Christ Episcopal Church
There is a place for you at God's Table!

The **Clarion**

Volume 30, Issue 11, January 2026 **A Monthly Publication**

SAVE THE DATE!!

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Christ Episcopal Church will be held on Sunday, **Sunday, March 1st** (more details to follow in the Newsnote and bulletins). All members of Christ Church age 16 and older are asked to be present for this once-a-year meeting.

Who can vote? According to the Canons of the Episcopal Church, voting members are those who are members of Christ Church and at least 16 years old, regular in worship, faithful in giving, and active in the ministry of the Parish.

Vestry Nominations

The Vestry's Nominating Committee, which includes Dan McGregor, Rick Everingham, and Kay Koeninger, along with ex officio member The Rev. Dr. Michelle Boomgaard, is seeking nominations for a new member to join the Vestry for a three-year term starting in March 2026. We are also accepting nominations for the position of Junior Warden, which is a one-year term. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for either of these positions, please contact Kay Koeinger at kaydavid7485@att.net or Rev. Michelle at mmboomgaard@christspringfield.org.

The Vestry functions as a board that oversees the spiritual, pastoral, and operational aspects of Christ Episcopal Church. It is composed of the rector and members of the congregation who have been elected at the parish's annual meeting. To be eligible for Vestry, members must:

- attend worship regularly
- make a pledge, or otherwise financially support the parish
- be able to attend and participate in the Vestry meetings, held the second Thursday of each month from 6–8 PM.

The Nominating Committee will contact nominated individuals and will present a slate of candidates at the Annual Meeting.



Happenings

Thurs.-Fri. 1-2 Office Closed; no Noonday Prayer

Sun. 1/4 **Worship** @ 8 & 10 AM; **Children's Chapel** at 10 AM

Wed. 1/7 Lectio Divina @ 1 PM; **Food Pantry Delivery** @ 8:15 AM

Thurs. 1/8 **ABLE Clinic** @ 8 AM; **Noonday Prayer**

Sun. 1/11 **Worship** @ 8 & 10 AM; **Children's Chapel** at 10 AM

Wed. 1/14 Lectio Divina @ 1 PM

Thurs. 1/15 **Food Pantry bagging** @ 9 AM; **Noonday Prayer**; **Vestry** @ 6 PM

Sun. 1/18 **Worship** @ 8 & 10 AM; **Oakwood Service** @ 1 PM

Mon. 1/19 **Office Closed**

Wed. 1/21 Pantry Day @ 8:30 AM; Lectio Divina @ 1 PM

Thurs. 1/22 **Noonday Prayer**; **Game Night** 6-8 PM

Sun. 1/25 **Worship** @ 8 & 10 AM

Wed. 1/28 Lectio Divina @ 1 PM

Thurs. 1/29 **Noonday Prayer**

The Clarion

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Christ Episcopal Church
in the Diocese of Southern Ohio

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Bishop:
The Rt Rev. Kristin Uffelman White

Rector:
The Rev. Dr. Michelle Boomgaard

Senior Warden:
Joyce Spangler

Junior Warden:
Dan McGregor

Treasurer:
Ken Bladh

Program Director and Parish Administrator:
Kelly Zeller

Music Director:
Dr. Christopher Durrenberger

Facility Manager:
Paul McAfee

Bookkeeper:
Tina Knox

Nursery Attendant:
Madison Smith



The Church Office will be closed on **1/1 and 1/2 for New Years and 1/20** for **MKL Jr. Day**. Please plan accordingly.



On Following Jesus

My friend, Lisa, often got frustrated with her confirmation class. She taught confirmation every year, and she was remarkably good at it. And, because she related to the kids so well (it helps that she had two of her own) and cared about them, she got frustrated. Not by the kids themselves, but by what she heard them say.

That being an Episcopalian wasn't a "real Christian."

These were young people about to finish middle school – twelve-year-olds, for the most part – young people who were in the middle of two years of learning about Christianity and the Episcopal Church. Learning enough to be able to make an informed decision about whether they wanted to be confirmed. And yet, most years, she often heard the students say something along the lines of the Episcopal Church wasn't a real church, because it wasn't hard enough. There were, according to her students, "real churches" that demanded more from their members in terms of sacrifice, or amendment of life, or living according to some particular set of rules, to prove that they were chosen or saved or something like that. All we did was baptize people and say the Nicene Creed. That wasn't hard enough, they thought, that didn't make you a "real Christian."

