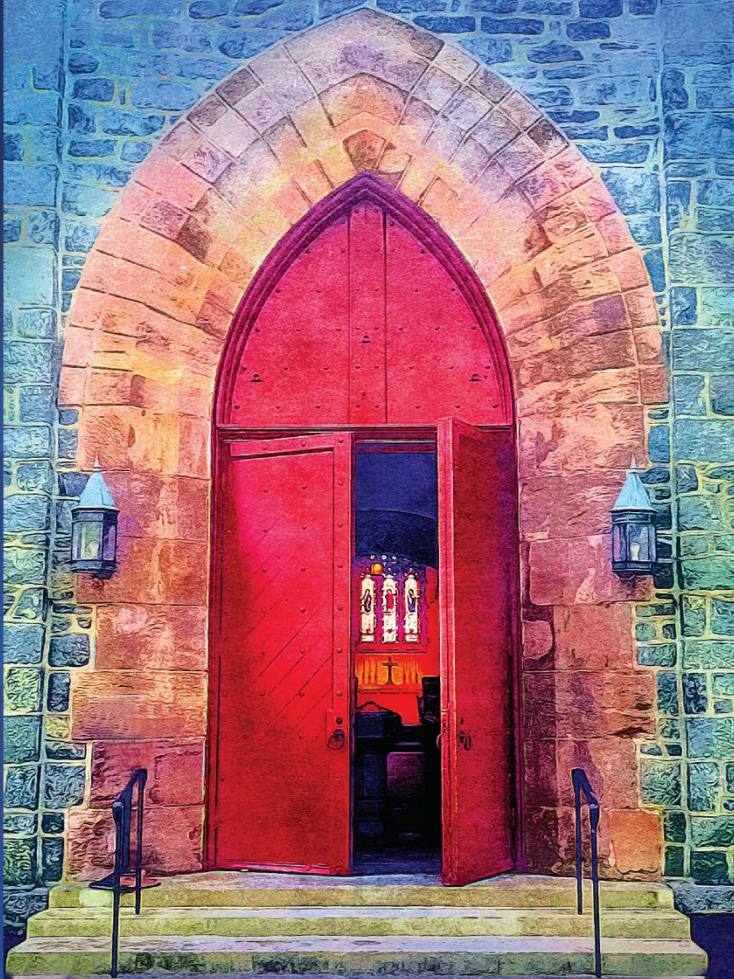


CHRIST CHURCH  
CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

*There is a Place*  
for YOU here



A place for inspiration,  
celebration, sharing,  
service, and worship where  
all are welcome!

REPORTS FOR  
THE PARISH OF  
CHRIST CHURCH  
CHRISTIANA  
HUNDRED

AT THE 176<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL  
MEETING  
MAY 2024

## A REPORT FOR THE PARISH COMMUNITY

At the 175<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Christ Church Christiana Hundred a year ago, the vestry, wardens, and strategic planning team were glad to announce the adoption of a five-year strategic plan that supports a clear mission for the parish.

*Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, Christ Church welcomes you into a loving and joyful community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ.*

The plan has three goals that have guided the work of the ministries, committees, and staff of our congregation.

- 1. We will grow our Episcopal faith community with God's help.*
- 2. We will grow deeper relationships with God and with each other, following Jesus Christ.*
- 3. As stewards of the gifts that God entrusts to us, we will faithfully manage and share our property, financial resources, and the time and talents of our members to support our ministries in and beyond Christ Church.*

I am pleased to make a report of our work toward these goals over the past year. Even with one hundred pages, it would be impossible to capture the fullness of our ministry, our service to God and to others in Jesus' Name. Instead of a written summary, it has been our practice for many years to use our website, which contains a wealth of information about the parish, and the spotlight in our communications to lift up our many ministries, one each week. But this year, I have asked the clergy and program staff to summarize their ministries in this report to the parish (pgs. 3-8). Their work addresses the first two goals of our strategic plan. While these will not be shared in presentations at the 176<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, I think it valuable for each of your staff to offer a report on the work they have accomplished and future efforts they anticipate. In addition, a report on our preschool and another on my ministry are included (pgs. 15-19).

There are two reports in this document that address the third strategic goal and represent the presentations made to the parish at the Annual Meeting on May 19 (pgs. 9-14). The finance and property committees oversee the wise management of our resources and report to the vestry every month and the parish every year. At the end of this report are two slides related to our strategic plan from the renovation team and our senior warden (pgs. 20-21).

There are many other ministries that are not mentioned in this document that aid our parish in being a loving and joyful community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. To learn of them, visit the website or call the parish office, and we can connect you with their leaders.

Thank you for your part in Christ Church Christiana Hundred's 176 years of ministry.

Faithfully,



Ruth L. Beresford  
15<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church Christiana Hundred



## ***Christ Church Christiana Hundred***

### ***Our Mission***

Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, Christ Church welcomes you into a loving and joyful community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

### ***Our Core Values***

**Belonging:** There is a place for you here.

**Care:** We support each other and those in need.

**Community:** We nurture relationships and connections where all of God's children can experience love, hope, and peace.

**Episcopal Faith:** The Episcopal tradition guides our worship, spiritual development, and church life.

**Growth:** We celebrate and encourage lifelong spiritual development of children, youth, and adults.

**Sacred Experiences:** We appreciate the beauty and holiness of our shared life, liturgy, music, and grounds.

**Service:** Following Jesus' example, we love and serve our neighbors by sharing our time, talent, and treasure.

### ***Our Key Goals for the Next Five Years***

**We will grow our Episcopal faith community with God's help.**

- By year-end 2027, we will have more than 2,000 active members, a 50% increase since 2022, by inspiring current members, re-engaging inactive members, and attracting new members, especially families with children and youth.

**We will grow deeper relationships with God and with each other, following Jesus Christ.**

- By year-end 2027, weekly worship attendance will have grown to 775 (this includes all services offered through the week), and participation in our program offerings for children, youth, and adults will average 150 children, 70 youth, and 470 adults engaged.
- Our Ministry Match implementation will have energized our members in caring for one another and supporting parish ministry, and our next generation of lay leadership will be in place.
- We will be known as a church that serves in our local community, sharing our time, financial support, and Jesus' message of hope, love, and self-worth to those disadvantaged by poverty and underserved in education.

