

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SUNDAY ♦ DECEMBER 13, 2020 ♦ 9:45 AM



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY

www.christchurchtomsriver.org

HOW TO LISTEN IN TO THE LIVE TELE-SERVICE

DIAL: 712-770-5505
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WELCOME! AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING US FROM YOUR HOME FOR TODAY'S SERVICE!

WHILE WE ARE NOT ABLE TO PHYSICALLY COME TOGETHER TODAY FOR WORSHIP, WE APPRECIATE YOUR SPIRITUAL PRESENCE AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS SERVICE.

WE THEREFORE INVITE YOU TO REPLICATE MANY OF THE SAME PRACTICES THAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY DO IN A SUNDAY WORSHIP. FOR EXAMPLE, WE INVITE YOU TO SPEND SOME TIME IN QUIET PRAYER TO PLACE YOURSELF BEFORE THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD BEFORE THE SERVICE BEGINS.

DURING THE SERVICE, WE INVITE YOU TO PERFORM THE SAME GESTURES THAT YOU WOULD NORMALLY DO IN CHURCH (SIGN OF THE CROSS, BOWING, ETC.).

ALSO, IN THOSE PLACES IN THE SERVICE WHERE THE PEOPLE WOULD NORMALLY SAY A PRAYER (SUCH AS, THE COLLECT OF WELCOMING) OR RESPONSE (SUCH AS, "AND ALSO WITH YOU"), PLEASE SAY IT ALOUD.

YOUR PHONE IS MUTED BUT OUR VOICES WILL RISE TOGETHER IN AFFIRMING OUR FAITH. THANK YOU.

TODAY'S MINISTERS

CALL HOST: The Rev. Ted Foley

PRIEST: The Rev. Ryan Paetzold

DEACON: The Rev. Ted Foley

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Polly Moore

ORGAN/PIANO: Andrew Van Buskirk

CHOIR PARTICIPANTS: David Corbitt, John Jowett, Cathy O'Neill, Helene Phillips,
Eileen Schilling

LECTOR: Pam Quatse

INTERCESSOR: Helene Phillips

PRELUDE

Advent Chorale - Gelobet Seist Du, Jesus Christ

J. S. Bach

George Becker, organ

OPENING HYMN

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Hymnal 76

- 1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.*
- 2. Then cleansed be every breast from sin; make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home where such a mighty guest may come.*
- 3. For thou art our salvation, Lord, our refuge and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away like flowers that wither and decay.*
- 4. To heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore earth's own true loveliness once more.*
- 5. All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore and Holy Spirit evermore.*

THE WORD OF GOD

The people standing, as able, the Priest says

Priest Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Priest Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

People Amen

Please remain standing as able for the following

THE FIRST SONG OF ISAIAH

Refrain:

*Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.*

*Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say, Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name;*

Refrain

*Make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his name is exalted.
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world.*

Refrain

*Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy,
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel*

Refrain

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Priest The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Priest Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The following is read by the Intercessor; said by all

THE COLLECT OF WELCOMING

All Almighty and gracious God, we are your church, serving your mission. Lead us forth beyond our walls to seek out all people in our community, to invite and love them as Jesus would. Empower us to welcome to Christ Church all who are hurting or in need, all who are searching for you or for answers to life. Open our eyes to recognize each person as an individual sent by you who will enrich our lives. Transform us all into disciples of Christ. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The following is read by the Lector; said by all

PRAYER FOR THE SELECTION OF A RECTOR

All Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for Christ Church that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The people sit as the following is read by the Lector

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The following is read by the Deacon; said by all

PSALM 126

- 1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
- 4 The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negev.
- 6 Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

The following is read by the Lector

THE SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A Reading from Paul’s First letter to the Church in Thessalonika.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Please stand as able and face the Gospeler.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Deacon There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Please be seated.

REFLECTION

The Rev. Ryan Paetzold

HYMN

People, Look East

Wonder, Love & Praise 724, vs. 1-2, 4-5

Sung by Canto Deo Choirs

*1. People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the guest, is on the way.*

*2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the rose, is on the way.*

*4. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the star, is on the way.*

*5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

All stand, as able, as the Priest says the following

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* "catholic" here means the universal Church across time and place

The "Leader" is the Intercessor; the voice of the "people" is the Lector

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Deacon Let us pray for the church and the world.

