

# the COURIER

Established  
1866

The Newsletter of Christ Episcopal Church  
Dearborn, Michigan

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## How Our Differences Become Our Greatest Asset of Love

In 1847 my great grandfather, five generations back, travelled with his family from Ohio to Missouri and then across the great plains to settle in Northern Utah. He homesteaded on land that was the traditional winter grounds of the Shoshone people. He took a piece of the land as if it were his birthright, as did all of my ancestors who settled in northern Utah and southern Idaho. My grandfather, George Washington Hill became well known and is still remembered in the Mormon Church as a missionary to the Shoshone people. He befriended them, learned their language, and wrote the first English-Shoshone dictionary so that Mormons and Shoshone could communicate.

The Bear River massacre took place in the winter of 1863, not far from where my great grandparents lived. 200 US soldiers travelled from California to attack the Shoshone in their winter camp grounds. They attacked in the early morning, before the people were awake, and decimated the tribe. These remnants tried to reform the tribe, but it was difficult. Ten years later the chief had a dream in which he was instructed to align the tribe with the Mormons. So, he sent for my great grandfather, and that day 102 Shoshone were baptized. Later, when the US government was relocating the Shoshone to the reservation, those who had been baptized were offered the option of staying on their land because they were considered members of the Mormon Church. Those who stayed were eventually absorbed into the Mormon culture, losing their identity as Shoshone.

This is also the reality of the world we live in: dominant cultures suppress and oppress less dominant cultures and they do so for power and economic gain. The values and beliefs of patriarchy and colonialism are alive and well in the world today. These values state that certain people, in our context - white people, or Christian people - and in other contexts it might be the Nazi's and the Jews, the Serbs and the Croats, the Hutu's and Tutsi, the Israelis and Palestinians, the Turkish people and the Kurds - examples are endless of how certain people end up believing that they are entitled while others are not.

On November 17 we began our partnership in faith with Mother of the Savior as they formally began to worship in the building and share this space. Mother of the Savior

people come from Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon, areas of the world that have experienced upheaval, violence, and trauma. Additionally, they have had an unstable existence as a congregation, being forced to move from building to building, with little choice of their own. Deciding to share a building with Christ Church is a choice they were invited to make, a decision of their own. Both Mother of the Savior and Christ Church are taking the long view with this decision to share a building and live together in a Partnership in Faith.

Voyager I, launched in 1977, is one of NASA's deep space probes. In 1990, when it was about 4 billion miles away from earth, Carl Sagan asked NASA to have it take one last photo of earth. The photo reveals a streak of red, and one tiny spot, earth. Sagan reportedly said, "That's our home. That's us...On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our suffering and joy on mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam."

Taking a telescopic view of the world gives perspective, for our lives are no longer measured in days and years, but across a much longer trajectory of time and space. From this far off perspective one might wonder, "Are we being good stewards of this earth and of one another? And how might our actions today impact the future, a future we may never see, but one that is there on the horizon, in the vision of God.

None of us can imagine how this partnership in faith will evolve. But I think we can trust that it is God inspired. Not to make us one people, not have us blend or merge into one congregation, but to become a model of living together as different cultures, embracing our differences and our similarities, our diversity not as a call to power over others, not as my ancestors did with the Shoshone, but a new community of love, a beloved community where we become stronger persons of faith because we honor the dignity of one another and our differences become our greatest asset of love.

*In Peace,  
Pastor Terri*

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# HOLIDAY MEALS FOR FOOD PANTRY FAMILIES

*By Erin Biggs*

We are very grateful to everyone who helped donate food and monetary gifts for the Thanksgiving Meals for the food pantry families. We handed out turkeys and meals to 55 families this Thanksgiving.

Once again our plan is to offer the families using our food pantry extra food for the Christmas holidays as well. We would like to offer both turkeys and hams. As with Thanksgiving, we want to provide all the side dishes for the meals and so we would appreciate donations from the congregation. Please see the "shopping list" for the items that we need. You can drop off the food items at the office or in the first floor kitchen until December 16. Monetary donations are also helpful; checks should be made out to Christ Church with Christmas Pantry in the memo line. Kroger cards in \$10 increments are also much appreciated by food pantry users.

