

Christ Church Parish, Kent Island
830 Romancoke Road
Stevensville, MD 21666

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December 2023

Connections

- ✙ Grounded in Christ
 - ✙ Growing in Faith
 - ✙ Giving in Community
- 410-643-5921 www.ccpki.org**



A parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Easton



Captain Robert Falcon Scott, RN, wrote of Antarctic in his Journal on 17 January 1912:

“Great God! This is an awful place!”

Scott had expectations; detailed expectations are dangerous things for explorers to have. The value of exploration has as much to do with voyage as with destination, and success depends far more on finding something rather than confirming one’s suppositions.

The holidays are coming...days freighted with our memories of holidays past. In those memories are rooted our expectations of this season’s holidays. Holidays can bring joy, and holidays can be as hostile as Antarctica. We set ourselves up to expect something. When our expectations are not met, we, mimicking Scott, declare of the holidays: **“Great God! This is an awful place!”**

What expectations do you bring to your exploration of the days ahead? The taste of your grandmother’s latkes, when she’s been dead for 30 years? The wonder of midnight services that never quite achieve the mystery and reverential awe of your childhood?

Often, we want what our former holidays gave us so much that we cannot receive what our present holidays offer us. We savor the memory-distilled sweetness of then so much that now inevitably disappoints us, not because it isn’t good, but because it isn’t then. [The t-shirt maxim is true, you know: “The older I get, the better I was.”] We want the remembered event, (or we want to avoid the remembered event), so much that we miss the current possibilities.

How can we treasure memory and explore the present terrains of life? The best way to do this is to explore carrying memories to be added-to rather than replicated. Holidays do not attack us, intending us harm. We do that harm to ourselves and each other in the context of expectations and memories which may be too perfect ever fully to be achieved or reproduced.

Scott's expedition was doomed by his desire to have pre-conceived notions confirmed by circumstances of which he could have no accurate prior knowledge, and over which he could never have full control. We bring the same expectations to the holidays if we're not careful. The record suggests that Scott wanted to be a hero rather than an explorer. We can approach the holidays in the same confusion if we're not careful; it will produce "Scott-results"-freezing to death. The heroic triumph of the gift given, the party hosted, the family meal served may never measure up to the expectations with which we load them; we become like Scott, destination more important than journey.

Approach the holidays chastened by Robert Falcon Scott, who failed before he set foot on Antarctica only because he never really went there to explore anyway. The holidays are a voyage of exploration rather than a destination in our expectations. What will you discover? I pray it will be gentle time, substantive conversation, and authentic relationships....all of it more wonderful and holy than you ever could plan, imagine, or recall.

Have a great trip. God bless you!

FBC3+

*Merry Christmas and
a Happy, Healthy New Year
from the Staff of Christ Church Parish:
Fr. Frank, Gary, Brenda, Jane & Bob!*

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

As we approach the end of 2023, it is with such overwhelming gratitude that I write this message to you. During this year, we have made significant strides in outreach, growth, giving, family programs and ministry. There is not enough room in this entire newsletter for all of the names of those who have given so much of their time, talent and treasure to make Christ Church what it is today, a warm, welcoming beacon of light and love in this community.

Over the past few months, our stewardship campaign was undertaken with great hope and a little anxiety. The goal was set twenty thousand dollars higher than it had ever been. (Would parishioners respond? Were we too aggressive?) The answer to the Stewardship Committee was a resounding affirmation of the love and commitment to our church home and family. The response to the campaign was stunning and inspiring, Christ Church said YES!

Now, lest you think that this is all a slam dunk and we can just rest on our gift plan laurels, let me just gently remind you that gift plans are prayerful, loving intentions and not cash in hand, they also may go unfulfilled if the giver has an unforeseen situation that compromises their ability to contribute. For most of us who submitted one, they are budgeted out over weekly, monthly or quarterly contributions and cannot be counted on to be there at the onset. This is why we gratefully accept all plans large, small or after the campaign has ended regardless of the total previously received.

