be. I don't know what the year will hold in store for me, either! We are in a place of transition here at Christ Church as we do our best to meet the financial challenges set before us. In many ways, our parish is growing and changing – just as a parish should! For we are first and foremost a spiritual entity, growing and changing as we meet the needs of the present and look forward to the future. I cannot predict what the year will bring, but I know God will be in it, both carrying us along and pushing us forward. Whatever it is we need at each turn.

What I do know is that God is so very good. For over a quarter of a century God has blessed me and my family through this little parish church. I feel privileged to be a part of the living entity of believers that has inhabited this corner for nearly 325 years. And I feel the responsibility for making sure that it continues to be a safe place for God's people for many, many years to come.

So, for this year? This year my New Year's resolution will be as simple as a fortune cookie. I am going to be intentional about meditating every day on the abundance I have received from God's hand. And until I have done that each day (along with a much-needed cup of coffee) I will not venture to open my mouth (except for the coffee). I have a feeling that if I first remember how gracious and generous our Lord has been to me, I will be much more successful in making this new year one of growth and prosperity. If I only speak after smiling over the good God has done each day, what a difference that will make.

Here is my challenge to you: if you hear me complaining or being negative, ask me if I've done my morning reflection on God's goodness. I may need a reminder! And then, do some reflecting yourself. It is bound to make for a much better year for us all.

Peace,

Mother Lisa+

NEWS AND NOTES:

Any Changes? Advise us of any changes in your address or telephone number. Let us know so we can keep our records up to date. Please send us an email or call the Church Office at 732-741-2220

Parish Hours

Monday – closed

Tuesday – 9 am – 2 pm

Wednesday - 9 am – 2 pm

Thursday – 9 am – 2 pm

Friday – 9 am – 2 pm

Congratulations!

Blessings to Josephine Lauren Fitzgerald, daughter of Lelse and Dawn Fitzgerald, who was baptized on December 23, 2023.

Add to your Directory:

Matthew Gossett, and Amelia
14 Windward Way
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Thank You to the many who made Christmas such a beautiful experience. From the beauty of the sanctuary to the delightful music program to those who served at altar and as readers and ushers. We have so much for which to be thankful. God is truly good!

Annual Parish Meeting The Annual Parish Meeting is Sunday, January 28, directly following the 10:00 am service. PLEASE NOTE: there is only one service on that day. We will have a potluck lunch in the Parish House following. We will go over the budget for 2024 and will discuss the future of the parish. We will also be electing three Members of the Vestry, a Junior Warden, and three alternate deputies to Convention. Please let Mother Lisa or one of our Wardens know if you would like to nominate someone to one of the positions. We urge all members to be present at this very important meeting.

Annual Reports

If there is an Annual Meeting. . . that means we need your reports! All reports need to be emailed to the church office by January 19. Please have them in Times New Roman at 12 point. If you have any questions, you can call the Church Office or ask one of the Wardens or Mother Lisa. If it happened at Christ Church in 2023, we want to know about it!

Second Saturday Workday

We will be meeting up at 10 am on Saturday, January 13 to give our buildings and grounds a little TLC, do join us! Inside work will include organizing and packing away all the Christmas supplies in the undercroft. For those of you that like working a pair of clippers, there are many bushes that could use a little trimming, if the weather allows. Let's get ahead of some of the small tasks that keep our parish running smoothly. For more information, contact Walter Dein.

Your Prayers are Requested:

For the sick and suffering, and those in any need or trouble:

*Cassie Reagan, *John Smalls, *Joan, *Judi Buncher, *Carolyn, *MiMi Brown, *Sarah Schmid, *Larry Nibbling, *Halina Nibbling*, John Veil, Jocelyn, Mariwether Schmid, Pat and Bob Rivenes, Peedy, Jack Sauber, Pam Diamond, Mignon Williams, *Jim Miller, *Bill Balmer, Lynn McKittrick, Pam, Dianne Regiec.
May they be relieved of their distress.