Lisa – and I – felt bad for these kids. First, because they seemed to miss the point of God's grace. Sure, when you're young, you need to feel like you're doing the right thing, but if Jesus taught us anything, it's that God loves us, even when we mess up. We worried that wanting something more rigid, more strict, would only lead to disappointment when life, inevitably, made It difficult to follow ALL the rules.

But the other thing is, we felt that the kids were selling the Apostle's Creed and Baptismal Covenant short. In their minds, all they had to do was say these words and they were Episcopalian. But of course, the words should turn into action.

There was a time when confirmands could simply affirm the Apostle's Creed (and in some cases, answer questions about the catechism in our Prayer Book) in order to be considered an adult in the church. This made some sense – these were the fundamentals of our faith. In some versions of the Prayer Book, beginning in 1662,

(continued on page 3)

there was the additional question, "Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" But in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer this question was expanded. Maybe the editors of the prayer book felt like those confirmands – that just saying "yes" was too easy. The meaning needed to be spelled out. Those five (six, in some parts of the Anglican Communion) questions are not rules, per se. They can, however, serve as helpful yardsticks by which we can measure how we are doing as we go through life. On the one hand, they are more flexible, more adaptable, than any strict set of guidelines, because they give us a way to judge new situations. On the other hand, they are more steady, offering us a way back to God if we feel we have gone astray.

In January, our secular world tends to advocate making "New Year's Resolutions," to improve oneself. At the same time, our church lectionary focuses on the early ministry of Jesus: on the calling of the disciples and what they did to follow Jesus. Most of us don't feel called to drop everything – literally – and follow Jesus, as the first disciples did. But our Baptismal Covenant and our upcoming Adult Forum series on calling and vocation, might give us some good places to start.

Michelle+



Christ Church has a long tradition of collecting & donating baby food for little ones in need around Christmastime, through the work of Help Me Grow, FYI-Parent Network (Springfield), etc. We will be collecting baby food throughout Advent & the 12 Days of Christmas and dedicating a few jars as a symbolic offering for God's service by blessing them at our 10 AM worship service on Epiphany **Sunday, Jan. 4th**.

Please drop off your baby food donations in the basket by the elevator anytime between now & Jan. 4th. Slips with Shopping Tips will be on the wall beside the basket. Thank-you for helping feed hungry babies throughout this Holy Season! Questions? Contact Deb Southward (937-925-1977 call/text) or email at dpsouthward@aol.com

Lectio Divina Resumes

We invite parishioners to join Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading). The Bible study (sometimes called African Bible Study) is a meditative, structured fellowship in which to reflect in a safe space on the importance of our Christian faith in our everyday lives. We listen to others with respectful silence, without crosstalk or commentary from others. We share without interruption or interrupting. Each participant has a voice.

The Bible study reads the Lectionary gospel reading for the forthcoming Sunday to prepare for our worship on Sunday. We meet online Wednesdays at 1 pm. We could be flexible about when we meet. If interested, talk with Keith Doubt at church or contact him at keithdoubt@123mail.org



Invite • Welcome • Connect

As the vestry discussed Invite-Welcome-Connect over the last year, several catchphrases challenged us or invited us to dig deeper. One of them was simply this:

> Invite-Welcome-Connect is a ministry of transformation.

"What does that mean?" many wondered. And, if we were honest, the related question, "transform how?"

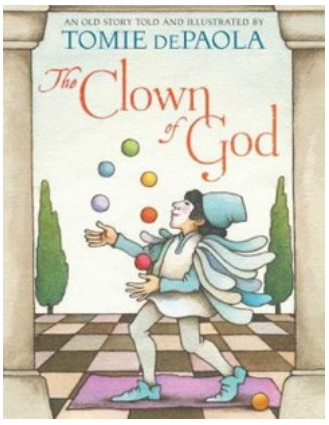
At the end of January, we will begin an Adult Forum series on finding our call, our vocation. But a big part of that lies in finding the things that bring us joy.