Planned giving represents only 75% of the budgeted revenue for the year and the balance, we pray, will be made up of unplanned giving or additional revenue sources. Even with that, we still have to work with a deficit budget which requires us to draw money from our Endowment funds. Deficit budgeting is not sustainable for the long term.

Which brings me to even more gratitude. Our unplanned giving was far higher than anticipated to date in 2023, expenses have been at or very close to expected, and, as I write this, we are nowhere near the deficit we had planned for this year. And, THAT is why I want you to know that everything you do for this parish counts, from the dollar that is put in the plate, to helping with

projects around the building, from volunteering with the soup group for a few hours to making a large donation. Everything helps us to continue in our mission to feed, love and bring comfort to our church family and the community around us, as we are fed, loved and comforted by God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

May God bless you all!

Lois Vanderbok, Sr. Warden

847-650-2680

srwarden@ccpki.org

VESTRY NOTES

The Soup Group is in desperate need of volunteers that are able to assist in the ministry in food prep, dishwashing, packaging, and distribution. They are in particular need of volunteers able to lift and move heavy pots. Please contact Lindy Coltharp at soup@ccpki.org for more information.

Columbarium Rules and Regulations were submitted to the Vestry by Charlie Schwan for the Broad Creek Cemetery. They were approved unanimously by the Vestry.

A 2024 budget (Ver. 9) was presented with a Recommendation from the Finance Committee to approve and adopt. The budget as presented was approved by the Vestry. It will be published at the Annual Meeting.

The final audit report to the diocese was submitted to the Diocese of Easton for all three entities of Christ Church (church, school and cemetery). Recommendations are being studied and implemented.

A Search Committee will be formed and charged to undertake a call for a new Rector in December. They will begin work with guidance from the Interim Rector in January of 2024.

Save these Dates:

Family Dinner

Sunday, December 3, 2023
5:30 p.m.

Westminster Ringers

Saturday, December 9, 2023
7:00 p.m.

SERVICE FOR THE LONGEST NIGHT

Sunday, December 17, 2023
5:00 p.m.

A Candle-lit Service for those experiencing grief and loss

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

December 24, 2023
4:00 p.m.

Family Christmas Eve Service

9:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist & Hymns

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

December 25, 2023
10:00 a.m.

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist

Christ Church Parish, Kent Island
presents a **Christmas concert** featuring

The Westminster Ringers



Back by popular demand! Hear this auditioned handbell ensemble play over 200 instruments to perform your favorite sacred and secular Christmas music.

Saturday, December 9th, 2023

at 7 p.m.

This concert is free and open to the public.

A free-will offering will be collected.



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www.ccpki.org ❖ 410-643-5921

Sun	Mon	Tue	We
3 Advent 1 8:00 Worship Service 10:00 Worship Service 5:30 Family Dinner 7:00 Youth Group	4 1:00 Cemetery Committee Meeting	5 5:30 EfM	6 10:00 Exec C 6:30 CECDS Christmas Pr 7:30 AA Meet
10 Advent 2 8:00 Worship Service 10:00 Worship Service 7:00 Youth Group	11	12 5:30 EfM	13 10:00 Exec C 7:00 Finance 7:30 AA Meet
17 Advent 3 8:00 Worship Service 10:00 Worship Service 5:00 Longest Night Service 7:00 Youth Group	18 6:30 Vestry Meeting	19 5:30 EfM	20 10:00 Exec C 7:30 AA Meet
24 Advent 4 Christmas Eve 10:00 Worship Service 4:00 Christmas Eve Svc 9:00 Christmas Eve Svc	25 Christmas 10:00 Christmas Day Service	26	27 7:30 AA Meet
Parish Office, Day School and Sou			
31 New Year's Eve 8:00 Worship Service 10:00 Worship Service			

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30 AA Meeting 7:30 Al-Anon Meeting	2 2:00 AA Meeting
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ing	28	29 7:30 AA Meeting 7:30 Al-Anon Meeting	30 2:00 AA Meeting
p Group Closed for the Holiday			

Emergency Emergencies, contact Father Frank Crumbaugh, Interim Rector ~ 609-709-3939

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Celebrating God's Gifts!

