

# the COURIER

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The Newsletter of Christ Episcopal Church  
Dearborn, Michigan

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## Gratitude, a discipline of perception

Have you ever considered that the face you see in a selfie is God? It's your face - but it's also God's face. Does that change the image you see? Is it startling to imagine seeing God in your face? Are you able to see that the image in the selfie is you and is also an image of God? God has your eye color, your skin tone, and the same shaped face as you.

God looks like each one of us and all of us at the same. God reveals God's self in and through every human being. God is black and brown, pink, and white, olive toned, and all shades of skin color. God has blue eyes, brown eyes, black eyes, gray eyes, green eyes, and every shade of eye color. God has all hair color and all textures.

At the same time God has none of our human characteristics - because God is not limited or confined by human constructs - God made us in God's image - thus God is like all of us - but God is also more, much more than all of us.

And yet, as Christians we know God first and foremost as a being with whom we are and can be in relationship. That God revealed God's self in the person of Jesus, gives us the idea that we can see God in human form. Each one of us is the face of God; in us God's love, made manifest first in Jesus, continues to be revealed to the world.

Now look at your image in a selfie and imagine that God is looking back at you. What does God see? God sees a beloved human being. God sees a person that God loves deeply. God looks at you tenderly and with compassion, holding all your fears and worries with love. God looks at you and says, you are my most precious creation, with you I am well pleased. God does this with every single person.

At Christ Church we are intentionally nurturing an attitude of gratitude. For it is through our ability to be grateful for all that we have and all that we are -

without comparing ourselves to others and without judgement - but with thanksgiving - that we are able to become even more grateful. It takes practice. This is a "discipline of perception," formed by how we choose to see our lives and the world around us.

Faith communities are also a reflection of God's presence in the world. However, like people, churches can become too self-focused, worried about how they look or worried about finances or some other obsession that takes them away from their mission. Such worries take us away from God and keep us stuck, frozen in an image of self that does not reflect how God sees us.

God looks at us, with all our flaws, and says, Christ Church in Dearborn, is my most precious creation. God does this for every church, every synagogue, mosque, and house of worship. God loves God's creation.

At Christ Church, Dearborn, we have many profound ways of expressing God's presence in and through us and out into the world around us. In all the ways we share the many gifts God has given us, we are gracing forward God's love in the world. Particularly in this COVID time, when we are staying home, we have an opportunity to practice the art of growing gratitude. As difficult as this year has been, what are you grateful for? Where and how has your life been blessed? How are you being asked to share graciously, caring for you neighbor as yourself?

*In Peace,  
Pastor Terri*

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## SEPTEMBER FINANCE UPDATE

*By Kevin Green, Treasurer*

Due in part to certain gifts being received earlier in the year than budgeted, we missed the September budget by approximately \$6,000, a significant change from previous months. Even so, we are still over \$5,000 ahead of the budget through the end of September as shown in the accompanying table although some major Buildings and Grounds expenses were incurred in October. As usual, our ability to beat the budget the rest of the year will be determined in large part by the year-end giving

of the parish. Thank you to everyone who has been able to make their pledge payments so far and we hope that everyone will continue to attempt to do so throughout the rest of 2020.

9/30/2020	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	2020 BUDGET
INCOME	\$164,889.58	\$169,165.12	\$240,983.00
EXPENSE	\$220,413.09	\$229,882.22	\$305,072.96
NET	(\$55,523.51)	(\$60,717.10)	(\$64,089.96)

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## A WORD FROM OUR CURATE THERE IS MAGIC IN YOUR SMILE

*By Curate Halim Shukair*

I like the comments I receive on my Facebook page when I post my pictures. Most of the comments go like this, "I like your smile", "Woo, you always smile in your photos", "God bless your smile". These comments make me wonder, why do I smile? Is it real? How can I smile in midst the of all that is going around me?

I have thought about it a lot these past days. What makes me smile in my photos and whenever I'm in public and around people. I struggled to get a clear answer, but I'm convinced that when I smile the world smiles back.

I smile because I'm convinced this pandemic will end one day, and when I will look back after a couple of years at my photos and the photos of the people I love wearing masks, I will smile. I will smile because I will be able to share the challenges we experience during this uncertain time and then I will thank God it's over and life will go on.

I smile for the reason that I'm able to connect with my family, friends, and beloved ones through video calls, imagine if this pandemic hits us ten years ago, how bad we would be isolated from each other.