## **Christmas Food Pantry Shopping List**

**Hams**

**Butter**

**Eggs**

**Milk**

**Instant Mashed Potatoes (box)**

**Cookie Mix**

**Kroger cards in \$10 increments**

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## CENTERING PRAYER

*By Stephanie Mulkern*

Centering prayer is a type of contemplative prayer in which you open your mind, heart, your whole being to God. It is practiced by sitting in silence and inviting God's presence. You begin by choosing a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. You sit with your eyes closed and silently introduce the sacred word. If you find yourself engaging with thoughts, you gently reintroduce the sacred word. Thoughts are inevitable in centering prayer. The idea is to just let them go and to place no judgement on yourself for having them.

Recently I attended a day long retreat for Centering Prayer with three other members of the Christ Church group. It took place at the De Sales Center in Brooklyn, Michigan. The center is situated on 214 acres of quiet woodland in the Irish Hills overlooking Vineyard Lake. It is a Catholic retreat center and a place where Oblate Fathers are trained. It is about an hour and a half drive from Dearborn.

The retreat was held in the chapel that is on the grounds of the De Sales Center. It is a small chapel, rustic in style with a large circular stained glass of Jesus in the center. It is open floor to ceiling with a balcony that goes around three sides of the building. There are windows along the balcony each with a window seat, a rocking chair and a small blanket should you need one. It is a perfect setting for prayer. There is a meeting room as well where we gathered at the beginning of the day.

The first half of the retreat was led by Father Mike. He is a young priest who used to live at the center but more recently has been assigned as a parish priest in Adrienne, Mi. There were twelve of us attending. Some of those attending had been there before and there were several who were there for

the first time. Father Mike introduced Centering Prayer and went over some guidelines. We took some time introducing ourselves and then took seats in the chapel. We sat for twenty minutes in silence and at the end of that time said together the Lord's Prayer and then reconvened in the meeting room. There we discussed our thoughts on the experience. We did this for a total of four times throughout the day with a break for lunch between the second and third time. We had time for a nice walk on the grounds and although it was cold outside the sun was up and it was a beautiful day. Father

Mike had to leave because he had obligations at the church in Adrienne after the second session. At that time Martha Balmer, a woman who has practiced Centering Prayer for a long time at St. Mary's Church in Ann Arbor, took over. She is the person who organized this and previous Centering Prayer retreats.

I have been practicing Centering Prayer now for several years. I have found it very helpful in my personal journey growing

closer to God. Taking some time to remove myself from the busyness of everyday life is helpful in keeping more balance in my spiritual life. Sitting quietly, inviting God's presence is a practice that continues to enrich my life.

The Centering Prayer group at Christ Church meets on Tuesday evenings in room 19 beginning at 6:15 p.m. and finishing by 7 p.m. Anyone is welcome to join us. You don't need any previous experience. If you have any questions regarding Centering Prayer I would be glad to answer them.

**"Be still, and know  
that I am God"**

**Psalms 46:10**



## **BAPTIZED FOR LIFE**

A series of eight dinners focusing on deepening intercultural relationships and growing our faith as Christians will begin in January, 2020. We will host two meals a month that will use the conversation guide, “Eating Together Faithfully”. This will include delicious, healthy, locally resourced meals, a time to reflect on scripture, and opportunities to engage in conversation about cultural differences, challenges, and similarities, particularly around food.

Participants will have a great meal. Participants will take part in engaging conversations. Participants will learn about each other and different cultures.

Participants will not be asked to hold the same values or beliefs, nor to adopt those of another. Participants do not need to hold any particular religious belief or value and will not be asked to adopt one.

The Baptized for Life (BfL) team developed this project as part of the Virginia Theological Seminary’s initiative from its Lily Foundation grant that supports discipleship formation in lay people. The BfL team plans to hold the series of 8 dinners three times, for a total of 24 dinners. It is hoped that people will sign up for one entire series of 8 in either January 2020, or the next series in the summer of 2020, or the final series in the fall/spring of 2020-2021.

### **Series One Schedule**

January 16 & 30; February 6 & 20; March 5 & 19; and April 2 & 23: from 6pm-9pm.

All are invited, however note that Series One is intended particularly for people who see themselves as leaders in Christ Church and Mother of the Savior, and who might be willing and able to help lead the second series of dinners in the summer of 2020.



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# WHY DO WE LIGHT CANDLES IN CHURCH?