And then, finding ways to translate doing the things that bring us joy into doing things that help the mission of the Church.

For some of us, that's obvious. People who love to sing can join the choir. People who love children can help with children's chapel.

But, too often, we view other ministries as things that HAVE to be done, and – again, if we're honest – HAVE to be done a certain way.

What if we were to transform them, into thinking of ways to do the things that bring us joy, in the service of the Church? What if we were ready to consider doing things a little differently, if they were still done with reverence, and done in ways to further the mission of the Church?



One of my favorite examples of this is Tomie de Paola's story *The Clown of God*. His retelling of the classic tale reminds us that anyone, even a street entertainer, has something to offer. But I also note that the book has inspired lots of people to actually become entertainers that share news of the love of God.

We often appreciate the creative gifts of people like Tomie de Paola, who inspired lots of people through his books. But each of us has something that we can do that inspires *and* transforms our church.

Invite-Welcome-Connect suggests we consider making creativity our New Year's Resolution (see article here: https://www.invitewelcomeconnect.com/post/a-resolution-for-2026-choosing-creativity-as-a-spiritual-practice) This would help transform our church. But, as first steps, consider joining the Adult Forum on call, and learning what gifts you have to share.



If the Clark County Sheriff calls a Level 2 snow emergency, Christ Church is closed. If Christ Church has to close on a Sunday, we will send out an email via Newsnote, post it on Channel 7, and put it on the Church's Facebook page and Website. Whatever the snow emergency level, use your best judgement to be safe.



Margaret Mattox	4-Jan
Graham Waggoner	4-Jan
Carol Harbaugh	10-Jan
Dan McGregor	19-Jan
Alex Bickel	20-Jan
Denise Sharp	27-Jan
Steve Sharp	30-Jan



Worship… *Offering meaningful, relevant, and welcoming worship in the Episcopal tradition for people of all ages.*



Children's Chapel Services for ages 2 through 6 will take place on January 4th and 11th!

We meet in the Chapel on the church's lower level at the start of the 10 AM service, down the hallway from the nursery. Each Sunday that we meet in the Chapel, when the sermon upstairs has concluded an usher will get the children and Kelly, and they will have the wonderful opportunity to take the gifts up to the Altar. Each month will have a theme, January's theme is Jesus, son of God. Finally, on the last Sunday of each month, the children will attend the service upstairs, where Rev. Michelle will deliver a children's homily.



Here's how to watch our services on YouTube: First, open the YouTube app on your smart TV.

- Go to "Search." Enter *Christ Church Springfield.* As you enter *Christ Church Spr*, a list will appear on the left side of the screen. Do **NOT** type *Christ Episcopal*. If you do, our church will not appear on the list.
- Select *Christ Church Springfield*, about the third one down. That's it!

Revised Common LECTIONARY

January				
Date	**First Lesson**	**Psalm**	**Second Lesson**	**Gospel**
01/04	Jeremiah 31: 7-14	84	Ephesians 3: 1-6, 15-19	Matthew 2: 1-12
01/11	Isaiah 10: 1-9	29	Acts 10: 34-43	Matthew 3: 13-17
01/18	Isaiah 49: 1-7	40: 1-12	I Corinthians 1: 1-9	John 1: 29-42
01/25	Isaiah 9: 1-4	27: 1, 5-13	I Corinthians 1: 10-18	Matthew 4: 12-23





Thursday Chapel Virtual Noonday Prayer services to resume on January 8th!

Judy Johnson offers a virtual Noonday Prayer service on Christ Church's Facebook page each Thursday. **(**facebook.com/christspringfield.org/) The text is located on p. 103 in the Book of Common Prayer or online at https://www.bcponline.org

NOTE: There will be no Noonday Prayer on Jan. 1.



2026 Altar Flower Dedication Chart

If you would like to sponsor the Altar flowers for 2026 in memory of, thanksgiving. or in celebration for someone or something, please Kelly Zeller at zellerk0612@gmail.com. Please be very specific in what or who you are dedicating the altar flowers, and if you have a particular choice of flower. The suggested donation is $45.