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is once again ready and waiting on the church! Please bring NEW hats, gloves, scarves, socks, and of course mittens to help with the frigid weather this winter.

Christ Church Coat Drive

We are accepting coats that are in new or used but in good condition for those who need them in our communities. Please drop them off at the Parish House during office hours or on Sundays. There is a bin for them under the stained glass window on the east side of the Parish House.

GFS Friendly Society: GFS

GFS will be inducting new members into the society on Sunday, January 14, following the 10:00am service. The Induction Ceremony will take place in the chapel, downstairs in the Parish House. A reception will follow for members new and old and their families. The parish is welcome to join in the festivities.



Dearest Christ Church Shrewsbury family,

I know the holidays are most likely over once you read this letter, but I still want to send you my warmest wishes. I think of you this holiday season, and I pray you can achieve whatever your genuine heart desires. Whether you are walking in a winter wonderland or just feeling the holiday breeze in a tropical country like me, I wish you a holly jolly Christmas and a bountiful new year filled with peace and bliss.

This December, I flew to Manila to visit the US Embassy of the Philippines for my tourist visa application. From the moment I started processing it, I prayed each day that my visa would be approved so I could meet you and personally give you my heartfelt thanks. I even visited one of the oldest historical churches in Manila before my interview. God knows how pure my intentions are, but it is probably not the best time yet. As Mother Lisa said, God has put me exactly where I need to be. Of course, after the interview, I was sad that I failed to pass and secure a visa. I was also disappointed that I sacrificed job opportunities and wasted time and money only to end up with nothing. But before the end of the day, I was fine. I roamed around Manila and enjoyed the city before my flight back to Davao. I did not think of it as an outright rejection but a beautiful redirection. After all, God always has the perfect timing. In his hands, I trust that soon enough, He will grant me that wish.

My visa application was rejected after only being asked three simple questions. I gave the male US Consular Officer truthful answers, but he only said, *“I’m sorry, I cannot approve your visa at this*

time. You may reapply again.” The average interview lasts only 3 minutes, and they don’t even look at your papers nor give you the chance to explain your case. I think they already have a certain rule in mind on who to approve and disapprove. Based on a national news report I saw on YouTube, the target of the US Embassy in the Philippines for 2023 is to grant roughly 300,000 tourist visa applicants, but the number of Filipino visa applicants is far more. Hence, getting disapproved on your first try seems normal. You’ll never know what went wrong or what you lack because they will dismiss you without explaining why. I could have explained to him further about my church visit and how important the church is to me, but we are not allowed to answer beyond what is asked.

The good news is that there is *hope*. Mother Lisa and Ms. Peggy are trying to help me out. I am so thankful for them. Although it is uncertain how it will exactly turn out, hope is **HOPE**. No matter how small the chances are, I am grateful and hopeful. And whatever the results may be, I will accept them and try again next time if all else fails. I am so touched by how eager everyone is to meet me.

After that, I got busy because my younger brother had started college, and I helped him with everything from enrollment to settling downtown. My mother lives in the countryside; thus, he is not used to the city. He is doing well despite being a little delayed from his batch because he started in the second term as he waited for me to graduate before starting college. He took his second option, the BS in Hospitality Management course, instead of a marine course because after inquiring from the marine academy, we realized that it was just too expensive for us. I am just happy that my younger brother is still eager to study. All I want is for him to do something he loves and that he’s happy with.

And more positive news—we rescued and adopted two stray kittens about a month old. I spent most of my time taking care of them when I got back from Manila because they were malnourished and sick. They almost got run over by a car! I am so glad they are spending happy and healthy holidays with me. I hope everyone feels great this season.

Love and prayers,
Queenie

A Covenant House Thank You

On behalf of all the kids at Covenant House New Jersey I want to thank you and everyone at Christ Church for helping bring Christmas to our young residents! This past Saturday we had a small gathering with our Board at our Asbury Park program to kick off the holiday celebrations and the kids were so appreciative. Below is a photo showing a young lady who at age 21 received her very first Christmas sweater! Doesn't the smile on her face just warm your heart?