*By Curate Halim*

Candles have important use in the Christian liturgical tradition. Lighted candles may be seen to symbolize the light of Christ, or the light of the gospel, or simply to remind us that the time and space for worship are sacred. Candles provide illumination that enhances the beauty of the church and may provide additional light for worship. Candles may be carried in procession by acolytes and held as the gospel is said or sung. Candles are placed on the altar.

The Book of Common Prayer provides prayers for the lighting of the altar candles at certain times in special services. At the Easter Vigil, the altar candles are lit after the Renewal of Baptismal Vows and before the Easter Acclamation, "Alleluia. Christ is risen" (BCP, p. 204). At Evening Prayer, the lighting of the altar candles and other candles follows the Prayer for Light and precedes the hymn "O Gracious Light" (BCP, p. 112). Certain candles have special liturgical uses. The Paschal candle is a large, decorated candle that symbolizes the light of Christ who was crucified, died, rose, and ascended into heaven. It is lit at the Easter Vigil, and at all services during the season of Easter. The Advent Wreath has four candles that represent the four Sundays of the season of Advent, and it also includes a "Christ candle" that is lighted on Christmas Eve. At baptism candle may be given to each of the newly baptized or a godparent after baptism.

Candles are often used as a sign of festivity and solemnity in Christian worship. The use of such lights has a long and varied tradition. Acts 20 records that there were "many lamps" at the service at Troas when Paul

and other Christians gathered to break bread, "On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting." Acts 20:7-8.

Lamps and candles were in normal use in Christian worship by the fourth century, use of altar lights and other candles in the worship of the church is now widely used in churches.

One of the anthems at the Candle Lighting in the Book of Occasional Services 1994, talks about Christ our light in the darkness.

You, O Lord are my Lamp;  
my God, you make my darkness bright.  
You, O Lord, are my lamp;  
my God, you make my darkness bright.  
You have been my helper:  
My God, you make my darkness bright.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
You, O Lord, are my lamp;  
my God, you make my darkness bright. (BOS, 10).

In this Advent Season, I invite you to light candles in your homes and in the church as you come to Christ Church, light a candle as symbol for intention of yourself, for healing, for strength, for this world and in memory of someone you loved. Candles are invisible prayers as offering of our intention our hope to God.



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## FINANCIAL UPDATE: IT'S CRUNCH TIME!

*By Kevin Green, Treasurer*

As you can see from the accompanying table, we have fallen over \$4,000 behind our budget through the end of October, primarily due to lower than expected income, meaning that we will need a big push to just get back to the budgeted deficit. In addition, as the year winds to a close, the Finance Commission is preparing to help the Vestry put together the 2020 budget. In order for us to be as accurate as possible and to help close the deficit, we are requesting that everyone submit their 2020 pledge cards (even if your pledge is staying the same, although increases are always welcome and appreciated) and do their best to fulfill their

pledges for 2019 (we recognize that this is not possible for everyone). Your help is greatly appreciated. Please contact me if you have any questions about the Church's financial condition.

10/31/2019	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	2019 BUDGET
INCOME	\$206,000.29	\$228,618.63	\$286,513.00
EXPENSE	\$249,347.36	\$267,619.97	\$318,879.00
NET	(\$43,347.07)	(\$39,001.34)	(\$32,366.00)

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## MUSIC UPDATE

*By Ally Barone*

There are many "miraculous mothers" throughout the Bible. Sarah, the barren wife of Abraham, gives birth to Isaac in old age, despite not believing she could. Elizabeth gave birth to a son, dedicated him to God, and he became a prophet, John the Baptist. Rebecca gave birth to twins, Jacob and Esau. But the woman we talk about the most must be Mary, the virgin mother of God's only Son. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. The angel Gabriel warns her not to be afraid. Despite confusion, she proclaims that she is the servant of the Lord and proclaims the Magnificat to her sister, Elizabeth.

Without the faith of Mary and the other miraculous mothers of the Bible trusting in God, we would not have Jesus or the prophets. Advent especially is a time to recognize Mary's commitment to and trust in God.

With this in mind, much of the music, especially the service music and anthems, we're singing throughout the season of Advent focuses on women. Whether it's written by or about women, it's a great opportunity to reflect on the role women played in the Bible and the role they continue to play in the modern Church.