**As stewards of the gifts that God entrusts to us, we will faithfully manage and share our property, financial resources, and the time and talents of our members to support our ministries in and beyond Christ Church.**

- By year-end 2027, we will have monthly events that draw people to our campus, both for CCCH programs and for use by the local community.
- We will ensure the sustainable stewardship of our parish for future generations through our commitment to pledging, our care for the master property management plan, and our efforts to expand legacy giving to strengthen our endowment.



## REPORT FROM THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR

*“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God’s mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” – Romans 12:1-2*

It is my honor and pleasure to serve with you in this corner of God’s vineyard. Every week, you present yourself as a living sacrifice to the glory of God. Your dedication to the spread of the gospel and sharing love and joy throughout our community inspires my ministry in the areas of outreach, adult formation, newcomer evangelism, and the preschool.

This past year, I am proud of our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary service project with Lutheran Community Services (LCS). Our collaboration with LCS began with a generous parish gift of \$175,000 to build school-based food hubs in food insecure communities in Wilmington. We have monthly opportunities to serve people in need through LCS, from packing food bags to painting and assembling food hub spaces. In 2023, the outreach committee allocated \$189,700 to twenty-one community agencies. We continue to offer many service options for the parish, including meal preparation for Emmanuel Dining Room and Family Promise, among other opportunities. Please contact me to offer your time and talents for service in Jesus’ name.

Christ Church’s adult formation ministry continues to renew and transform minds. Weekly and monthly small groups form us as disciples throughout the year. Midweek formation gathered fifty people each Wednesday in Lent to discuss God’s presence in the world’s suffering. Recently, the Rev. Stacey Carpenter spearheaded a collaboration with St. Barnabas Church to show *The Philadelphia Eleven* documentary that featured conversation with the Rev. Nancy Wittig, one of the first eleven women ordained to priesthood in the Episcopal Church. On Saturday, June 1, the Rev. Scott Gunn, executive director of Forward Movement, will lead a half-day workshop on devotional writing as a spiritual practice. We hope to use our experience with Scott to launch a parish daily devotional for Advent 2024. Later this fall, we plan to host the Very Rev. Dr. Robert Willis, a leading voice in Anglicanism and Dean Emeritus of Canterbury Cathedral. More details of his visit will come in the time ahead.

We continue to welcome new people to life at Christ Church. Last August, we held our first invitation workshop to help us build the skills and confidence to invite people to Christ Church. More invitation workshops will occur in the year ahead. In four sessions this past year, we have welcomed 43 people to church membership through *Belong*, our gathering that helps new people find belonging in the life of Christ Church. They have brought with them 14 family members who are a part of our community. Many newcomers come to us from the preschool, and I am proud of this connection. It is a weekly highlight to help lead the preschool in chapel and the high point of every day to see my son learning and growing alongside friends in a safe, God-filled environment.

I’m grateful for the opportunity to serve among you as the associate rector of Christ Church. I pray for the continual transformation and renewal of our hearts and minds through the incredible richness of God’s grace.

Your faithful servant in Jesus Christ,

The Rev. Michael B. E. Kurth  
Associate Rector



## REPORT FROM THE PRIEST ASSOCIATE

### **A Year of Spiritual Growth: Uncovering, Recovering, and Discovering God**

I have been blessed to be engaged in ministry that facilitates uncovering, recovering, and discovering God. These ministries include pastoral care, the LGBTQ ministry, the ministry of pilgrimage, and intercessory prayer.

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care at Christ Church demonstrates our Christian care and hospitality to people in need within and beyond the Christ Church family. The impact of the eight active pastoral care ministries has been far-reaching with a small and mighty team made up of less than 40 people. In the past year of care, there were 400 flower deliveries, 100 notes of care written, 50 lay Eucharistic Visitor services, and 150 people attended Elder Ministry luncheons and the new monthly Coffee and Conversation gatherings.

We honor the dedicated service of four leaders who are retiring this year from the PMT team: Fran Bayard, Sheila Bourgeault Dowdy, Nan Jackson, and Lynne Swartz. Their commitment has been the cornerstone of our pastoral care.

Looking ahead, the pastoral care team will focus on accomplishing the goals set forth in the strategic plan, which include expanding the team of lay leaders who provide pastoral care and working to develop formation programs that will support people through life transitions.

### **Pilgrimage—Walking the Way of St. James**

In the fall of 2023, I led a group of fifteen pilgrims to walk a portion of the Camino de Santiago. It was a pilgrimage that many said felt like a re-discovery of one's relationship with God, themselves, and the world. A highlight of the trip was our celebration of Holy Eucharist at the end of the walk. It was held in a hotel conference room with a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine, and for one of the pilgrims, it was her first Eucharist in her life. My fervent hope is to lead a Camino pilgrimage in 2025. Stay tuned for more information!

### **Health and Wellness—Recovery Ministry**

A ministry that is near and dear to Christ Church and my heart is our recovery ministry. Christ Church hosts three Twelve-Step meetings, including the oldest AA Twelve Step meeting in Wilmington. In September 2023, we hosted our second annual Recovery Eucharist in which we welcomed 80 people, most from outside of the Christ Church community.

Looking ahead, we will continue to build out our recovery offerings by hosting our third annual Twelve-Step Recovery Eucharist in September, which is Recovery Month. We are also partnering with Limen Recovery + Wellness to identify opportunities for our two organizations to work together, which includes leading workshops and identifying service opportunities.

As I do in so many of my sermons, I leave you with some homework and a question. The homework is to either go back and review your Ministry Match results or complete Ministry Match if you have not done so yet. If you find a match with one of the ministries in this report and would like to explore joining us, please reach out to me. We need you and the gifts you have to share. I hope this report has provided you with a sense of the great joy and blessing of ministry that is grounded in uncovering, recovering, and discovering God.

God's peace,

The Rev. Stacey Carpenter  
Priest Associate



## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

The 2023-24 season for the music program here at Christ Church felt as though it was our first truly “more normal” season since the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time since 2020, our choirs were not interrupted in their work to lead the music for our liturgies and to present music in concert—it was a blessed relief.

Our chorister program has flourished under the direction of Dr. Jo Harney, reaching in number and in quality heights not seen in our music ministry with children since well before the pandemic. There is a report about the chorister activities offered by their director, Jo Harney, that follows this report.

