

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

"THE LITTLE STONE CHURCH"

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER, 2016 NEWSLETTER

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An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife, enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said 'yes,' but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you." The carpenter was shocked! What a

shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with a shock, we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we'd do it much differently. But we cannot go back.

You are the carpenter. Each day, you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. "Life is a do-it-yourself project," someone has said.

Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the "house" you live in tomorrow. Build wisely!

Reprinted from our 2005 newsletter
(author unknown)



Fall Back on
November 6th
at 2 AM



THE CHOIR SINGS OUT!

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by and Advent and Christmas will soon be upon us. The choir does have some special music planned for Advent – we're working on it already.

Christmas Eve Service music will (hopefully!) be a beautiful offering. We are working on a special lullaby that Eli Saul will sing at the blessing of the crèche (accompanied by the choir). It is a beautiful Welsh lullaby written especially for Christmas.

At this writing, specific details for Christmas Eve service are not yet finalized. So stay tuned for more information. - Dawn Pentecost



A Thought About Our 2017 Pledges - Stewardship is not fundraising.

Our fundraising is mainly based upon the maintenance needs of the church building itself (efficient lighting, conversion to gas heat, new altar carpet) and administrative expenses. Stewardship is based upon our need to share the generous gifts that God has given us.

We share the gifts that God has given us first at home, then in the workplace, then in our communities and our parish. However, our parish is central to our coming together as disciples of Jesus. It is in the parish that we join with one another to celebrate our faith, share in the Eucharist, and become the Body of Christ in the world.

Please consider all of God's gifts to you and evaluate how you are sharing your gifts of time, talent and treasure within our parish community. – Jack DeMark



Pilgrimage Update: Pentecost Meditations Pilgrimage Blog - September 20, 2016

“Out of the Comfort Zone”

Shared by Sara McNelis, Grace Church, Kingston PA (Part II of III)

Sunday is my day to rest, to breathe, to rejuvenate; to be nurtured rather than nurture. Sunday is my day to ‘go to church’ – a commitment that, over the last few years, has become an absolute pleasure. To sit in my familiar pew ... to smell the familiar blend of candle wax with a faint hint of incense ... to hear the echoing toll of the 10am church bells ... to greet my friends and loved ones with a gentle handshake or a familiar hug ... to listen to the familiar words of prayers and hymns chanted and spoken and sung by familiar voices with familiar rhythms and tones ... to taste the familiar wine as it melts the wafer on my tongue. I liken it to finding the perfect spot on the beach. The familiar sound of the waves ebb and flow ... the seagulls cooing the people's laughter ... the smell and taste of salty air ... the feeling of the sun's warmth on my skin. I allow this familiarity to wash over me and engulf me in a quiet meditation.

One Sunday, a few months ago, I sat down. I took a deep breath. I closed my eyes. And, I began my familiar quiet meditation. But, I am interrupted from my familiarity, this particular Sunday, with these words from our Pilgrimage Collect: “give us the courage

to set off on pilgrimage to seek the form and styles of life and ministry you have prepared for us. You call us to leave familiar things and leave our 'comfort zone'" I open one eye and look at Father John questioningly to make sure he's sincere. Yup, he means it. I look around me to see if anyone else seems unsettled. Nope, everyone looks quite comfortable.

So, I am pulled from my comfortable and familiar meditation into a barrage of questions and protests. Courage?!? I think I've got enough of that! Do you know how much courage it takes to change jobs? To allow your child to get their driver's license and then let them drive? To nurture a new romantic relationship after divorce? And, leave familiar things?!? Why? There is not one thing wrong with my familiar things! Well, not much anyway (well, OK, some familiar things could use some updating, but still ...). No, I'll decide when to leave familiar things, I don't need coaxing! (Or maybe I do, but still...). Out of my 'comfort zone'?!? When was the last time I saw my 'comfort zone.' Everyday I'm out of my 'comfort zone.' Learning to navigate our digital world, I am out of my 'comfort zone.' Eating the 'right' foods because of new toxicities rather than traditional comfort foods passed down from my grandmothers and before, I am out of my 'comfort zone.' And, for goodness sakes! Hearing this new Collect instead of the familiar rhythm and tones of a traditional Collect, I am out of my 'comfort zone' ...