Leader With all of our hearts and with all of our minds, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness."Gracious God, give strength to all your people as they work and witness in your world. Unite us in your truth and love, and help us to show our love to others. Make Christ Church an example of your love and mission. Let us pray...

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Leader We pray for justice and peace among all peoples. Give us strength to work for justice in our own communities. We pray for all terrorists and anyone contemplating acts of violence and murder. We pray for all the leaders of our country, especially Donald our President, Joe our President-Elect, Phil our Governor, for all leaders of the world and all those who are standing in the gap for our protection. Let us pray...

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Leader We ask your mercy and justice for all who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, oppressed, in prison, or in any kind of trouble. Let us pray...

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Leader God of healing, we pray for all those affected by natural and man-made disasters; for those who are sick and suffering; for those who struggle to care for a loved one; for those who are in pain or distress; for those who are serving our country; for those listed on our parish prayer list, and for those we name at this time.....Let us pray...

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Leader We pray for all who have died in the hope of rising again, for those who died serving our country, and those we name at this time Let us pray,

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Leader We thank you, God, for the blessing of this beautiful earth, for the spiritual gifts you have given us, for those blessings we now name...(wait)..., and for all the blessings in our lives. Let us pray...

People *Come, Lord Jesus, be our light in our darkness.*

Priest Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen. (BCP 820)

Priest Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP 826)

The Priest may add an additional closing collect.

THE CONFESSION *The people kneel, as able.*

Deacon Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

To be read by the Intercessor; said by all

All Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Priest Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

Please listen to the following prayer read by the Deacon.

PRAYER IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with all essential workers. Be with all emergency responders, law enforcement, and medical professionals who seek to help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of all people, particularly those who are poor and most vulnerable. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Adapted from prayer written by Kerry Weber, America Magazine

The following is read by the Priest; said by all

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**We use the modern translation of Lord's Prayer because it is closer to the Greek original text; particularly for the verse, Save us from the time of trial since God does not deliberately lead us into temptation.*

The ministries of Christ Church "thank you" for your continued giving during these times of uncertainty.

Your generous donations and pledges keep Christ Church moving forward.

Please continue to mail to Christ Episcopal Church (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753) or set up with your individual bank, a bill pay, to be directly submitted to Christ Church.

Please contact the Church Office via phone or email with any questions or concerns.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

The Priest invites the following prayer to be said by all:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving as I proclaim your resurrection. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please also read "Parish News" beginning on page 10 of this bulletin for additional information and news.

THE BLESSING

The Priest blesses the people

CLOSING HYMN

Soon and Very Soon

Lift Every Voice & Sing 14

- 1. Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!*
- 2. No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!*

3. *No more dying there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dying there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dying there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!*

4. *Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're are goin' to see the King!
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.*

THE DISMISSAL

The Deacon dismisses the people

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

POSTLUDE

Hark! a Thrilling Voice Is Sounding

William Henry Monk

John Keys, *organ*

+ + +

PARISH NEWS

(Titles in Red indicate a New or Updated Item)

THANK YOU FR. RYAN FOR BEING TODAY'S PRIEST! “Rev. Paetzold is a passionate social justice advocate and public theologian who has been a featured speaker at multiple events on issues of healthcare and immigration justice. Rev. Ryan Paetzold lives in Marlton, NJ with his art-educator wife, Katie, and son, Asher; their rather feisty, yet adorable cockatoo, Peach; as well as two very energetic Pomsky puppy sisters - Yuki and Nutmeg. Rev. Paetzold has led two nonprofit organizations, and has been a featured speaker at multiple events on social issues, including events on healthcare and immigration justice. He is pleased to be worshipping virtually with Christ Church this morning.”



DEACON TED'S QUOTE OF THE WEEK: In today's Gospel, John the Baptist says that he is not the light but came to testify to the light. It is like he is a window transmitting the light of Christ. The same is true for us. As we progress in the spiritual life it is as if the window all but disappears, allowing the Christ light to shine through us without hindrance (adapted from John of the Cross).

“THANK YOU” to all that donated towards the Thanksgiving Giving Tree with gift cards and monetary donations. A total of \$1,220 in various store gift cards and monetary donations were received in the month of November. Christ Church was able to bless many families both within our parish and in our close community who were in need of “help” this past Thanksgiving.