I smile as every Sunday we can gather in-person and on Zoom to worship together and to engage

every Monday night through our virtual Forum hour. I smile because I believe one day our dream will come true and our Partnership in Faith will flourish to nourish our community here in Dearborn.

I smile because it's free and it will spread joy and happiness in people around me. In this season of generosity as we walk this path together, let us be generous in spreading smiles around us. Smiling is free and it's actually contagious. In a Swedish study, subjects were shown pictures of several emotions: joy, anger, fear, and surprise. When the picture of someone smiling was presented, the researchers asked the subjects to frown. Instead, they found that the facial expressions went directly to imitation of what subjects saw. It took a conscious effort to turn that smile upside-down. So if you're smiling at someone, it's likely they can't help but smile back. If they don't, they're making a conscious effort not to.

I will try to make all the effort I can as I walk the path of generosity to give back to the people around me what God has blessed me and one of these blessings is hope. In smiling we reflect the deep sense of gratitude to God, to our world and it's a free prescription we offer to the people around us.



I would like to express my sincere thank you for your generous contribution to Beirut Aid. Through our Partnership in Faith between Christ Episcopal Church and Mother of the Savior Church we were able to raise \$ 4,994.00 . These funds raised went to repairs for All Saints Episcopal Church Beirut, which was hit badly by the horrible explosion on August 4th, and to SADA (Not for Profit Organization) which is helping people of Beirut to recover from the blast through social support and assisting in repairing damaged houses. Thank you again for your generous support. Please keep Lebanon in your prayers.

Rev. Halim Shukair, Curate



*The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & The Middle East  
The Diocese of Jerusalem*

*The Most Revd. Suheil Salman Dawani*

28 October 2020

Rev. Halim Shukair,  
Christ Episcopal Church, Dearborn, Michigan

Dear Fr. Halim,

I am writing to thank you for your recent and generous donation of USD 2,439 in the aftermath of the massive explosion that took place in Beirut on August 4<sup>th</sup>. As you know, first-responders have identified at least 190 persons killed from this blast, and over 6,500 wounded. Beyond that, upwards of 300,000 people living in the vicinity of the blast zone have been rendered homeless by the destructive force of the explosion's powerful shockwave.

Since the explosion, we have been in constant communication with Archdeacon Imad. Even though the country is still under heavy restrictions, he has been able to make repairs to their damaged parish hall and continue to provide help the All Saints' parishioners who were hurt and, in some cases, forced from their homes because of the explosion. He is also now coordinating with other churches and NGOs their relief effort toward the thousands of other families left homeless in the city. Because of your contribution and those of our other donors, All Saints will be able to pay for its repairs to the parish hall and continue to serve as an outreach center for a good number of those who have been heavily affected by the blast.

Thank you again for your support of our work in the Diocese of Jerusalem in response to this terrible tragedy. I pray that God will bless your ministry in the weeks and months ahead as we seek to remain faithful in our service to the world in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace and Peace,

+ Suheil Dawani  
The Most Reverend Suheil S. Dawani  
Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

Code 2/2020



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October 29, 2020

**Attention:** Mother of the Savior Church and Christ Episcopal Church Dearborn

We would not be able to thank you enough for your generous donation amounting to 2439 USD sent to SADA organization in Lebanon.

Your support is giving us the strength to continue with our mission, and filling us with the needed power to take care of our roots and do the necessary to stay in our beloved country and assist those who are looking for salvation.

We wish you all, the faith to fill you with hope and the love to keep you strong and happy.

President

Father Tony Keady

*Tony Keady*





## ELECTION DAY PRAYER VIGIL, Nov. 3

A prayer vigil will be pre-recorded for use anytime on election day and/or the days following. There will be prayers and music along with time for silence and your own prayers. A link will be sent to you on Tuesday, Nov. 3 for this YouTube video. It will also be posted on the church Facebook page.

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## ALL SOUL'S DAY WORSHIP, MONDAY, Nov. 2, 7PM

Zoom or in-person, in the Chapel  
(Zoom link will be emailed on Monday, Nov. 2).

Please join us as we pray for the departed from our family, friends, and this parish. Please send the office names of those you wish to have us include in the prayers. You may also add names on your own as you worship with us.