Next week they will get to open all the other gifts. They are going to be so excited! THANK YOU!

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and I wish you the very best for 2024!

-Sue Montiero



Monmouth County SPCA

The SPCA continues to seek donations of sheets, towels, blankets that are NOT quilted and box lids (ie: box that comes under cases of bottled water, canned goods, etc.) Please bring items to the parish house during office hours. Thank you.

--Elaine Feyereisen

A Cry Like a Bell



Madeleine L'Engle

Peak of the Week for January

Happy, Happy Christmas to all and the bestest wishes for a wonderful brand New Year!

While we are still in Christmas tide and personally finishing the Peak of the Week book for December--The work of Christmas, we're Peaking ahead to the January book which is one by Madeleine L'Engle called A Cry Like A Bell. She is always a woman for all seasons.

Join us at 9:30 in the parish house for an informal Eucharist. We talk book at about 10:15. Come one or both--we'd love to have you join us!

---Donna

St. Mary's Corner:

The young members of St. Mary's Choir did an outstanding job at the 4pm Christmas Eve Service. Not only did they sing the rousing Sussex Carol (*On Christmas Night all Christians Sing*) but they also made their way in merry dance around the nave singing - and ringing - to *Ding Dong Merrily on High*.

The children have been invited to act in the Epiphany Pageant on January 7th at the 10:00am service; the congregation will certainly enjoy the performance. Regular rehearsals resume after Church on January 14 and 21, a Sunday off for the Annual Parish Meeting on January 28, and then another rehearsal on February 4th. We sing on February 11th. Want to join us? Meet us at the piano.

New Year!

Do you love the sound of your own singing voice? If so, kudos! Singing your heart out, carefully crafting your vocal interpretation, and sharing your singing for a crowd are three wonderful things that only humans can do. If, however, you hesitate to sing, hear an invisible critic over your shoulder nay-saying your vocal attempts, and refrain from joining in on refrains (pun intended!), then you have plenty of company. In a 2005 British study, patients with voice ailments rated their own voices more negatively when listening to their recorded voices than did the clinicians who evaluated them. And anyone who has heard recordings of his or her own voice can probably attest to cringing, at least some of the time. Why? Our voice as it reverberates through our vocal cords, jaw, head, and ears sounds *vastly* different than it does to a person standing several feet, or more, away from us. What we expect to hear when confronted with recordings of our own voice doesn't match what we expect, and so we tend to find it jarring and strange. It's no wonder many people just don't want to sing. But should we feel this way? Every voice, like every human being, is unique. If we don't sing we deprive the world of our own voice. This is merciful! you might say. But, then, do you speak? If your voice is *really* that atrocious, it may be asked, then why talk at all? Before you move on to the next article, bear with me a bit. Some of the greatest, or at least most iconic singers, also hated the sounds of their own voices. John Lennon couldn't stand his own voice; to mask it, he often urged Beatles' producer George Martin to obscure his vocals on recordings. He also experimented with vocal straining and other physical methods to alter his singing voice.

Other admired singers who hated their own voices include U2's Bono, who confessed to avoiding listening to his records for many years; Jimi Hendrix, who dreamed of singing like Marvin Gaye, but realized he couldn't and put his efforts into the guitar—while eventually accepting his voice and singing; and the recently-deceased Robbie Robertson, of The Band, who was so insecure about his voice that, while he wrote intricate vocal melodies for his bandmates to sing, he refrained from recording his own singing voice until the very last Band album: *The Last Waltz*. And

way back in 1904, Australian opera star Nellie Melba only conceded to release the records she recorded after her father gave approval and encouraged her to have them released.

The list of singers who hate their own voice can be greatly augmented by including singers who don't hate their voice, but are told they *should*: Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, Neil Young, Louis Armstrong, Tom Waits, et al. They, thankfully, ignored calls to cease the singing. We should too. Every individual has a unique singing voice that can be developed, refined, and molded into something we can, if not love, at least accept and appreciate. This year, here's hoping each of us joins in the song—at home, in the car, in karaoke, with the family, and maybe even in church.