Read and discover what others say and share on the diocesan website, <https://www.diobeth.org>. Perhaps you, too, will have something special to share ...

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(Ed. Note: This particular Diocesan blog caught my eye because I think its topic is very timely, as it offers good food for thought that is meant for each of us as

Christ Church parishioners. We at Christ Church are currently at a crossroads, a place where none of us is certain along which road our church will travel in the times ahead. Alone, we will go nowhere. But together in shared faith and strength, the possibilities are endless.

We are also at that time of year when each of us is asked to think and to share ... to think harder about budgeting and discovering how we might each share differently in our giving through Stewardship so that our Church can indeed continue to move forward.

Further, we are each being invited to step up to give and share our time, talents, and energies as a Vestry member during the upcoming new terms, as well as through volunteering in many of our ongoing church activities: Just a few hours once a month are needed to lend a hand and enjoy fun and great camaraderie at the Food Pantry, Community Lunch, dinner events, etc.

NOW it is time for each of us to step out of our respective 'Comfort Zone' that is discussed herein and step into being an active and vibrant part of Christ Church. As you take in Sara McNelis' blog, please think about your own 'Comfort Zone' ... perhaps you will even be daring and excited to discover how you might step out of it and step up to do something differently as we go forward together and continue to keep Christ Church strong - together).



**REPORT ON THE
145th CONVENTION
OF THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE OF
BETHLEHEM**

The 145th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem was convened on October 7-8 in downtown Reading, PA. This convention is the culmination of the diocesan pilgrimage that began at last year's convention. This convention's theme was *Connect, Communicate, and Collaborate*.

Following Morning Prayer, the convention was called to order for business session #1, which included the Bishop's address to delegates on

the reason for changes to Constitution and Canons. He was followed by the Rev. Charles Cesaretti, describing a 140 km pilgrimage that he took in Spain.

Following was a Pilgrimage session using a "Lectio Divina," or "divine reading" of Matthew 5:13-16 with the theme of "Salt (you are the salt of the earth), and Light (you are the light of the world)." Salt: Common value of connecting and communicating. Light: Common value of collaborating.

The afternoon business session #2 was concerned with significant changes to Diocesan Constitution and Canons. There were 12 changes to the canons and one change to the constitution. The changes are quite lengthy so following is a nutshell description; please see Bob Schreiber if you have questions or concerns.

The final proposed changes had been modified after comments from the three regional pre-convention hearings. The most significant changes had to do with changes to the numbers of members on the Standing Committee, combining the Incorporated Trustees with the Diocesan Council and number of members and composition thereof and the number of members of the Commission on Ministry.

Of particular significance to us are the changes to Canon VIII "Of Parish Vestries relabeled Title II: Of Parish Vestries and the Governance of Parishes. It is essentially a total rewrite and establishes a consistent set of parish By-laws, replacing individual parish By-laws. Also of significance is the restriction that neither immediate family members nor officers of the vestry nor employees or immediate family members of employees may serve as an officer of the vestry.

After the business meeting, people gathered for a procession to Christ Church, reading for the convention Eucharist. The convention dinner back at the hotel followed the Eucharist.

The second day began with Morning Prayer and business session #3. During this session, the various elections to committees took place, the budget was presented and approved and other resolutions were presented and approved. There were really no fireworks. -Bob Schreiber, Delegate



NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Here's a catch-up with some of our recent church activities. And be sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming events; watch the weekly church bulletins for additional information:



SATURDAY,

OCTOBER 1ST

-- Many of God's favorite furry creatures were blessed on October 1st, when Fr. Peter shared the annual Blessing of the Animals. Held at the Browndale Fire House, this year's event brought pets of varying breeds, colors, and temperaments. Additionally, \$115 was raised from the sale of light refreshments and will benefit the Dessin Animal Shelter.





NOVEMBER 3-5: 9th ANNUAL COATS for the COMMUNITY

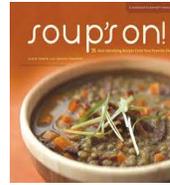
Begun in 2007 with a meeting of the Episcopal churches of the northern tier of Diocese, this program continues to grow every year. It keeps folks warm and snuggly, not just with the warmth of the actual coat but in the knowledge that others have cared enough to wrap them in love and faith too.