January 11th, 18th, and 25th
February 1st, 8th, and 15th
April 19th and 26th
May 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 25th
June 14th, 21st, and 28th
July 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th
August 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd,
September 27th
October 4th, 11th, and 25th
November 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd



If you would like an update of what you have given thus far in fulfillment of your pledge for 2025, please email Kelly Zeller at zellerk0612@gmail.com for a statement.

ONLINE GIVING

Christ Church has an option for online giving through the church's website.

- Go to christspringfield.org or use the QR code
- Go to the tab in the upper right-hand corner marked "Online Giving"
- Click on the **Online Giving** link in blue
- Fill in the amount you would like to give
- Next, choose either **Pledged Giving** for a Pledge or **Miscellaneous Giving** for other giving
- Complete the rest of the form
- Press **Continue**
- Enter your billing information

Thank you! If you have questions or concerns, contact Kelly Zeller at zellerk0612@gmail.com.



2026 Calendars are available in the East Entrance on the table. Thank you to Richards, Raff, and Dunbar Funeral Home for providing them for our use.



January 11th is the Baptism of our Lord. If you want to be baptized or you know someone who would like to be baptized, please contact Rev. Michelle at mboomgaard@christspringfield.org.

Vestry Highlights

Vestry Highlights from the November 13th, 2025 meeting. Vestry Highlights are published after the minutes have been approved at the following month's Vestry meeting. A copy of the Vestry minutes is posted on the bulletin board in the entryway of the Guild Room.

The meeting opened with a reading of Genesis 41:1-8, 25-33 followed by discussion and prayer.

Invite Welcome Connect: Rev. Michelle displayed notes from the Vestry Retreat that listed reasons why people come to Christ Church and asked why people come during Advent and Christmas. Reasons included that people seek beauty during this time, and our church and music are beautiful. Also listed were community building and spiritual nurturing through Coffee Hour and Adult Forum.

Jr. Warden: Dan McGregor is working with Peebles-Herzog regarding the organ restoration A series of contracts are scheduled to start in January 2027. Contract 1 will focus on the highest-priority item: the Swell division. Dan suggested we add a capital budget outside the operational budget, as money classified in this way is not considered in the Diocesan assessment, unlike operational budget items.

Stewardship Committee: The committee has established a pledge goal of $149,000 for 2026. So far, we have received 29 pledge cards, amounting to approximately $116,576.00.

Discussion of alternate budget options: Rev. Michelle suggested that the Vestry establish a goal to reduce dependence on the endowment. Finance committee member David Bingman invited everyone to attend the January finance committee meeting. He reported that we currently have $7.5 million in the endowment, which is expected to grow. David emphasized the importance of being prudent but reassured us that there is no need to panic. However, given our current low attendance, we will inevitably need to withdraw more from the endowment. Ken agreed said we will need about half a million dollars to maintain a balanced budget in 2026. Dan suggested we develop a metric to measure endowment usage. Joyce moved to allow the treasurer to present to the Vestry for vote in December an inspirational budget that utilizes the endowment to balance the 2026 budget. Motion seconded and carried.

Nominating Committee: Vestry members leaving in February were asked to join the Nominating Committee. Diane Rode moved that we appoint "retiring" members Rick Everingham and Dan McGregor, along with Kay Koeninger as ex officio and Rev. Michelle, to the Committee. Motion seconded and carried.

Proposal to request a deacon for CEC: Rev. Michelle requested vestry permission apply to the Diocese for a deacon. Joyce moved that Rev. Michelle proceed and to add funds to the deacon budget line. Motion seconded and carried.

Capital campaign exploratory committee: Discussion revolved around forming a small committee to review 3 items to guide a capital campaign: 1) Bring the kitchen up to code, 2) Update the East Entrance to make the doors more user-friendly, 3) Consider an electric sign in front of the building. Ken moved the committee be formed. Motion seconded and carried.

Anticipated food pantry needs in light of a potential hunger crisis: Currently, $16,000 of the budget is designated for outreach, and the Food Pantry, our largest outreach mission, has a designated gift currently sitting around $25,000. However, because Second Harvest is unable to obtain protein and shelf-stable items due to cuts in government funding, sourcing those items from retail outlets is eroding that amount. After discussion, Joyce moved that Vestry review the outreach money each quarter, prioritizing the Food Pantry. Motion seconded and carried.