The **CHRISTMAS “GIVING” TREE** gift card collection is during the month of December. Christ Church hopes to collect additional gift cards so we may help more families in need during the Christmas holiday season. If you missed the Thanksgiving collection or wish to donate again, please mail or drop off to Christ Church (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753). For Christmas, suggested stores are Walmart and Target (please no Visa, etc.) as the majority of need is to provide a gift for a child or teen.

If you are currently not shopping at stores for health safety and still would like to contribute, checks payable to Christ Church with "Giving Tree" in the Memo are gladly accepted.

This Christmas will be different for each of us in various ways, as this very different year comes to a close. Many families in our church and community annually rely on other family and friends to have a “Merry” Christmas... due to Covid-19, such travel and larger gatherings will not be possible...and for many families, the loss of their job or the loss of their spouse who was the financial provided in the home, will make gift giving to children difficult or even impossible. Your gift card donations will help Christ Church provide Christmas blessings to such families in need this year. We "thank you" for your continued generosity this Christmas.

BLUE CHRISTMAS TELE-SERVICE: Christmas is not always a happy occasion, especially for those who have lost a loved one or who have suffered a tragedy of some kind. Life may look much different this year from last year. Loss of any kind is so difficult to handle during the holiday season, not to mention during a pandemic when you cannot safely be with others and receive hugs, etc.

For this reason, there will be a special “Blue Christmas” tele-service offered on **Saturday, December 19 at 3pm**. This is also the weekend of the winter solstice – the date of the longest night of the year. This Service of Solace marks the darkness, or the blue feelings that may come for some of us this time of year, especially this year. All are welcomed to call in to this service of prayers and remembering, grieving and acknowledgement of our losses. Join us...whether your loss is a loved one who died this year or many years ago...if it is the loss of your job, your home or a relationship...if it is just the abundance of not being able to participate and celebrate this entire pandemic year...join us, whatever your loss may be. Please invite relatives, friends or neighbors to participate as well; anyone who may be suffering a loss. This service is not just for Christ Church members. It is a special service offered to our community as a whole. **There will be a moment of lighting candles during the service, you are invited to light your own at home during the service. There will also be an opportunity for a two-minute sharing for those interested.** To call in for the service (it is suggested that you call-in a few minutes prior to the start time of a service), Dial: 712-770-5505 and Enter Access Code: 189853#

CHRISTMAS EVE & DAY SERVICES: The Rev. Petrina Pyatt will officiate Christmas Eve and Day services. Details of these services will be announced soon. Please stay tuned and be on look out for announcements of how you can join us from the safety of your home.

LET’S SING CHRISTMAS CAROLS! Christ Church will host a Christmas Carol Sing Along from the safety of our cars on Sunday, December 20th at 3:30 PM in the church parking lot. A list of Christmas Carols and their lyrics will be provided onsite, there will be a music director... we just need your voices to make this complete! Please sign up using this link <https://signup.com/go/KEmZoHn> so we now how many cars to expect. When you arrive, please follow the parking lot attendant to the next appropriate parking space and remain in your vehicle. Let us safely Come together ...let us be Merry and Rejoice! in the birth of Christ our Savior. Festive hats and decorated vehicles welcome! No rain/snow date.

THE FOOD PANTRY (updated 12/8/20) is going strong and remains open to anyone in need every Tuesday from 9:30am - 12pm. We have a few more items we're in need of at the Food Pantry now. The following are items asked for that we are currently out of now: 2% Honey Bunches of Oats Cereal — Cookies — Animal Cookies — Pancake Mix — Raisins — Peaches — Chilli (with and without beans) — Beefaroni (and other varieties) — Tomato Soup — Whole Tomatoes — Dried Black Beans — Rice — Mayo. If you would like to donate, please leave items on the table marked 'Donations' outside the lower door during Food Pantry open hours. Any questions, please text or leave a message for Claire at (732) 600-5709. Thank you! Please share and encourage any individual or Family in desperate need of food to visit us.

WE ARE IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS! If you are able to help 1,2 (or more) Tuesday mornings per month, please also contact Claire. She is happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you!

WEEKLY FINANCES: During the year 2020, we have budgeted \$5,635 to come from pledges and loose offerings each week. For the week ending December 4, we received \$8,887 in pledges.