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## SHARING OUR STORY...STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

*By Jeanne Martens*

The 'Sharing Our Story' project is a way to help us connect with the Christ Church story by listening to the wealth of experiences of our long-standing members; learning from their wisdom; and capturing a piece of our own history. We recognize we are inheritors of a remarkable legacy and appreciate the contribution of those who have given to Christ Church in so many ways.

We have 10 Nonagenarian and Centenarian volunteers to be Story Tellers. That is 10 folks who are either in their 90's or 100's!! There are six Story Gatherers along with members of the Strengthening Community Relations Renaissance team to visit and collect their stories.

We were fortunate to complete the majority of our visits in November. We have one or two more visits planned for the first week in December.

On Sunday, December 15, during forum time, stories will be shared with the parish. In addition, we plan to include individual stories each month in the upcoming Couriers for 2020!

Hope you can join us after the service at the Forum on December 15.

### JANUARY COURIER SUBMISSIONS

Submit news and articles for the January issue of the Courier by December 20th to  
office@christchurchdearborn.org.  
Please add Courier to the subject line.

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# ANNUAL MEETING



The Annual Meeting at Christ Church will be Sunday, January 26 following the 10 a.m. service. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a light breakfast, review reports from the previous year, review our budget for 2020 and elect new Vestry members.

The Vestry is the governing body of a church within the Episcopal Church. The Vestry and Rector are charged with developing and advancing the Mission and Ministries of Christ Church. Bio's of the slate of Vestry members will be published in the January Courier. The annual meeting is the day we gather to celebrate the year past, honor our ministries and the work we have done, and give thanks for the time and commitment of the Vestry.



## CHRISTMAS FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

All thanksgivings and memorials will be listed in the Christmas service leaflets. Please contribute what ever you are able, \$20-\$35 is a typical contribution, but less is fine and more, if you are able, is appreciated. Return names to the office by Sunday, December 15.



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## ADVENT STUDY

This year we will have three opportunities for Advent study: one will be an Advent meditation booklet titled "I Am Mary". This little booklet reflects on the life and ministry of Mary, the mother of Jesus, as she prepares to give birth to Christ. Daily meditations with scripture readings will guide us through the season of Advent to Christmas. Copies of the booklet containing meditation materials for all four weeks will be available. Secondly, we will have weekly meditation coloring sheets that will be included in the bulletin and emailed to the parish. Pray by coloring is one way that people engage in

prayer and meditation and can be very relaxing. Thirdly, as we did last year we will use an advent calendar with cards for every day of the week that offer ideas for scripture readings or activities to enhance your Advent season. These were created by the Salt Project, an Emmy award winning non-profit production company dedicated to the craft of visual story telling. One aspect of the Salt Project is assisting churches tell their story through visual arts and thoughtful meditations.

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

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## CHRISTMAS SEASON SERVICES

**December 22:** Advent 4 and the "Greening of the Church follows the 10am service."

**December 22:** Lessons and Carols with Renaissance Voices, 7pm. This is a performance of Lessons and Carols presented by Renaissance Voices, an all female chorus led by Kevin Dewey. Tickets are \$10 and available in the office.

### December 24

Three services of the Incarnation, the Christ-mas

Christmas Eve Pageant at 5:00pm, the children offer a Christmas play, Holy Eucharist follows

Bi-lingual service at 7pm followed by a festive Christmas Eve dinner, for both Mother of the Savior and Christ Church and their family and friends. Stay after the 7pm service or come early for the 10pm service and share a meal.

AND Christmas late service at 10pm

**December 25:** Christmas morning 10am

### Sunday, December 29

8am in the Chapel - Holy Eucharist

10am in the Church - Holy Eucharist with Carols

## Calendar Highlights

### FELLOWSHIP

#### COFFEE HOUR

Sunday, 11:15am

Refreshments in Fellowship Hall following the 10 am service. The sign-up sheet is downstairs if you would like to host a Sunday.

### YOUNG PEOPLE

#### CHILDREN'S PRAYER ROOM

Sunday at 10:05am for 3-9 year olds during the 10am service. The children leave the church together and meet in the Prayer Room for a child friendly service with stories and crafts, then return to church for communion. Please contact the church office at 313-565-8450 or [office@christchurchdearborn.org](mailto:office@christchurchdearborn.org).