In January, we celebrate Jesus's incarnation, and his time on earth, teaching the disciples. Accordingly, our Forum will explore what it means to follow Jesus and the call of the Holy Spirit today, through various lenses.

January 4: The flight into Egypt in Art – Classic and Contemporary Diving more deeply into the morning's Gospel reading we'll consider how at least two different artists have interpreted Joseph's journey. How does these piece speak to us, and what relevance does this story have for us today?

January 11: Baptism of our Lord The Baptismal Covenant is one of the foundations of what it means to be Episcopalian. Would the disciples have been able to affirm it? And how does it ground our actions as a parish?

January 18 – Called by God – The first of five sessions on understanding our vocation We'll reflect on the day's Gospel, as well as the calling of Abraham and some contemporary fiction and non-fiction stories, to talk about how we hear God calling our lives.

January 25: Called from Within – The second of five sessions on understanding our vocation We'll reflect on the day's Gospel, as well as some contemporary fiction and non-fiction stories, to talk about where we might sense our purpose and gifts.

February 1: Called Out – The third of five sessions on understanding our vocation Why does Jesus say God's burden is light? We'll reflect on the calling of the disciples thus far, as well as story of Zaccheus and some contemporary fiction and non-fiction stories, to discern where God might be asking us to let some things go.

This series will continue until the start of Lent on Feb. 22.



Children building the creche scene at the 4:00 Christmas Eve service





Hospitality…welcoming, nurturing, and supporting the members of our parish and greater community.



Laugh and Craft Group will NOT meet in January.

Please plan to join us on February 7th.

Church Staff

- **Rector:** The Rev. Dr. Michelle Boomgaard
- **Senior Warden:** Joyce Spangler
- **Jr. Warden:** Dan McGregor
- **Treasurer:** Ken Bladh
- **Clerk of Vestry:** Kelly Zeller
- **Program Director & Parish Administrator**: Kelly Zeller
- **Music Director:** Dr. Christopher Durrenberger
- **Facility Manager:** Paul McAfee
- **Bookkeeper:** Tina Knox
- **Nursey Attendant:** Madison Smith

Your Vestry at Large

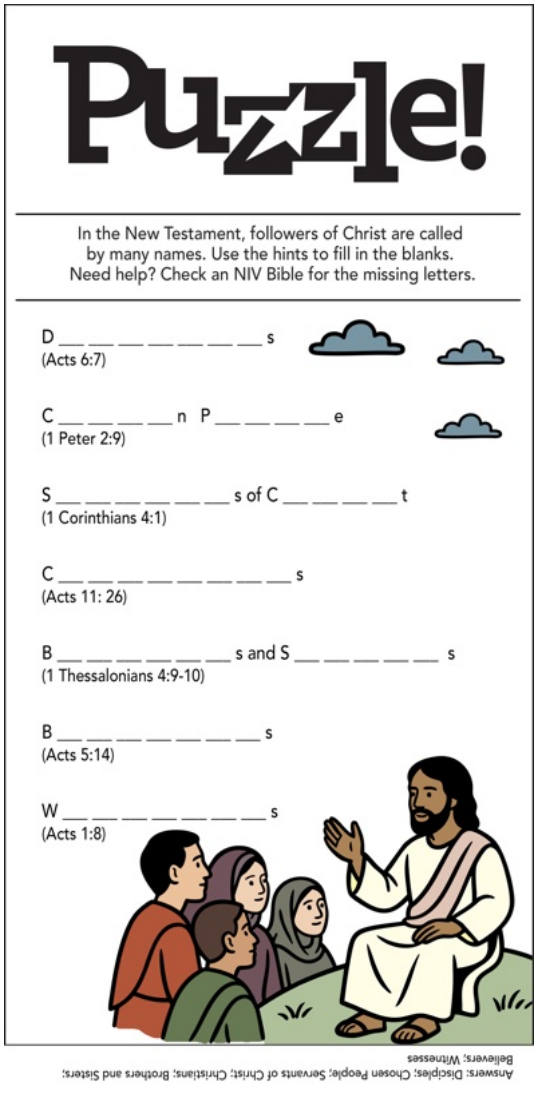
David Bingman, Beth Deger, Rick Everingham, Kay Koeninger, Diane Rode, and John Richardson



Join us for Game Night on **Thursday, January 22nd**. We'll gather at 6 PM at Meyers Market, 101 S. Fountain Ave. to play a variety of board and card games. Friends and new games are always welcome. Contact Rev. Michelle with questions at mboomgaard@christspringfield.org.