This year, about 600 coats were delivered by the American Legion Post 154 in Montrose on October 31st. Through our own church and community collection, about 150 additional new and/or gently used coats were donated; Vestry also purchased about two dozen children's coats. Hats, gloves, and blankets are also available.

Distribution will be Thursday-Friday, November 3rd and 4th, Noon-3:00pm, and again on Saturday November 5th, from 1:00-4:00pm. Children's and adult-sized coats are available and are FREE to all who come; no questions are asked and no qualifications are required to benefit from this event. Volunteers are invited to help with the distribution.

Christ Church is one of several churches offering to serve as a distribution point for this program. When our distribution ends, all remaining coats and related items will be boxed for transport by the American Legion volunteers to take to their next distribution destination; generally, this is Christ Church in Susquehanna or St Mark's in New Milford.

This has been a wonderful outreach effort for everyone involved.



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2nd - Sign up to share your favorite soup recipes and bring a hearty appetite to enjoy our annual Soup Supper

on Friday December 2nd. This is perhaps one of Christ Church's most favorite food feasts. Watch the church bulletin for additional information.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3rd - A fun-filled Forest City Christmas Event is being planned ... please check

out the Forest City News for more details as they become available.

SEWING FOR THE COMMUNITY



A new project is underway that ANYONE can share. We're looking for folks who would like to usefully fill

some of their quiet winter times by creating and sewing a variety of useful items for our community friends, the armed forces, and even pets.

If you can fold and stitch pre-cut upholstery fabrics together - by machine and/or with yarn and an overcast hand stitch - please join us. The plan is to make simple carry-bags for folks to hang over their wheelchairs or walkers, reusable totes for our food-pantry clients, cell phone or snack pouches for military friends to keep in their backpacks, and even colorful lap quilts or bed-mats for area pet shelters. All fabrics are pre-cut samples and will be provided free of charge. We need only people who can share some of their time and talents - think of it as a way to share your church Stewardship throughout the winter months too!! Some friends from St. James-St.

form of fraud protection. And often, they don't hold you responsible for money spent with a stolen card. On the other hand, debit cards don't always offer the same fraud protection. Plus, they're linked directly to your bank account, giving cyber thieves access to your funds if they get hold of your card information.

#4: Set up strong identity monitoring. The good news is you can be proactive so that if thieves do get their hands on your information, it's easier to detect and resolve fraud. *ProtectMyID* will monitor your credit report for signs of fraud and alert you if anything looks fishy. Then a dedicated Fraud Resolution Agent will help you restore your good name. With this support, it's easier to have peace of mind during holiday shopping. Learn more about how AAA can help you protect your identity at AAA.com/IDTheft or call 877-440-6943.
- Donna Gasper, AAA



WHAT IS ADVENT?

For many Christians unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there may be some confusion surrounding the meaning of the Advent season. Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but there's more to Advent.

The History of Advent - The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming." Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the

January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation as represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1), his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (John 1:29), and his first miracle at Cana (John 2:1). During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

However, by the 6th century Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Advent Today - As we know and practice it today, the Advent season lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. At that time, the new Christian year begins with the 12-day celebration of Christmastide, which lasts from Christmas Eve until Epiphany on January 6. (Advent annually begins on the Sunday that falls between November 27th and December 3rd.)

Advent symbolizes the present situation of the church in these "last days" (Acts 2:17, Hebrews 1:2), as God's people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God's past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, during Advent the

church looks back upon Christ's coming in celebration while simultaneously looking forward to the coming of Christ's kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" perfectly represents the church's cry during the Advent season.

Advent Liturgy and Practice - To balance the two elements of remembrance and anticipation, the first two Sundays in Advent (through December 16th) look forward to Christ's second coming, and the last two Sundays (December 17th - 24th) look backward to remember Christ's first coming. Throughout the four weeks, Scripture readings move from passages about Christ's return in judgment, to Old Testament passages about the expectation of the coming Messiah, to New Testament passages about the announcements of Christ's arrival by John the Baptist and the Angels.