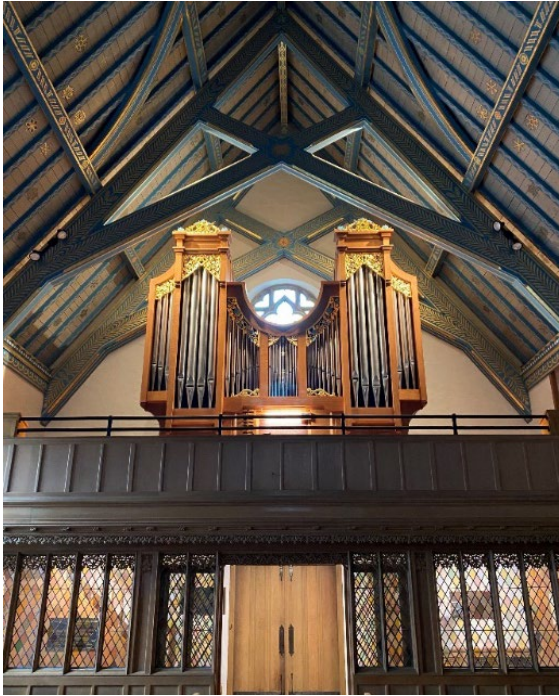
This season also marked the return of the Parish Choir (formerly the St. Cecilia Choir), which affords non-professional singers in our parish the opportunity to sing together. Joined by members of the Christ Church Choir, they have led services at 10:30 AM on Sundays, for special holidays, and for Choral Evensong. They are also the principal support of the senior choristers as they expand their repertoire into the wealth of great music composed for four parts (and more). We currently have six musicians joining in the fun and hope to welcome more in the coming season. The Parish Choir is designed to be a Sunday only choir to afford the greatest ease of participation. Anyone interested in learning more about the Parish Choir should contact me in the parish office.

The Christ Church Choir continues to mature as an ensemble, reaching wonderful musical heights and being the principal ensemble of Christ Church. They have faithfully staffed our liturgies, including the additional chapel Choral Evensongs on the third Sunday of the month and Lessons & Carols for each liturgical season. They have excelled in their concert work, bringing literally hundreds of non-parishioners onto our campus to experience Christ Church. Certainly, the Christmas concerts with John Rutter far exceeded our expectations and garnered enthusiastic acclaim from non-parishioners and parishioners alike. Then, two short months



later, the Christ Church Choir performed one of the most sublime concerts of the Duruflé *Requiem* in memory. What a tremendous gift they are to this parish. June 16<sup>th</sup> will see the Choir singing Choral Eucharist (11 AM) and Choral Evensong (3 PM) at iconic St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue in New York City. This will mark their first time singing in NYC, and we are presenting music closely associated with Christ Church.

The Christ Church Choir saw the retirement of four long-term devoted musicians last year in January 2023: Assistant Organist David Hearn, soprano Kathryn Hearn, alto Sheila Bourgeault Dowdy, and tenor Dana Robertson (RIP+). David, Kathryn, and Sheila still help with the choir, and we see them singing regularly. Since David’s retirement, we have been without an assistant organist, though he has assisted over the past year and a half regularly. We have recently begun the search for a new Assistant Organist and Choirmaster. Our hope is to have someone in place by September.



This was the first full program year to incorporate the Chapel's organ, Fisk Opus 164, in our worship and concert offerings. Musicians delight in discovering its voice, so perfect for the chapel's intimate reverence. Douglas Cleveland and I played recitals, and Jo Harney, David Hearn, and I have all supported worship and the congregation's singing through the liturgical year. One additional opportunity has been to provide music for the noonday service once a month when the Elder Ministry offers its fellowship programming.

The music program of Christ Church has been a mainstay of this congregation for over 100 years. With even greater focus on our strategic goals, the program welcomes visiting artists and ensembles who, in turn, draw hundreds of people to our campus each year. New plans are afoot to connect our "Invite, Welcome, Connect" ministry to those programs and events.

As I plan for next year's ministry of music, we hope to offer concerts and worship that inspire a deeper connection with God for us all and draw more guests and visitors up Buck Road to discover sacred experiences here. I am pleased to announce that the Christ Church Choir will be making another pilgrimage to England in July 2025, to serve as the choir in residence at York Minster. This year's music brochure will describe those opportunities in detail just before September.

None of these achievements would be possible without the dedication of our choirs' members, young and not so young, our congregation, and our rector, Ruth Beresford. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

Bruce Barber  
Director of Music



## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHORISTERS

In the 9 AM ARK service on May 12, 2024, we acknowledged the work of all the Christ Church Choristers over the past year. They have been faithful in attendance, embraced their role as leaders in worship, and worked hard to become better musicians. They have all engaged with great seriousness in the Royal School of Church Music's *Voice for Life!* chorister training program, and their individual achievements are represented in the ribbons and medallions they wear when singing. In gratitude for their service, each was presented with a certificate acknowledging their dedication to this ministry of Christ Church.

We emphasized the word "service" in this recognition because what they do is not "performance" or "show" but a true contribution to the worship of each Christ Church parishioner. Learning to be servants in the church is a vital element of Christian formation, and it is a privilege to share this experience with our choristers.

This past year, our Choristers have sung Sunday services in the 9 AM ARK service, the principal service at 10:30 AM, and at Choral Evensong at 4 PM both in the Chapel and in the Church, by themselves and with the Parish and Christ Church Choirs. They have truly made remarkable strides, and we are all very proud of them.

Jo Harney  
Director of Choristers







## REPORT FROM THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Our children and youth ministry this past year would not have been possible without our amazing and dedicated volunteers. Volunteers are always important to this ministry, but this past year they were tasked with keeping the program alive and running while there was no dedicated staff member. Many took on more than they signed up for and went above and beyond so there was something to hand over once I started my ministry. Without our wonderful volunteers, my job would be much harder, and I am so grateful to have them supporting me and this ministry.

My first two months in this role have been very busy but equally rewarding. I have had the privilege of leading our High School Youth Group and starting to build that program up more. When I first got here, our Youth Group was focused on staying alive and viable, and in just a short time, I am happy to report that they have grown to be much more. On Sunday evenings, the group has begun to settle into a routine. We break bread and share a meal together, play games, then gather for a time of spiritual formation through lessons and discussion together. We have just finished our first series learning about supporting roles in the Old Testament and had our first event where we went bowling.