2021 PLEDGES & OFFERING ENVELOPES: To date, we have received 70 pledges for 2021, totaling \$154,165. Thank you to everyone who has turned in their pledge cards. Offering envelopes for those of you who requested them on their pledge cards will be available for pickup at the church door next week on Wednesday, December 16, between 9 a.m. and noon, and Thursday, December 17, between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2020 must be received by the Church Office on or before, Sunday, January 3, 2021 in order to appear on your 2020 Contribution Statement. Thank you for your continued support of Christ Church.

DEAR PARISHIONERS & FRIENDS, Melissa and I would like to thank everyone who helped out during our Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) hosting week in November. As many of you know our families affected by homelessness are staying at the Day center on Lexington Avenue in Toms River. During our host week we supplied meals groceries and general support as needed. As always our support church, Second Baptist Church, provided meals on Monday and Friday. We still have the money from Lucas Maciel's fundraising to provide the families with dinners from Wendy's on Wednesday. They really appreciate that!! Because of your generosity in providing gift cards to the office we have been able to provide Christmas gifts and food for one of our families currently in the program.

A third family has joined the program since our hosting week so please keep them all in your prayers. I cannot imagine what it must be like to be homeless during the Christmas Holidays.

Until our churches open up again, we will continue to host families at the day center. This is not a permanent change and we hope to be back to our model of hosting at individual churches on a rotating basis as soon as feasible. When that happens we will need our full force of volunteers and hopefully many new volunteers to spread the joy of serving in this awesome ministry. Just a heads up, Interfaith Hospitality Network will be changing their name in the new year to Family Promise. Nothing else will change. We are just adopting the name of the national organization.

Thank you again for your faithful support of this important outreach ministry of Christ Church.

Faithfully,

Melissa Briggs and Dale Chant

CURRENT SCHEDULE OF CHRIST CHURCH SERVICES:

SUNDAYS, 9:45 AM — LIVE WORSHIP TELE-SERVICE *

Recordings of this Service are posted on the Church Website and Facebook page for listening at your convenience. The bulletin for this service is emailed weekly.

WEDNESDAYS, 10:00 AM — LIVE HEALING PRAYER TELE-SERVICE *

The bulletin for this service is emailed weekly.

FRIDAYS, 7:00 AM – LIVE MORNING PRAYER TELE-SERVICE *

This service can be followed on page 80 of your Book of Common Prayer or at <https://www.bcponline.org/>

BLUE CHRISTMAS: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 3:00 PM — LIVE TELE-SERVICE*

A Service of Remembrance & Hope, for those who find holiday rejoicing especially difficult this year. The bulletin for this service will be emailed.

CHRISTMAS EVE & DAY, (TBA)

Stay tuned for more details. The bulletins for these services will be emailed.

FOR THOSE WHO PREFER LISTENING IN SPANISH, The Sunday Gospel Reading, a Reflection and Prayers are available weekly on our Facebook page or WhatsApp. To join the WhatsApp group of Christ Church contact Deacon Jose: jmcantos5@hotmail.com

*** TO LISTEN TO A LIVE TELE-SERVICE:**

(It is suggested that you call-in a few minutes prior to the start time of a service)

Dial: 712-770-5505 and Enter Access Code: 189853#

If you have any difficulty, please email or call the church office (leave a voicemail).

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW: Dear Parishioners & Friends, As I was reflecting upon the past year, I had an idea about putting together a kind of anthology with pictures, poems, stories even limericks about what we have all been experiencing during these very strange but unique times. I'm thinking about this project as a way to connect with one another by sharing some of our personal experiences. Feel free to offer anything that feels right. Pictures of a zoom bingo or of something you have painted or crocheted or created or of masked events you have participated in... Just think of this as a way to share with each other how we have all been coping through these many months. No pressure either. Our submissions are for us alone. Your story does not need to be a literary jewel. No grades will be handed out. For those of us who continue to be involved in various ministries, a picture or a story about how we continue to "be the church" in and for our community, would be a perfect offering. (garden, food pantry, cafe, trunk or treat, worship offerings, parking lot yard sale, IHN) ... our project will need a name. Please include ideas for naming this "thing" we are going to create. Finally, I'd like to put this altogether to share sometime in January, so if you can submit anything you'd like by December 21, that would be awesome. Please send written stories as a pdf if possible. My email is dalechant@ymail.com
Blessings and peace to all, Dale

CONVERSATION & COMPLINE continues every other Saturday (12/12, 12/26, 1/9) at 7pm via Zoom.