While it is difficult to keep in mind amid the holiday celebrations, shopping, lights and decorations, and joyful carols, Advent is intended to be a season of fasting -- much like Lent -- and there are various ways that this time of mourning works itself out in the season. Reflection on the violence and evil in the world cause us to cry out to God to make things right -- to put death's dark shadows to flight. Our exile in the present makes us look forward to our future Exodus. And our own sinfulness and need for grace leads us to pray for the Holy Spirit to renew his work in conforming us into the image of Christ.

One catechism describes Advent spirituality beautifully: "When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah. For by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful

renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: 'He must increase, but I must decrease.'"

Advent and the Christian Life - While Advent is certainly a time of celebration and anticipation of Christ's birth, it is more than that. It is only in the shadow of Advent that the miracle of Christmas can be fully understood and appreciated; and it is only in the light of Christmas that the Christian life makes any sense. It is between the fulfilled promise of Christ's first coming and the yet-to-be-fulfilled promise of his second coming that Karl Barth penned these words: "Unfulfilled and fulfilled promise are related to each other, as are dawn and sunrise. Both are promise and in fact the same promise. If anywhere at all, then it is precisely in the light of the coming of Christ that faith has become Advent faith, the expectation of future revelation. But faith knows for whom and for what it is waiting. It is fulfilled faith because it lays hold on the fulfilled promise." The promise for Israel and the promise for the church is Jesus Christ; he has come, and he will come again. This is the essence of Advent. - www.christianity.com, Justin Holcomb



CHURCH VESTRY,
Two New Members
Needed

- With the beginning of new year, three current Vestry members terms will be expiring. Therefore, three new Vestry members are needed to fill these vacancies.

No special requirements are needed ... Just look into your hearts to give a bit of your time and personal talents to share with Christ Church as a Vestry member.

The Vestry is responsible for the “oversight of the well-being of the church,” the administration of the “household of faith,” modeling of the Christian community, all these are ministry.

One should expect and experience Vestry not as a “business meeting,” but as a faith-girded leadership group. Being invited to be on the Vestry is a rewarding and spirit-filled ministry.

Generally, the Vestry meets on the third Wednesday of each month for about 90 minutes, beginning at 6:30pm in the Parish Hall (the second Wednesday in December; July or August meetings are not held). The meetings begin with “Formation,” a group Bible study/prayer, then your sharing of news – the good, the bad and the ugly and praying for them. Next is “Information,” with the Wardens’ reports and other reports and information by other members. Following a brief time for discussion and decision items, the meeting is adjourned with prayer.

The Vestry encourages all members of the church to be alert to who will make good Vestry leaders. **YOU** can make a difference in our church!

Current Vestry Members & Contacts:

- Jack DeMark (term ends 1/31/18)
Sr. Warden / Joint Ministry Treasurer
- Juliann Doyle (term ends 1/31/17)
- Rick Kulasinsky (term ends 1/31/18)
Jr. Warden / Treasurer
- Bob Schreiber term ends 1/31/19)
- Susie Schreiber (term ends 1/31/19)
- Karen Toolan (term ends 1/31/17)
- Peg Wirts (term ends 1/31/17)



HERE'S WHAT'S COOKIN' in our CHURCH KITCHEN

Here's a rich and chocolaty holiday favorite that you've probably tried at some time in your cooking repertoire. This reprised version is easy to prepare and can be flavored with specialty liqueurs, espresso, or a contrasting flavored baking extract. Choose your favorite flavor and top off your holiday feast. Enjoy!

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Yields about 8 half-cup servings

Ingredients:

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 2 tbsp. cold water
- 4 tbsp. boiling water
- 1 c. sugar
- ½ c. cocoa powder
- 2 tsp. vanilla *
- 2 c. heavy cream (very cold)

* In lieu of vanilla, can use equal amount of flavored liqueur (cream de cacao or raspberry are especially good); or espresso

Directions:

Sprinkle gelatin over cold water in a small bowl; stir and let stand one minute to soften. Add boiling water; stir until gelatin is completely dissolved (mixture must be clear). In another small cold mixer bowl (a chilled stainless bowl works well), stir together sugar and cocoa. Add heavy cream and vanilla, and/or flavored liqueur. Beat at a medium speed until stiff peaks form. Pour in gelatin mixture and beat until well blended. Pour into dishes or serving bowl. Serve with whipped cream and/or chocolate slivers. Chill about one-half hour before serving.