This summer I will be accompanying our youth on the annual Dominican Republic mission trip. I am incredibly excited for this opportunity to serve the community of Jalonga and to build deeper relationships with the 13 young people who will be attending. The mission trip is only the start of the summer, and I have a lot of plans that I can't wait to share and enjoy with everyone.

I have also been busy meeting the children of the Christ Church community. I have been helping lead chapel for our preschoolers and visiting preschool, Godly Play, and youth formation classes. As these programs end, I have been planning for next year by studying our Godly Play curriculum and familiarizing myself with executing it. Alongside the new Children and Youth Ministry Team, I am working to put together an organized and intentional long-term curriculum schedule for all our youth formation classes so that classes aren't repetitive and that what is being taught in class is sticking with the children, following them home, and staying with them for the rest of their lives.

My short time here at Christ Church has been such a blessing, and the work has been so rewarding. In the coming year, I will continue to invest in our youth group by planning events such as a fall retreat to help grow our community in number and in faith. I will continue to work alongside the newly formed Children and Youth Ministry Team to strengthen our programming and make it the best it can possibly be. We will be having a Godly Play info/training session on June 1, where a master Godly Play storyteller will provide a "show and tell" for parents and encourage myself and our teachers in offering an effective and impactful Godly Play session. This, combined with further study of the curriculum, will ready me for leading Godly Play sessions with our preschool and our Sunday school classes.

I have met so many in the Christ Church community, and I look forward to continuing to meet new people over the next year. I will work my hardest to guide the children and youth of Christ Church down the right path and feeding them spiritually while also growing and learning myself. I can't wait to see what the future has in store for me and my ministry here at Christ Church.

Mason Cruz

Minister for Children and Youth



## 2023-2024 PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT

At our 176<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the parish, our assistant treasurer, Bob Reardon, provides a review of our financial resources and management. His report includes:

1. The status of our endowments and assets held by the parish, including:
  - Endowment Funds (March 2024 value is \$12,602,276), which are assigned for an area of ministry like capital projects or the choir, either at the donor’s request or by the designation of the vestry.
  - Temporary/Restricted Funds (March 2024 balance is \$1,277,217), which are designated funds given and expended for a particular purpose like the capital improvements fund or the concert fund, or are temporary in nature like deposits for a pilgrimage.
  - Pension Fund (March 2024 value is \$782,947), which was established for the lay members of CCHC staff before The Episcopal Church provided a 401(3)b. This fund supports current retirees and a future retirement for one of our staff.
  - Property Value (March 2024 value is \$6,566,497). The Book Value of our buildings and grounds is nearly \$16 million, but accumulated depreciation of \$9,141,040 provides the above net of \$6.5 million.
  
2. A review of the 2023 budget. To close a small deficit, the vestry authorized use of contingency funds.

2023 FINANCIAL RESULTS			
INCOME		EXPENSE	
Pledges	\$ 1,534,913	Giving Beyond CCHC	\$ 422,633
Plate	\$ 26,460	Adults, Children, & Youth Formation	\$ 18,346
Endowment & Investment	\$ 558,119	Worship & Music	\$ 152,810
Gifts & Bequests	\$ 69,903	Online Worship	\$ 24,419
Preschool Allocation & Transfers	\$ 311,086	Parish Outreach Ministry	\$ 92,431
Green Show & Special Offerings	\$ 128,460	Fellowship, Pastoral Care, & Other Programs	\$ 39,308
Miscellaneous Income	<u>\$ 58,751</u>	Administration (Salaries & Staff Support)	\$ 1,398,902
		Administration (Communications, Risk Management, & Other)	\$ 178,209
		Utilities	\$ 116,070
		Property Management & Related Expenses	\$ 231,254
		Contingency Funds	<u>\$ 13,310</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 2,687,692</b>	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 2,687,692</b>

ANNUAL MEETING — MAY 19, 2024

3. A review of 2024 ministry budget approved by the finance committee and vestry. The budget may be viewed on the parish website, [www.christchurchde.org/finances](http://www.christchurchde.org/finances), and in the slide images that follow.

## 2024 Ministry Budget Adopted by Vestry

### INCOME

Pledges	\$ 1,636,132
Plate	\$ 26,500
Endowment & Investment	\$ 543,453
Gifts & Bequests	\$ 66,779
Preschool Allocation & Transfers	\$ 264,445
Green Show & Special Offerings	\$ 139,000
Miscellaneous Income	<u>\$ 60,700</u>

**Total Income**                    **\$ 2,737,009**

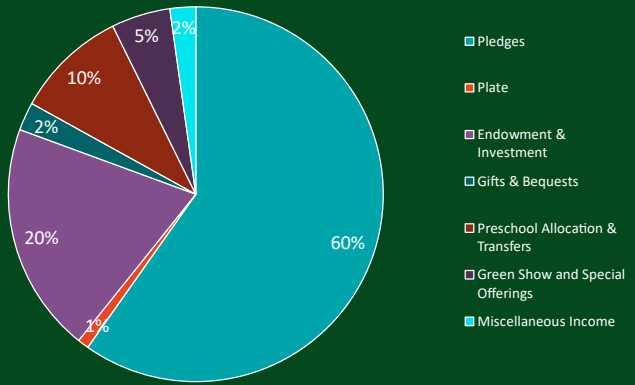
### EXPENSE

Giving Beyond CCCH	\$ 424,052
Adults, Children, & Youth Formation	\$ 22,000
Worship & Music	\$ 161,040
Online Worship	\$ 26,000
Parish Outreach Ministry	\$ 57,000
Fellowship, Pastoral Care, & Other Programs	\$ 39,334
Administration (Salaries & Staff Support)	\$ 1,475,991
Administration (Communications, Risk Management, & Other)	\$ 176,472
Utilities	\$ 115,482
Property Management & Related Expenses	\$ 234,038
Vestry Discretion/Contingency Funds	<u>\$ 5,600</u>