Safe Church Training Update

Everyone who is involved in ministry with the vulnerable (such as ministry with children or those in the hospital) is required to complete Safe Church training every five years. If you would prefer to do this in person (rather than online), the Diocese is offering a session of this training on **Feb. 19 from 10 until 3, for only $10.** Find out more and register here: https://diosohio.org/youre-invited-in-person-safe-church-training/





Outreach… helping to provide the physical, material, social, and spiritual needs in Springfield and beyond.

A big **THANK YOU!** to all the pantry volunteers! In December, we served 468 clients. The first car arrived at 4:15 AM, and the first walker arrived at 6 AM. It felt like a heatwave!! The clients were offered a variety of items, including chicken, turkeys, bologna, hot dogs, canned chicken, canned goods, pasta, cereal, peanut butter, and produce, as well as extras such as toilet paper, pet food, laundry detergent, and toiletries.

We didn't place an order with Finks Meats this month because Second Harvest had had meat available. However, we still had to pick up some essential shelf staples at local grocery stores to complete the bags.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who generously donated 72 bottles of spices; they were greatly appreciated! A special shout-out to Hayward Middle School for creating beautiful, handmade holiday cards for our clients! Overall, the clients were in good spirits, due to a few extra pop-up food distributions and extra holiday meals in the community.

January dates on which volunteers are needed are listed below. Volunteers are needed to:

- help unload food,
- help bag food, and
- help with customer service.

	Time	Jan.
Food Delivery	**8:15 AM**	7
Bagging Day	**9:00 AM**	15
Pantry Day!	**8:15 AM**	21

Food Delivery
Please mark your calendars for our next delivery on **Wed, Jan. 7th, at 8:15 AM**. We could really use more volunteers to help with unboxing and removing the plastic from canned goods.

Food Pantry Bagging
All are welcome to help bag shelf items to prepare for distribution! We meet at 9 AM in the Bethel room. This month, we'll meet on **Jan. 15th**. Email **Brian Shelburne** to ask any questions or to let us know if you can help.

With the need for supplemental food assistance growing, please consider joining us if you have an hour or two to spare! To volunteer, contact *Brian Shelburne, bshelburne@wittenberg.edu, Kelly Zeller zellerk0612@gmail.com, or Anne Randolph annejrand@aol.com.*

Toilet Paper, Pet Food, and Laundry Detergent!

What do these items have in common? These are the three items most requested by Food Pantry clients, and none of them can be purchased with the SNAP card. We are the only Food Pantry that offers toilet paper, and the clients often ask when they first arrive if we have it that day. Pet food, laundry detergent, and cleaning supplies are expensive items; clients are very grateful when we offer them on distribution day. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and really make a difference!! Thank you!

RAINBOW TABLE

January is Christ Episcopal Church's month to volunteer at the Rainbow Table at St. John's Lutheran Church. Volunteers are needed each Friday in the various areas at the times listed below.



9:00–9:30 Help wrap silverware.
10:00–10:30 Help repackage baked goods.
10:30–11:30 Help set out desserts, salads, etc.
12:00–1:00 PM Help serve

- Hand out trays and escort those needing help to tables
- Pour and hand out drinks

12:30–1:00 PM Scrape dishes

- Clean Up - Wipe tables & chairs, stack chairs
- Help in dishwasher room

Many of these activities maintain distance from guests. Therefore, you can choose to help where you feel most comfortable. Please remember to sign in and out noting you are from Christ Episcopal Church; the Volunteer Notebook is located in kitchen. If you have questions, please contact Deb Southward 937-925-1977.