Patrick Durek

Stewardship Update

As we approach 2024, I wanted to give you an update on our Pledge Campaign for the new year. As of today, we have:

47 Pledges received

6 **new** pledges

6 pledges stayed the same

3 pledges decreased

24 pledges have increased **AND**

6 pledges have increased by \$1000 or more!

Pledged to date: \$154,562. This number does not include fundraising and other contributions. In one of our recent financial reports, we stated that we needed \$224,356 to balance our budget for 2024.

Last year our final pledge amount was \$138,815. That is one of the reasons we needed to take so much money out of our endowment in 2023. We have made progress with our 2024 pledge campaign, but we are not there yet.

The highest pledge is \$13,000.00

The lowest pledge is \$300.00

The average pledge is \$3,288.55

To make our budget, the average pledge *must* be \$5,000. You can see we still have work to do! There are 8 parishioners that pledge every year that have not turned in a pledge certificate yet. You know who you are!!!

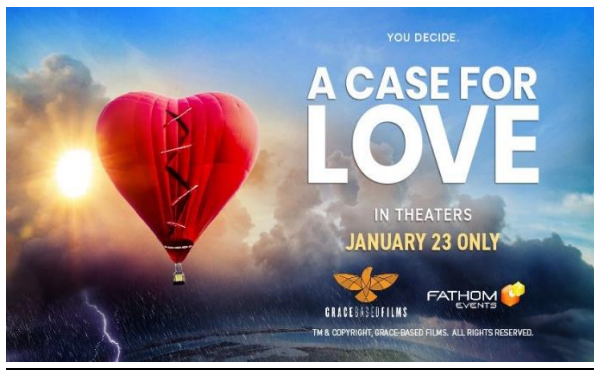
Some of you regularly give money but have never completed a pledge certificate. It would be a HUGE help for the finance committee for budget planning, if you would put your intentions in writing and complete a pledge certificate.

Our goal is to keep Christ Church financially healthy and open for another 300 years. We can do this with your pledge and by paying your pledge on time, remembering Christ Church in your will, sponsoring coffee hour, supporting the church by volunteering to help with fundraisers and by just supporting our fundraisers, volunteering your time and energy on the 2nd Saturday workday, or just volunteering to help around the church (wash windows, help with bulletins, etc). There are many more ways to help, just ask the Rector, the Wardens or any Vestry Member.

Peggy James, Senior Warden and Stewardship

Youth Group Movie Party!

The Youth Group will be meeting on Sunday, January 21st at 12 noon for an afternoon movie, snacks, and what we hope will be stirring conversation. We have been invited to the home of Cassandra and Abigail Murphy. A separate email will be sent to our youth and their families with the details. This is definitely an event you can bring a friend along to. In fact, we encourage it!



A Case for Love

Mark your Calendar for January 23 when a new film is being released. The Episcopal Church and Bishop Curry's message of love is ready to be shared with the wider world. We encourage everyone to attend. To purchase tickets, use the link below.

https://acaseforlovemovie.com/?mc_cid=9379af5edf&mc_eid=0e46ce1438

January 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 NEW YEARS DAY	2	3 Holy Eucharist 9:30 Peak of the Week 10:15 am Parish House	4	5	6 Epiphany Pageant rehearsal 11 am
7 8 and 10 am Holy Eucharist Epiphany Pageant	8 <u>Office Closed</u> Vestry 7:00 pm	9	10 Holy Eucharist 9:30 Peak of the Week 10:15 am Parish House	11	12	13 Second Saturday Workday 10am
14 8 and 10 am Holy Eucharist Church School 9:50 am Choir Practice 9-9:45 am GFS Induction Following 10am service	15 <u>Office closed</u>	16	17 Holy Eucharist 9:30 Peak of the Week 10:15 am Parish House	18	19	20
21 8am and 10am Holy Eucharist Church School 9:50 am Choir Practice 9-9:45 am Youth Group Movie Party 12 noon	22 <u>Office closed</u>	23	24 Holy Eucharist 9:30 Peak of the Week 10:15 am Parish House	25	26	27
28 Annual Parish Meeting and Holy Eucharist 10 am (no 8 am service)	29 <u>Office closed</u>	30	31 Holy Eucharist 9:30 Peak of the Week 10:15 am Parish House			