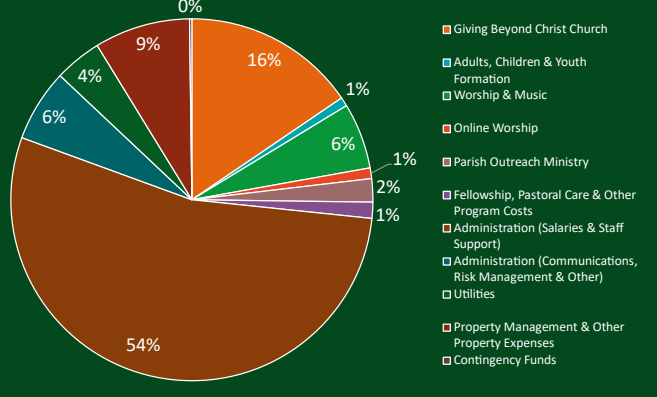
**Total Expense**                    **\$ 2,737,009**

ANNUAL MEETING                    – MAY 19, 2024

### PROJECTED INCOME FOR 2024



### PROJECTED ALLOCATIONS IN 2024



4. A report of the 2024 first quarter results in our stewardship of the parish finances. That report can be found on the next page and on our website, [www.christchurchde.org/finances](http://www.christchurchde.org/finances).

#### Committee Members

Derek Anderson	Allison Ayers
Christine Cook	Hardy Drane
Sherri Howell*	Bill Jones
Ted Ledden*	Jaqueline Whalen*
Mark Parsells, Treasurer	
Bob Reardon, Assistant Treasurer	
Chip Sawyer, CCEP Treasurer	
Suzanne Smith, Junior Warden	
Marissa Stipa, Convener	
Ruth Beresford, Rector <i>ex officio</i>	
Terri Carpe, Finance Manager <i>ex officio</i>	

*\*Appointed from vestry*



## PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT

Results through March 31, 2024

	2024 YTD Actual	2024 Seasonal Budget	Actual vs Seasonal Budget	2023 YTD Actual	2024 Actual vs 2023 Actual
<b>Income</b>					
Pledges	600,548	544,685	55,864	482,656	117,892
Plate Collection	8,150	6,625	1,525	6,948	1,202
Endowment & Investment Income	80,220	82,609	(2,389)	129,119	(48,899)
Expected Gifts & Bequests	7,625	7,143	482	7,669	(44)
Special Offerings	116,754	120,625	(3,871)	91,230	25,524
Transfer/Rental/Other Income	63,407	26,425	36,982	41,367	22,040
Contingency Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>876,704</b>	<b>788,111</b>	<b>88,593</b>	<b>758,989</b>	<b>117,715</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Outreach/Giving Beyond the Parish	186,253	190,500	(4,247)	161,540	24,713
Parish Programs	109,357	81,294	28,063	85,712	23,645
Administration	370,775	405,563	(34,788)	402,856	(32,081)
Buildings & Grounds	75,779	86,505	(10,726)	80,852	(5,073)
Contingency/Vestry Allocation	5,600	-	5,600	-	5,600
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>747,764</b>	<b>763,862</b>	<b>(16,098)</b>	<b>730,960</b>	<b>16,805</b>
<b>Income Less Expenses</b>	<b>128,940</b>	<b>24,249</b>	<b>104,691</b>	<b>28,030</b>	<b>100,910</b>

First quarter results for Christ Church were very sound. Several factors combined to cause income to exceed expenses by approximately \$130,000. A number of families fulfilled their pledge for the entire year in the quarter (the Finance Committee welcomes and encourages this practice). Administration was \$35,000 under budget due to open staff positions, which have since been filled or are expected to be filled in the near future. As the year unfolds, expenses are expected to track closer to budget.

**We thank you for your contributions to Christ Church Christiana Hundred this year.** If you have not yet pledged your financial support for 2024, please join us by contacting Mike Sayer in the parish office at (302) 655-3379. If you have questions or recommendations regarding our financial management, please speak with the treasurer, wardens, rector, or any member of the vestry and finance committee. Call the parish office for contact information or visit [www.christchurchde.org/finances](http://www.christchurchde.org/finances) for additional reports. The finance committee is committed to transparency in our financial stewardship—the management of the resources that fuel our ministry.



## PROPERTY COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

### First Impression – Lasting Impact

Last year, when I presented the property committee report at the Annual Meeting, I framed the presentation around the collective memory we all have regarding our “first impression” of Christ Church. This year, with our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration behind us, we want to share with you how the property committee is not only doing what it can to ensure a great first impression for visitors and guests but that our work has a “lasting impact” for generations to come.

Our signature project last year was the installation of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary walkway in September. We worked with Dan Grover, the talented stone mason who had previously done the stonework as part of the Chapel renovation. Dan spent days piecing together the centerpiece of the walkway with the inlaid cross that matches the cross in the window above our new organ in the Chapel of the Christ Child. The finished walkway is beautiful and certainly looks as if it has been part of our property for many years. We know it will be enjoyed for many years to come.

While the walkway and new plantings around the church were our signature effort in 2023, we want to share with you a brief rundown of each of the components of our campus. As a reminder, the property committee is tasked with maintaining both the physical property and land across the campus. We do so with an approximate \$150,000 annual capital budget.

#### **The Church** *Completed in 1856 – Project cost: \$23,000*

Not surprisingly, the centerpiece of our efforts is the maintenance of the main church building and its systems. While the initial cost of the church was modest...at least by today’s anticipated “replacement value”—work on the church has been ongoing for 175 years. A few of the more noteworthy improvements over the years—the balcony in 1957, the renovation with the organ installation in 1990, and the wings that were added for the new entry and main floor bathroom in 2007. This spring we repainted the interior of the church and various rooms in the undercroft.



#### **The Rectory** *Completed in 1939 - Project cost: \$41,600*

Like all homes, the gracious house that our rector resides in has undergone renovations since its construction on our campus. There is a long list of improvements that have been made to ensure the property is suitable for a family in the 2020’s rather than the 1950’s. This year’s project is to stain the wooden porch deck.

**Squirrel Run Cottage** *Acquired in 1987 with 11 acres – 1990 Renovation cost: \$325,000*

This was a priceless gift to the church, but the house was in rough shape. According to Andy Marine, the basement was completely filled with coal that was dug out and removed by some very capable Boy Scouts. Over the years, the cottage was a home for assisting clergy and lay staff, but in recent years, and with additional updates, Squirrel Run has been a rental property providing revenue for each annual budget.