(NOTES: To halve the recipe, use only 1 tsp. unflavored gelatin, cutting remaining ingredients in half. Using all heavy cream tends to make a very heavy, very firm pudding – this recipe can be doubled using 1 c. heavy cream and 1 c. half & half creamer (do NOT use flavored coffee creamers) and twice all other ingredients; this version creates a mouse with a very good consistency when thoroughly chilled.)



OUR CHURCH'S ADMIN CORNER

Stay in touch with the Christ Church office. Via the parish phone, 570-785-3425 (please leave a message, the line is regularly checked). Or by email: www.christchurchparishforestcity@gmail.com.

We also have two web sites: www.christchurchforestcity.com is the official church web site. The second is: www.christchurchforestcity.shutterfly.com. This site contains photos of some of our recent activities. You can also sign up to become a member and receive email notices of events that are on the web site calendar.

Mail should be directed to Christ Church, PO Box 118, Forest City, PA 18421. For church emergencies or situations requiring immediate attention, please call Sr. Warden, Jack DeMark, at 570-540-5936 or 570-785-5792.

– Bob Schreiber, Church Administrator



November

- 7 David Suhadolnik
- 18 Barbara Mihelc
- 19 Margaret Wirts
- 21 Donald Armstrong
- 22 Laura Statkun
- 23 Fern Cornall
- 30 Emily Maslar

December

- 2 Lynn Jones
- 8 Juliann Doyle
- 15 Ann Emmett
- 15 Jeanne Suhadolnik
- 19 Deborah Zane
- 27 Lorraine Jones
- 28 Leonard Sherman

BIRTHDAY PRAYER: *O God, our times are in your hands. Look with favor, we pray, on your servants listed on our birthday list as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives. And so, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen



November

- 26 Allan & Marie Hornbeck

December

- 19 Barbara & Albert Taylor

MARRIAGE ANNIVERSARY PRAYER:

Grant, O God, in your compassion, that the couples on our anniversary list, having taken each other in marriage, may live out the covenant they have made, may they grow in forgiveness, loyalty and love; and come at last to the eternal joys which you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with them, this day and forever.

Amen

CONGRATS.

Our prayers and best wishes to Rachel Roeckel and Michael Everly on their engagement to be married. Rachel is the daughter of our sexton Sandra Murphy and granddaughter of Barbara Gliha.



CHURCH CHUCKLES

Message on the outside sign of Faith Temple Church, Sioux Falls, SD: "We welcome all denominations — \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100." - From the Joyful Noiseletter.com, via Rev. Jeff Hayes

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When a young minister was still single, he preached a sermon he entitled, "Rules for Raising Children." After he got married and had children of his own, he changed the title of the sermon to "Suggestions for Raising Children." When his children got to be teenagers, he stopped preaching on that subject altogether.

- From The Joyful Noiseletter.com, Rev. Bernard Brunsting

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A man had been shipwrecked on a remote island in the Pacific, and was alone for 20 years. When a ship finally arrived, his rescuers were impressed with the three buildings he had built and asked him about them.

"Well," the man replied, "this is my house, and that building over there is my church. It's a wonderful church and I hate to leave it."

"And what is the third building yonder?" a rescuer asked.

"Oh, that is the church I used to go to," the man replied. - From The Joyful Noiseletter.com, via Palmer Stiles, Melbourne, FL

CLOSING THOUGHTS

"Unexpected kindness is the most powerful, most underrated agent of human change. Kindness that catches us by surprise brings out the best in our natures."

- Bob Kerrey,
Veteran & former NE Governor

TEAM = TOGETHER EVERYONE ACCOMPLISHES MIRACLES.

- M.V. Hansen, Guideposts Magazine



The Next Parish News will be for January/February 2017; article submissions are due by December 19th. Please email your newsletter sharings and photos to Karen Toolan, kbtwrite@nep.net; or post them to 993 State Route 2029, Clifford Twp PA 18470.

Also, if anyone from Christ Church would like to become one of our fun-loving, news-gathering, and photo-snapping fellow Church Mice, please contact the church office. More mice and more photos are always welcomed!

The Roving Church Mice.