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## ILLUMINATED: AN INVITATION INTO THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS, AN ONLINE RETREAT OFFERED BY JAN RICHARDSON FROM NOVEMBER 29-DECEMBER 26

In a chaotic time, this retreat will offer a space of elegant simplicity. Intertwining reflection, art, music, and community, this four-week online retreat provides a distinctive opportunity to journey through Advent and Christmas. The Illuminated Retreat will be based on Jan's book *Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas*. You will receive three emails each week (Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday). These emails will feature reflections, artwork, and blessings from *Night Vi-*

*sions* particularly selected by Jan for this retreat. Music from Garrison Doles will weave through the retreat, drawing you deep into the gifts of this season with his original songs and reflective instrumental pieces. Please let Erin in the office know if you want to participate and we will register you. This will be a wonderful way to journey through Advent and Christmas.

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# PATHWAYS TO GENEROSITY

By the Pathways to Generosity Team: Karen Beck, Erin Biggs and Matt Sallman

**Pathways to Generosity** is the title for this year's stewardship journey to support of Christ Church in 2021.

**Pathways to Generosity** focuses on the spiritual significance of each of us, as followers of Jesus, to give and to share generously from the blessings we have received in this life. Based on the teachings of Jesus, and other biblical principles, this journey will invite each person to pray, "God, how are you calling me to give?" as we seek to grow in our life of discipleship.

In the coming weeks you will be hearing what God has to say to us about giving, and about the foundational giving principles of the Bible. Jesus teaches us that when we form generous hearts and give graciously, our lives will be transformed. Our transformed lives and generous sharing will help others live closer to God's intention for all people. Generosity leads to gracious living and lives that feel more whole. You will not be hearing about next year's budget or the financial needs of the church.

After we have each prayerfully considered how God has blessed our lives, and how each one of us is being called

to be generous in response, we will fill out the Estimate of Giving form on the website. (It will also be emailed and/or mailed to you). From our generosity, our leadership create a Ministry Plan for the coming year.

It is easy to judge the success of a stewardship campaign by whether we balanced the budget and met the church's need to pay its expenses. We believe there is a better, more faithful way to define success: in the spiritual growth of each person as they respond to God's generosity by living generously, sharing generously, and supporting the church in its mission to the world. Supporting the church expands each person's giving exponentially as we feed people in mind, body, and spirit.

How generous is God calling you to be, and much do you need to give? That's between you and God. Prayer should be your focus as you seek the answer to this question: "God, how are you calling me to give?" This promises to be an exciting time in the life of Christ Church. Will you take the next step?

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## November Celebrations

### BIRTHDAYS

Jennifer Patterson	NOV 1
Alex Boyar	NOV 2
Emily Brehob	NOV 3
Collin Kappauf	NOV 3
MeiLing Marzonie	NOV 5
Lisa McCallum	NOV 9
Robert Peterson	NOV 9
Jonathon Quam	NOV 10
Erika Stanis	NOV 10
Patrick Sanderson	NOV 16
Kasia Quam	NOV 17
Myrna Burkhalter	NOV 20
Ellen Chapman	NOV 22
Anthony Johnson	NOV 22
Marion Bloye	NOV 25
Carol Waddell	NOV 26
Selia Danes	NOV 27
Michael Magnan	NOV 28
Amy Penk	NOV 28
Carmel Price	NOV 28

### ANNIVERSARIES

Alex & Elizabeth Boyar	NOV 5 (26)
Daniel & Kristin Hipp	NOV 22 (45)
Frederick & Barbara Brandenburg	NOV 16 (71)
Jerry & Isabelle Behm	NOV 27 (28)

## COMING SOON!

### A PICTURE DIRECTORY

By Erin Biggs

Our church management software allows us to add pictures to our directory. Please take and email a picture of those in your household, to have them included in our directory. Email pictures and any updates to your contact information to the office:

[office@christchurchdearborn.org](mailto:office@christchurchdearborn.org)



### DECEMBER COURIER SUBMISSIONS

Submit news and articles for the December issue of the Courier by November 23rd to [office@christchurchdearborn.org](mailto:office@christchurchdearborn.org). Please add Courier to the subject line.



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#### OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

**The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry**, Bishop  
**The Rev. Terri Pilarski**, Rector  
**Lynn Becker**, Sr. Warden  
**Dale Taylor, Jr.**, Warden  
**Kevin Green**, Treasurer  
**Matthew Sallman**, Clerk

#### STAFF

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

#### VESTRY

**Jean Angel**  
**Lynn Becker**  
**Barbara Hall**  
**Stephanie Mulkern**  
**Jill Poske**  
**Holly Schanz**  
**Dale Taylor**  
**James Thornton**