**The Sexton’s House**

The Sexton’s House was originally designed as a single-family home but was converted into two apartments in 1944. Over the years, many sextons and their families and pets have made a home in the units. Our current trio of sextons do not require housing, so at this time we are able to rent the first floor apartment, while the second floor unit serves as storage space and emergency housing for sextons ahead of a snowstorm. The building’s exterior was repaired and repainted this spring, and we installed an emergency generator.

Now, all residences and the parish center have emergency generator backup. As we have seen in the past few years, when power goes down on the campus, we are not the first stop for Delmarva repair crews.

**The Parish Center** *Project completed in 1953: \$513,000*

The Parish Center—chapel, parish halls, and education wing—is where the day-to-day life of the church takes place. Our preschool is housed here, the church staff works here, special events, Sunday school, adult education, community groups, and the many services held in the chapel take place in this facility. It is hard to believe that our “new” education wing is now almost 25 years old. We renovated CCEP classrooms over three summers (2017-2019) and the workroom with the recent chapel renovation. It is a beautiful facility, but there are issues to address.



**Current Projects**

As we plan for 2024 and beyond, I want to highlight four current initiatives that are underway.

**Mending Fences**

We are certainly aware that Christ Church must be a good neighbor. We are an important member of the Buck Road East Association, which, along with Hagley and our neighbors along Buck Road, maintains the road into our campus. We border the Hagley property, the Centennial development, and the properties below us along Squirrel Run creek. Recently, I met with a neighbor to address her concerns about water runoff from our property uphill from hers. Before we could determine the source of the water runoff, we needed to address the trees and debris that were literally cascading onto our neighbor’s property. We have cleared a ten-foot path along the fence line and now have good access to the lower part of our property. The source of the excess water appears to be an underground spring on our side of the property line that we can now track and perhaps better redirect. And, at the very least, our neighbor’s backyard has been cleared of our debris and overgrowth.

### **Fixing the Roof**

Maintaining roofs seems to be a constant need for all our buildings. Slate roofs must be repaired regularly, and once every 100 years they need to be replaced. The flat roofs of the parish center are now nearly 25 years old, and the rubber membranes below the concrete tiles and flashing along the edges of the roof lines have deteriorated. As a result, we have been chasing leaks that are continuing to damage ceilings and walls of our buildings. We recently repainted parish halls A and B but within days, following heavy rain, we had water damage to the walls. We are in the process of securing bids for a new roofing system that we hope will stand both the test of time and the elements.

### **Repairing Lighting Controls**

In 2014, a lightning strike damaged our existing control system for the lighting system in the main church. We were able to Band-Aid the system and keep things running, but the combination of time and technological progress now makes our current, partially functioning system evermore obsolete. We are collecting bids to replace the control panel in the undercroft, operating through the same wiring but completely reprogrammed to provide lighting flexibility and enhanced operator control. Our current fixtures will work with the new controls, and the system will have the flexibility to update lights from incandescent and halogen to LED without having to adapt them. The good news is that as the technology has improved, the cost to install and update our system has gone down. The approximate cost to install and program the new system will be \$50,000.

### **Refreshing Our Property**

You may have noticed that several trees have come down across the campus in recent years. In almost all cases, these trees were diseased and dying as victims of the spotted lantern fly and the ash borer. We also like adding new plantings! We are grateful for an Eagle Scout project that planted native trees along the lower lot, and soon, trees will be planted along the edge of the upper lot that will match three trees planted a few years ago. In addition, we are supporting the efforts of the Creations Care Team to install new natural pollinator plantings on the lawn near the labyrinth.

In closing, I want to thank the members of the property committee and assure the parish that everyone on our committee is committed to maintaining and enhancing Christ Church Christiana Hundred for a good first impression and a lasting impact on our lives.

Thank you,

John Faulkner  
Property Committee Convener

#### **Committee Members**

Randall Attix  
Barbara Cairns  
Tom Desper  
John Faulkner, Convener  
Thorpe Moeckel  
Martin Taylor  
Annie Williams, CCEP Faculty Representative  
Michael Flynn, Senior Warden  
Michael Sayer, Facilities Manager



## CHRIST CHURCH EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL

Chase Curiosity – Discover Friendship – Spark Joy

2023-2024 – The Preschool’s Eighteenth Year

As summer 2023 approached, Christ Church Episcopal Preschool faced another transition in leadership with the resignation of Kim Wagner as Head of School. The Board of Trustees approved Kim’s and my recommendation of Denise Gilliam as the Interim Head of School while a search committee was formed to assist in finding the fifth Head of School for CCEP. Denise began her leadership in July 2023 for the preschool’s 18<sup>th</sup> year in ministry, and the search committee got to work in September.

### Enrollment

The 2023-2024 school year started with 89 students enrolled, representing 81 families. Seventeen families are also members of the parish, or about 20% of the CCEP community. Enrollment for the 2024 summer camp currently stands at 62 children, and the 2024-2026 school year has 72 currently enrolled. The Primary classes (for three-year-olds) can accommodate six more students, while the other three age groups are at full capacity for the coming year. Tours of the school are always available, and a marketing campaign is underway on social media to reach new families to fill that class.

### Campus & Classrooms

Through the week, you can find children in the outdoor classroom studying nature, doing a science project, or enjoying imaginative free play. This year, new equipment was installed on the small playground that is designed for children aged two and younger, and a new playhouse was located near the large playground. In addition to those playgrounds, faculty take their classes to the field, the labyrinth, the front lawn, and for play time in the safety of the circle entrance. Classes attend gym and music or movement classes in parish hall C and worship each week in the Chapel of the Christ Child. Once a month, that chapel service includes parents and special friends as the school worships together. In the classrooms, the CCEP faculty tried a new curriculum sponsored by Brightwheel, while the Pre-K teachers kept the curriculum they have perfected and shared over many years together. Special instruction in Spanish is a favorite, and the faculty look forward to the return of Godly Play in their classrooms, a spiritual component halted in the interim between ministers for children and youth.





## **Faculty**

Six new faculty members joined CCEP this year, including Jen Fordham, the new Preschool Administrator. In addition, six teachers are serving their second or third year with us, one faculty member is in her fourth year, and eight are serving in their eighth to eighteenth year, including Interim Head of School, Denise Gilliam. Our teaching and administrative staff are a great strength to our school community.