It is indeed a cause for celebration, with an abundant dose of gratitude! Our remarkable parish is once again generously demonstrating its passion to do God's will. **Many thanks** to everyone who has already shared their Gift Plans for 2024 and to those who will soon join in the celebration!



We have already received Gift Plans toward the Operating Fund from 75 families for \$190,834 – just over **100%** of our campaign goal! Very, very well done! **Thank you!**

Our mortgage balance is now \$122,891, down more than \$125,000 over the past twelve months. So far in our Celebrating God's Gifts Campaign, we have received sufficient Gift Plans from 56 families to cover all twelve mortgage payments in 2024. Our Finance Team is analyzing the impact of these remarkable numbers. However, it seems that, if all these planned gifts are fulfilled, we may be able to eliminate our mortgage debt in 2025. Once again, very, very well done! **Many, many thanks!**

With all this success, why you may ask, should I submit a Gift Plan if I haven't already done so? Consider, if you will, that our church funds its remarkable work on God's behalf with only three sources of funding:

What we **Give**,
What we **Earn**, and
What we **Take** from endowments.

To realize our mission and accomplish all that we want to do for our community, we have continued to spend more than we **Give** and **Earn**. Consequently, we are forced to **Take** from our endowments, the future of our church. This approach is unsustainable. Our leadership will need to carefully allocate our resources. Each of us will need to plan for and do what we can to help realize our collective dreams. Please refer to our Senior Warden's eloquent comments about this in this Newsletter. In the meantime, share with your friends in the gratitude for our success and join together in **Celebrating God's Gifts!**

NEWS ON CONTRIBUTIONS

As our pledge drive comes to a close, I was asked to give an update regarding the reissue of some envelope numbers. In the past, Christ Church ordered over 100 boxes of envelopes for parishioners, upwards of 200 boxes in a time long ago. With online donations and bank issued checks, we no longer need as many boxes of envelopes.

In an effort to save money and prevent most of the envelopes ending up in recycling (members leaving, not picking up their envelopes, etc., etc.), we have limited our order of envelopes to 50 boxes. Those who have numbers below 50 will keep their numbers. Those above 50 will be assigned a new number.

We want to be able to renumber accounts and have envelopes available before Christmas. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office. Your questions can be answered by Dennis Conrad, Treasurer, Kathy Christopher, Collections, or Brenda, Church Administrator.

Please add that it would be helpful to the counters if contribution checks displayed their giving number. It would be one less step in the process for counters.

Kathy Christopher

LAST CHANCE FOR A REALLY GOOD DEAL



Although the columbarium has yet to be delivered, at least as of mid November, we expect it by the end of the year. This is just a reminder that as of January 1, 2024, the price of a niche will increase from \$1750 to \$2500. As of mid November approximately 12 of the 36 niches have been spoken for.

So, if you've been thinking about purchasing a niche, now is a good time to contact Charlie Schwan (443-262-1074) to let him know.

BACKPACK WEEKEND MEALS FOR KIDS

WE ARE BLESS AND VERY, VERY GRATEFUL!

Every week during the school year, Christ Church and community volunteers gather on Thursday mornings to prepare, pack and deliver 175 bags of weekend food for food-insecure children in three schools. During the summer we support the QACPS Migrant Program and summer school sessions at the four Title I schools.

By the end of 2023, 25 energetic volunteers will have helped to plan for, prepare and deliver about 6,000 bags of weekend food to children in need.

Christ Church is part of a coalition of 10 churches that provide weekend meals for 630 children in every elementary and middle school in the county. We help coordinate the county-wide program and serve as a hub for delivery of Maryland Food Bank supplies used by the churches. The program is partially funded by Queen Anne's County and the churches provide the rest.