### HEALTH

#### MARTIAL ARTS

##### Adult Classes

Wednesday 7pm

Sunday 2pm

### STRETCHING CLASS

Meets the 2nd and 4th Saturday monthly at 10:30am. Michael Mroczyk, leader of our Martial Arts Group, is offering coaching in a method of effective, dynamic, facilitated stretching for all interested persons. The sessions are open. The greatest benefit will be for those whose range of motion has atrophied. Come dressed comfortably. The sessions are free of charge. Donations to Christ Church are welcome.

### YOGA

Tuesdays, 7:15-8:15pm, Room 213

This is a beginner level hatha class. Hatha links movement with breath. If you have a yoga mat, please bring it. The sessions are free of charge.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### DECEMBER

Dec 1 Adult Forum  
Dec 2 Listening Group 7pm  
Dec 2 Scout Leaders 7pm  
Dec 3 Scout PLC Meeting 6:30pm  
Dec 3 AAUW Meeting 7:30pm

Dec 6 Chapel Day Christmas 6:30pm  
Dec 7 League of Women Voters 10am  
Dec 8 Choir Rehearsal 11:20am  
Dec 15 Parish Stories Forum  
Dec 15 Vestry 12:30pm  
Dec 16 Listening Group 7pm  
Dec 19 Sonneman Studio 4:30pm  
Dec 21 Lessons & Carols Rehearsal 9am  
Dec 21 Sonneman Studio 1pm  
Dec 22 Greening of the Church  
Dec 22 Lessons & Carols 7pm  
Dec 24 Family Service 5pm  
Dec 24 Bi-Lingual Service 7pm  
Dec 24 Candlelight Service 10pm  
Dec 25 Christmas Morning Service 10am

### JANUARY 2020

Jan 4 League of Women Voters 10am  
Jan 6 Listening Group 7pm  
Jan 7 Scout Leaders 7pm  
Jan 7 Scout PLC Meeting 6:30pm  
Jan 7 AAUW Meeting 7:30pm  
Jan 12 Sonneman Recital 3pm  
Jan 18 Vestry  
Jan 18 AAUW 1pm  
Jan 20 Listening Group 7pm  
Jan 26 Annual Meeting

## ANNUAL GREENING OF THE CHURCH: DECEMBER 22 FOLLOWING THE 10AM SERVICE

This year we will share coffee hour with Mother of the Savior in the church on December 22 while we green the church. This is an all hands needed event as there is much to do. It takes about 90 minutes to set up all the Christmas trees, wreaths, roping, and other vestments. Mother of the Savior will have its Advent 4 service following. Also, the annual Renaissance Voices, Lessons and Carols concert is at 7pm on December 22.

## December Celebrations

### BIRTHDAYS

Bradyn Gaines  
Dan Pilarski  
Bill Owens  
Isabelle Behm  
Lena Gray  
Christopher Marzonie  
Jimmy Lopez  
Maggie Pellegrino  
Andrea Blake  
Kathleen McClorey  
Joanna Connelly

DEC 3  
DEC 3  
DEC 10  
DEC 11  
DEC 11  
DEC 17  
DEC 22  
DEC 22  
DEC 23  
DEC 25  
DEC 31

### ANNIVERSARIES

Patrick & Stephanie Mulkern  
Frank & Carol Kery  
Richard & Judith Polcyn

DEC 17 (41)  
DEC 19 (50)  
DEC 29 (47)





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#### OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

**The Rt. Rev. Wendell Gibbs, Jr.**, Bishop  
**The Rev. Terri Pilarski**, Rector  
**Lynn Becker, Jr.**, Warden  
**Nick Bell, Sr.**, Warden  
**Kevin Green**, Treasurer  
**Matthew Sallman**, Clerk

#### STAFF

**Allison Barone**, Music Director  
**Erin Biggs**, Office Manager  
**Tess Dowgiallo**, Children's Choir Director  
**John Jones**, Sexton  
**The Rev. Halim Shukair**, Curate

#### VESTRY

**Jean Angel**  
**Lynn Becker**  
**Nick Bell**  
**Barbara Hall**  
**Michael Mroczyk**  
**Stephanie Mulkern**  
**Holly Schanz**  
**James Thornton**  
**Chris Ventura**