## **Finances**

The CCEP treasurer, Chip Sawyer, is supported by finance manager, Terri Carpe, in carefully accounting for the revenue and expenses of the school. A monthly report on the preschool's finances is presented to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Directors also reviews the annual budget. In his more recent report, Chip wrote, "The school remains in a strong financial position, both in general and relative to our budget. We are 83% through our fiscal year, and we have collected 99% of our budgeted revenues and spent just 76% of our budgeted expenses." The Annual Fund, the gala, and grants also allow our preschool to be in an excellent financial position.

## **Head of School Search**

Working in tandem to lead the search for the next head of school, David Nichols (Convener of the Board of Trustees), and I were joined by Chuck Arensberg, Vera Belger, Stephanie Dallaire, Ted Lauzen, Bart Reese, Chip Sawyer, and Sarah Saxberg as the search committee, meeting weekly through the fall. The Trustees supported the decision to engage Educators Collaborative as the search consultant, and George Sanderson worked with the committee to engage the school's stakeholders, identify the qualifications desired in the HOS, and recruit, screen, and present candidates to the search committee. In January 2024, the committee reviewed dossiers and selected five candidates to interview by Zoom. Narrowing the selection to three finalists, onsite visits were executed, leading the committee to unanimously recommend Sheila Abio to the Board of Trustees as CCEP's fifth Head of School.

Sheila Abio is passionate about early childhood and elementary education, especially within Episcopal communities. She's an experienced Head of School, leading Good Shepherd Episcopal School in Austin, Texas, an early childhood school with 160 students and 30 teachers. While their Head, Sheila led them through a strategic planning process and a successful accreditation process while creating trusting partnerships and continuous engagement with parents, students, teachers, and trustees. In her fifteen years in Episcopal schools, Sheila has highlighted the spiritual foundation for children, instilling in them a lifelong love of learning and successful achievement. Play is an important part of her approach to early childhood education, and she was attracted by our commitment to outdoor spaces for our children. Her most recent leadership has been with St. Philip's School and Community Center, a Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade Christian school in Dallas, Texas. Sheila begins her ministry here on July 1 2024. She has determined that Denise Gilliam will continue to serve CCEP for the remainder of 2024 to allow a seamless transition and to support the administrative tasks while Jen Fordham is on an extended family leave to welcome her first child.

## **Governance**

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool is a ministry of Christ Church Christiana Hundred. The Board of Trustees advises the Head of School on the day-to-day oversight of CCEP and is made up of educators, parents and alum parents, parishioners, and vestry members. To see a list of the trustees, visit the school's website, [www.ccepde.org/board](http://www.ccepde.org/board).

In addition, there is oversight provided by the Board of Directors, which is made up of the members of the vestry and four independent directors, who are usually also Trustees. The Directors meet twice a year to review annual budgets and approve the nominees for new trustees. This double governance structure attempts to keep the parish and preschool aligned in purpose as one community, facilitating communications and casting a vision for the future while fulfilling the school's mission.

*Christ Church Episcopal Preschool educates young children, creates community among families, school and church, and honors and nurtures children in the Episcopal tradition.*

It is a blessing in my ministry to work with Denise and to support the boards in their leadership. You could say that through its eighteen years, our preschool has grown through infancy and the toddler years and is emerging as a mature institution, still eager and ready to help young ones and their families chase curiosity, discover friendships, and spark joy in the heart.

Ruth Beresford  
Rector





## REPORT OF THE RECTOR

It is a joy to share ministry with the people of Christ Church Christiana Hundred and to mark 176 years for this parish. In *The Book of Common Prayer*, the Catechism teaches that we are all ministers, lay and ordained, representing Christ Jesus and his Church, bearing witness to him wherever we may be and with whatever gifts we have been given. While those in holy orders—bishops, priests, and deacons—have particular responsibilities, the “duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.” *BCP p 856*

As we strive to accomplish the goals of our 2022-2027 strategic plan, only with the investment of our lives in service to Christ Jesus, inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit can our parish experience the growth in membership and deeper relationships with God and with one another. While the vestry and the staff bear the primary responsibility, each one of us can extend an invitation, or offer care and kindness, or engage in meaningful connections that bind our hearts and lives to one another and to God. I hope to honor the ministry of every Christian in our community—from the youngest child to the oldest adult, from the newest newcomer to those who have been a part of Christ Church for many years. This ministry happens here on our campus, in our preschool and congregation, as well as among our neighbors, colleagues, friends, and strangers. It happens with those who have fallen away from active membership and those who have never heard of The Episcopal Church. We minister to one another in Christ’s name as we serve every sort of person, bold to love.

To those gathered at the Annual Meeting, I honored a few ministers of the parish who have served long and faithfully, both lay and ordained. In her report, Stacey mentions four lay leaders in our pastoral ministries who were recognized with our appreciation. In addition to those, I recognized the outgoing members of the vestry and our wardens, Michael Flynn and Suzanne Smith, with appreciation, as well as the following staff members and clergy colleagues.

- Andy Marine has served as a member of the facilities team for 10 years, though his ministry among us reaches farther back to when he was an outside contractor with his father for the parish.
- Charles Parfitt-Simpson has also served as a member of the facilities team, becoming a sexton the same day as Andy, February 1, 2014. His mother had tended ours and neighboring gardens.
- Denise Gilliam has served Christ Church Episcopal Preschool for 18 years—this past year as Interim Head of School. I am delighted that our next HOS, Sheila Abio, and Denise have agreed to extend Denise’s ministry among us through the end of December.
- The Rev. Bill Lane has served in and among the people of CCCH for 21 years—for 11 years from 1986 to 1997 and then as a pastoral associate since 2014 when the Rev. Russ Bohner left to become the rector of St. Anne’s Church in Middletown.
- The Rev. Cal Wick has served in and among the people of CCCH for 43 years—for four years from 1970-1974 and then from 1985 to today. Cal has determined that it is time to fully retire as a pastoral associate, a priest serving in our community. But that does not mean he will stop being Christian, living out the duties of worship, and working, praying, and giving for the spread of God’s kingdom.