Through this work, our hands are reaching out to vulnerable children and families in our local community. We rely on the love and caring support of our volunteers who shop for and donate food, prepare and fill bags, deliver the food, and send in cash to help support this vital ministry.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU!!

Kathy Sells backpacks@ccpki.org 410-490-6042





*Haven Ministries is a coalition of Christian Churches
providing shelter, clothing, and food.*

The Haven Ministries homeless shelter is open. Christ Church has been asked to provide the following food for:

Saturday, December 16, Sunday, December 17 and Monday, December 18:

Breakfast

Milk - 1 gallon of 2%

Juice - 1/2 gallon

Breakfast sandwiches or bagels/cream cheese or
English muffins (sandwiches can be frozen)

Lunch

2 loaves of bread

2 pounds of lunch meat

1 package American cheese 8 oz. or larger

Cookies - single packages

Chips - single packages

Dinner

Casserole (cooked and ready to serve in foil pan)

Salad (bagged salad is fine)

Bread

Dessert - optional

All food should be delivered to kitchen door at Kent Island Methodist Church around 6:30 PM. We do not know number of guests yet (usually around 6) but we will have a definite number as we get closer to our dates.

If anyone is interested in volunteering on our scheduled nights, you are welcome to eat dinner with guests and enjoy some conversation or play games. Please arrive at 6:45 p.m. at the kitchen door. A staff member will meet you in the kitchen and direct you to the shelter. Two volunteers may help with serving dinner.

If you are able to help us out please contact Leslie Schneider at lschneider3@msn.com or 410-310-4085.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

CECDS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

A highlight for CECDS in November was celebrating Veterans Day with a special ceremony in the narthex of Shand Hall. The children made a flag with their handprints. We surrounded the flag with pictures of loved ones that served in the armed forces.

We began with a prayer followed by the pledge and the National Anthem sung by Tech Sargent May. We were fortunate to have a few of the children's fathers who served attend as well as our church sexton, Bob Moore. It was a very moving way to teach our children about gratitude, service to others and love for our country.

We have many fun events planned for December beginning with following Mary and Joseph on their journey to Bethlehem. The creche will be empty and the children will have to look each day to spot the progress of Mary and Joseph as they make their way to the creche.

CECDS will participate in the Wreaths Across America event. The children will watch the convoy leave the American Legion while waving American flags. We will introduce the concepts of honor and respect for our veterans and our country.

Our annual evening Pre-K Christmas program is scheduled for Wednesday December 6th at 6:30 in the Sanctuary. The rest of December will include Family Chapel, class Christmas parties and a special Christmas event called Night Tree where we will decorate trees with treats for our animal friends in the woods.

The CECDS children, families and staff wish you all a

Merry Christmas

from our hearts to yours!





OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

The CCPKI Outreach team met with Leanne Rhodes with *Tides of Grace, Inc.* about how we can help each other in our outreach efforts. *Tides of Grace* is a local 501C3 organization formed about a year ago. They are very active in Queen Annes County helping those in need through events such as Christmas Toys, Easter Baskets, Family Photos, Clothing Drives, Prom Dresses, etc. Working together will extend CCPKI outreach capabilities and increase our involvement in the community. Check out their website: www.tidesofgrace.org.



The next *Tides of Grace* outreach event is **CHRISTMAS MAGIC**. They are looking for new and slightly used toys. They also need volunteers to help with the event on December 2 at The Edge Arena in Stevensville.

If you would like to volunteer or donate toys, please go to the event website: www.christmasmagictoydrive.org to find toy drop-off locations and sign-up to volunteer.

CHILDREN'S WINTER COATS AND CLOTHING NEEDED



We have received a request for boy's and girl's winter coats and clothing, primarily in large and extra-large sizes. If you can help, please bring items to the church within the next week. There will be a donation box in the church narthex. THANK YOU!