THOSE WHO SERVE – JANUARY 2024

December 31

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell
Deacons: 8 am Reverend Bill Balmer, 10 am Reverend Victoria Cuff
Acolytes: 8 am Edgar John 10 am Joshua and Matthew Dunford, Halina Nibbling
Lector: 8 am Walter Dein 10 am Bill Cuff
Ushers: 8 am Judi Buncher 10 am Larry Nibbling, Connie Goddard
Organist: Iris Chen
Altar Guild: Phyllis Edwards
Coffee Hour:

January 7

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell
Deacons: 8 am Reverend Bill Balmer, 10 am Reverend Victoria Cuff
Acolytes: 8 am Judi Buncher 10 am Dexter and Kodi Craven, Cassandra Murphy
Lector: 8 am Priscilla Gettis 10 am Bill Larry Nibbling
Ushers: 8 am Carl Alfano 10 am Elaine Feyereisen, George Edwards
Organist: Iris Chen
Altar Guild: Cindy Webster
Coffee Hour:

January 14

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell
Deacons: 8 am Reverend Bill Balmer, 10 am Reverend Victoria Cuff
Acolytes: 8 am Priscilla Gettis, 10 am Isabel and Isara Chen-Durek, Andrew Brown, Brian Wachter
Lector: 8 am Peggy James, 10 am Robert Maber
Ushers: 8 am John Callaghan, 10 am Bramley Maber, Christine Maber
Organist: Iris Chen
Altar Guild: Judi Buncher, Mark and Colleen Roth
Coffee Hour: GFS

January 21

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell
Deacons: 8 am Reverend Bill Balmer, 10 am Reverend Victoria Cuff
Acolytes: 8 am Judi Buncher, 10 am Joshua and Matthew Dunford, Halina Nibbling
Edgar John
Lector: 8 am Priscilla Gettis 10 am Tara Dunford
Ushers: 8 am Peggy James 10 am Rod Webster, Jim O'Connor
Organist: Iris Chen
Altar Guild: Halina Nibling
Coffee Hour:

January 28

Celebrant: Reverend Lisa S. Mitchell
Deacons: 8 am Reverend Bill Balmer, 10 am Reverend Victoria Cuff
Acolytes: 8 am Edgar John 10 am Dexter and Kodi Craven, Cassandra Murphy
Lector: 8 am Peggy James 10 am Bob Honecker
Ushers: 8 am Carl Alfano 10 am Larry Nibbling, Connie Goddard
Organist: Iris Chen
Altar Guild: Phyllis Edwards

Coffee Hour:

Christ Church Shrewsbury

*380 Sycamore Avenue
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702*

ChristChurchShrewsbury@verizon.net

*The Communications Team reminds you to check the web site for current parish news.
www.christchurchshrewsbury.org*



"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 Victoria Cuff, Deacon
The Reverend William Balmer, Deacon
Iris Chen, Organist/Choirmaster
Debbie Roese, Office Administrator
Halina Nibbling, Sexton

VESTRY 2023

Peggy James – Senior Warden, Stewardship
Connie Goddard – Junior Warden
Elaine Feyereisen
Dianne Regiec
Carl Alfano
Sheila Hatami-Watson
Sue Napoletano- Church School
Larry Nibbling – Finance
Robin Solbach
Martie Viets – Parish Life
Treasurer – Stephen Craven
Asst. Treasurer - Lynn Marengo, Larry Nibbling
Vestry Clerk – Nancy Stewart