Of course, there are many others who deserve our gratitude and recognition for their faithful ministry, whether in altar guild, ushers, choirs, and other worship ministries, or serving on committees and ministry teams for outreach, formation, fellowship, invitation and welcome, or managing and maintaining our resources in property

and finance, the members of our renovation team and vestry, our preschool board of trustees, and those who served on search committees this past year—to one and all, we cannot be Christ Church without you. We cannot create a loving and joyful faith community that serves others and seeks to grow deeper in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. To one and all, I honor and appreciate your ministry.

### **The Work of Ministry**

For those ordained to the priesthood, we are called to serve as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God. That is from the Catechism again. *BCP p 856*

In my ministry this year, I have

- Delighted in joining the youth group on Sunday evenings and look forward to this summer's mission trip with 13 of our youth and their friends along with Mason Cruz and Brad du Pont.
- Thoroughly enjoyed each Thursday morning, first leading a Eucharist at 6:30, then a hybrid Bible study, then the chapel worship for our preschool classes.
- Grieved with those who grieve, leading funerals crafted to minister to the family while proclaiming the Good News of the resurrection. This is a pastoral ministry that our parishioners share in, offering hospitality and support to the family around the reception and extending our care in grief support.
- Rejoiced with those who rejoice—weddings, baptisms, confirmations, graduations. It is a joy to share the lives at those important moments.
- Searched for meaning in the scriptures and searched for new staff members to take part in our parish and preschool life. It is an honor to invite gifted and faithful staff and clergy colleagues to follow Jesus with us.
- Served in the diocese as an Intake Officer, which means if one of my clergy colleagues may have done injury or broken trust, I am among the first to help the Episcopal Church in Delaware address it and to determine the way forward.
- Crafted liturgies that are varied, both by the time of day and the intended congregation. I treasure partnering with staff and clergy colleagues and garnering feedback from participants so that each service is thoughtfully and prayerfully prepared.

There is more I could list. Some say I am too busy, but I love all that I do for God and for the church. I pray that the example of my faith gives witness to the love of Jesus that heals, blesses, and restores us to unity with God and with one another.

### **Discernment of Gifts**

One of the ministries of the church is to discern with those who hear God's call to a distinct ministry, like holy orders. In the past decade, we have listened and prayed with the Rev. Marta Illueca, the Rev. Cate Anthony, the Rev. Maryann Younger, and the Rev. Clay Brown. Three members of our parish are enrolling in classes at the Stevenson School for Ministry this summer, and I will be forming discernment teams to pray with them and test the call they are experiencing. If this is a ministry you feel called to share, please be in touch with me.

Thank you for the honor of serving Christ Church and sharing in ministry with you. This is a gift we offer one another, in loving and joyful service in this parish, to the glory of God.

Ruth Beresford  
Rector

# CCCH: GOALS AND BENCHMARKS PROGRESS

In March 2023, Christ Church Christiana Hundred underwent a strategic visioning process that resulted in the following goals and one-year benchmarks. What follows details the progress as of April 2024.

Key: Grey = completed    Italicized = in progress    Black = pending

## WE WILL GROW OUR EPISCOPAL FAITH COMMUNITY WITH GOD'S HELP.

## WE WILL FAITHFULLY MANAGE OUR PROPERTY, FINANCIAL RESOURCES, AND THE TIME AND TALENTS OF OUR MEMBERS TO SUPPORT OUR MINISTRIES IN AND BEYOND CHRIST CHURCH.

## WE WILL GROW DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD AND WITH EACH OTHER, FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST.

### New Members

- Developed targeted marketing to families and ready to implement
- Implemented clear welcome path for newcomers
- Developed a new member introduction plan
- Enabled clergy participation in local community
- Created a program that trains members to invite others to CCCH

### Current Members

- Created a plan to reach members at critical life transitions
  - Created a CCEP connection process
- ### Inactive Members
- Completed an every household reconnection campaign

### In worship

- Created an inventory of current worship and music offerings
- Incorporated key learnings from the April 2023 Sunday Summit to encourage greater participation in worship

### CYM

- Established a CYM Team to support our Minister for Children and Youth
- Created a communication plan between CCEP and CCCH to share stories and updates

### Adult

- Established volunteer needs for CYM
- Created an inventory of current adult formation, plus an assessment tool to determine what to keep, change, or retire
- Created a twice-annual survey for broad parishioner feedback

### Outreach/Service

- Launched the 175th Anniversary Outreach Project with Lutheran Community Services
- Identified 3-5 other organizations to focus our collective volunteer service efforts
- Created and launched the Ministry Match
- Hosted a working session to train parishioners in pastoral visitation, forming a new ministry group as a part of the Pastoral Ministries Team

- Conducted a review of our campus resulting in a campus usage plan
- Added education for new members on stewardship and pledging
- Expanded our stewardship committee membership and tasked them with developing a year-round pledging communication cadence
- Renewed the Legacy Society to encourage planned giving.

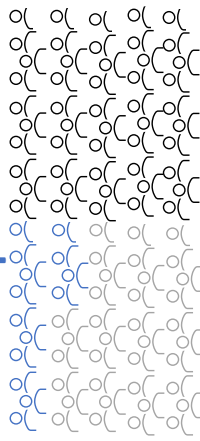
# Parish Survey

## Key Findings

As proposed in the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, a survey was conducted to measure parish progress toward the goal of growing deeper relationships with God and others, following Jesus Christ. Questions were designed to understand parishioners' contentment, engagement, and sentiment about the parish and our mission.

Email to all parish contacts and shared in eNews, the survey was available for completion between May 1-13, 2024. The survey will be reviewing the responses for insight and direction.

### 135 Responses



14% are new to Christ Church, attending within the last 2 years

About half have attended at Christ Church more than 20 years

### Sense of Belonging

On our scale

**75%** feel strongly that they belong

**9%** are neutral about belonging

**16%** do not feel they belong here

### Worship



**62%** worship in person

**4%** worship online

**33%** do both



### Direction

**64%**

Agree our parish community is moving in the right direction

**7%** disagree

### Activities & Programs

**61%** attended Green Show



**87%**

Are likely to recommend Christ Church to others

### Invitation

**58%**

Have invited someone to Christ Church in the last six months



**47%**

attended a concert or special music offering

**44%**

attended a fellowship event



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