In this sharing, interested members of the parish chat about a given topic, such as what books you're reading, TV shows you particularly enjoyed, or any blessings or challenges which unfolded for you in the last week... and then end the evening with compline. We would love to see you (and your favorite beverage!) at this virtual fellowship
The Discipleship Team also offers **BIBLE STUDY, FOLLOWED BY COMPLINE**, is every other Saturday (12/19, 1/2) at 7:00pm on Zoom. This is the same group that brings you "Conversation and Compline" (mentioned above) on alternate Saturdays. Now we will get together every Saturday and alternate between the two activities. event. **To Join the above mention Saturday Zoom Meetings:**

1. via internet with (option of both audio and visual) click use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87001507163>

AND ENTER PASSCODE: 123963

2. by telephone (audio only) Dial: 1-646-558-8656 AND enter **Meeting ID: 87001507163 and Passcode: 123963.**
Any questions, please contact Gail Miller gailkeatingmiller@gmail.com or 732 814-8357.

WEEKLY MONDAY EVENING VIRTUAL "COFFEE HOUR" FROM 7-8PM*

Join this Zoom Meeting Here! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/94333201452> AND ENTER PASSCODE: 169772

OR Dial by Phone (audio participation only): 1 646 558 8656

And then enter the Meeting ID: 943 3320 1452 AND THEN ENTER PASSCODE: 169772

For those not familiar with ZOOM, it is a video chat room/meeting space. If you have a phone or computer with video/camera functions, you will be able to join in and SEE the faces of your Church Family as well as show us your face. If you are not interested in being visible, having your video off is an option.

If you do not have or are not comfortable using a computer or internet, you can still participate by calling in on your phone. You will still be able to listen and speak to everyone else participating (but you will not have a visual). We look forward to "seeing" your faces in these virtual Coffee Hours as we take this opportunity to say "Hello!" and "How are you?" If you need any help, please let us know!

COVID-19 DISCRETIONARY FUND: The COVID-19 Fund Committee has been considering the situation of low income families and the possibility of virtual, remote or hybrid learning this year. We want to make sure that all students have the resources to create a healthy and productive learning environment. If you know of a child that has a need for any such items (computer, high speed internet access, books, office supplies, etc.) please contact one of the clergy or leave a message at the church office. *

While everyone's life has been impacted by the coronavirus, we have become aware of several people in our parish who have already lost their jobs and income and are in dire need of emergency assistance. Also, as this disaster continues, we expect that more jobs will be affected. For this reason we are setting up a Coronavirus Discretionary Fund. This fund will provide emergency assistance to people affected by this disaster. If you are in need of emergency assistance, please contact one of the clergy (Mother Petrina, Deacon Jose, or Deacon Ted). If you are able to contribute to this fund, please send a check to Christ Church (415 Washington St. Toms River, NJ 08753) with "Coronavirus Fund" in the memo. A restricted account has been established specifically for this purpose. May God bless us all. We will get through this together. ****As of December 10, the COVID-19 Fund stands at: Contributions: \$23,155.50; Disbursements: \$15,279.64**

BIRTHDAY CLUB: We all have one day of the year that is just for us; it's our birthday. We may celebrate in grand style with family and friends singing that special song, eating cake and GETTING gifts; or we may choose to celebrate in a quiet fashion. However you choose to celebrate, it is YOUR special day. The Endowment and Stewardship Committees have come up with another way to celebrate this day. How about GIVING a gift that will KEEP ON GIVING? Each year on your birthday, we are inviting you to join the Birthday Club by writing a check in the amount of your age to Christ Church, which will be deposited into the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is invested with the diocese. By giving to this fund on your birthday, you will be contributing to the day-to-day life of the parish as well as the future of Christ Church. It is truly a gift that will keep on giving! How can you donate? Simply write out a check for the amount of your age, put Birthday Club in the memo and put it in the offering plate, mail it or drop it off to the office mailbox. So that we can all watch our gifts grow, we will update you on what we have received. We look forward to celebrating each of your birthdays! The current total for the month of December is \$80 (1 birthday)!

**CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
415 Washington Street Toms River, New Jersey 08753
www.ChristChurchTomsRiver.org**