



February 2026

extraOrdinary Times

this month at Christ Church

February 1

Preacher/Teacher Series: Canon Hill
Evensong | 5:00 p.m.

February 4

Dinner Church | 5:45 p.m.
Comprehensive Campaign Info Session |
7:00 p.m.

February 5

LGBTQ+ Theology & Faith | 7:30p.m.

February 7

Labyrinth | 9:00 a.m.

February 8

Betsy's Breakfast | 8:45 a.m.

February 15

Exploring Türkiye Forum | 9:00 a.m.
Evensong | 5:00 p.m.

February 17 | Shrove Tuesday

Burning of the Palms and Mardi Gras
Churchyard and Auditorium | 6:00 p.m.

February 18 | Ash Wednesday

Service of the Word and Imposition of
Ashes | 7:30 a.m.

Service of the Word and Imposition of
Ashes | 12:05 p.m.

Family Ash Wednesday service | 5:30
p.m.

Service of the Word and Imposition of
Ashes | 7:30 p.m.

February 19

LGBTQ+ Theology & Faith | 7:30p.m.

February 22

Preacher/Teacher Series: Rev. Michael
Sullivan

February 24

Vestry Meeting | 7:00 p.m.

Inside.....
Blessings On
Rites of Passage
Worship Notes
New Faith Formation Series
Meet the New Seminarian
January Happenings



The Clang of the Bell

High atop our church building, way up in the bell tower, there exists – unsurprisingly, a bell!

In April of 1816, the vestry of Christ Church passed a motion requesting that a church bell be secured for the parish. The only stipulation was that the bell was not to be more than 1000 pounds in weight. Interestingly, the Vestry was calling for a bell before there was even a bell tower as it was not until June of 1817 that the vestry approved, with two members opposing, the construction of the steeple. It seems quite possible that the bell might have been at ground level initially and rung from there. Perhaps a structure was built for it, or it might have sat on swinging wheels. The bell was purchased in July of 1817 for \$538.87 (a little more than \$13,000 today).

In April of 1818, the steeple was finally prepared for construction. Among the three parishioners assigned to oversee the construction of the steeple was Edmund J. Lee (cousin of Robert E. Lee). Sometime after July of 1819, the steeple was completed and the bell hung.

The bell was initially rung by hand. In fact, vestry minutes show that someone was paid as the “bell ringer” for Christ Church. An article in the Alexandria Gazette in 1896 reported that the tone of the bell had suddenly changed. Upon inspection, it was discovered that the bell had a crack in it. In 1897, the bell was recast by McShane Bell Company in Baltimore.

A long rope descended from the steeple to the area at the top of the stairs leading into the gallery of the church (right before you open the

Rites of Passage

Deaths

Polly Venable
Tom Dillon
Derek Shows
Catherine Claggett
Evelyn Ambriscoe
Ken Thumma
Renee Nicole Good
Frank Martin Reinink
Bob Pringle
Brad Lipham
Richard Briggs

Births

Aaron Cairo Nodjomian-Esajeda, son of Adam & Aaron Nodjomian-Esajeda

Baptisms

Georgia Commander Grey
Ezra Michael Niznansky-Taylor
Thaddeus Stuart Dickey
Leila Blake Wolff

Transfers Out

Sheryl Sims

door and see the back of the organ). For nearly 150 years, an employee or parishioner would ring the bell by pulling upon the rope. This was an exhausting process as the bell is quite heavy, and it also put a strain on the supporting structures around the bell. On at least one occasion, a young child who was pulling on the rope was unexpectedly hauled upwards to the top of the landing when he didn't let go in time.

In 1934, the clapper of the bell was replaced with one that was donated to Christ Church by The Rt. Rev. William Proctor Remington, then the

Bishop of Eastern Oregon. He had received the clapper from All Saints Church, Purleigh, in Essex, England, where a former rector was George Washington's great-great grandfather and Bishop Remington felt that Christ Church would appreciate the gift.

In 1975, the clapper of the bell was electrified, and the rope mechanism was removed. Today, a switch at the side of the organ console and a similar one in the sacristy are turned on to ring the bell. The bell itself is now stationary, and a clapper strikes the bell by being pulled with an electrical motor rather

than the bell swinging. The bell typically is rung prior to the start of worship services as well as during our funeral liturgies during the Commendation.

When you next hear the bell, consider how many ears over the years have heard that same call to worship!

-Jason Abel (with assistance from Marilyn Bromley)

Faith Formation

Preacher/Teacher, a new series in Adult Christian Formation

This spring, with thanks to the family of Martha Wilcox, we will begin a new, ongoing series at Christ Church called "Preacher/Teacher." In this series, esteemed preachers from all over the country will join us first in the pulpit then in the classroom, offering a sermon at the 8 and 10am services and also offering the Sunday forum in the Meade Room.

With this series, we will hear from voices and perspectives from different parts of our Communion

and hear what is important to them and what they are thinking, writing, praying, and preaching about in their own contexts.

The first Preacher/Teacher will be on February 1, The Rev Dr Lee Hill, Canon Missioner for Racial Justice in the Diocese of Virginia. On February 22, we welcome The Rev Michael Sullivan, who in his capacity as President of Kanuga Camp and Conference Center, has lead through COVID, tornado, and flood. Coming in April, The Rev Nathan Empsall is the rector of St Peter and St James in New Haven, Connecticut, and the former director of Faithful America, and he will be teaching us about White

Christian Nationalism and how we can begin to think about our place in reclaiming Christianity from the scourge.

Stay tuned for other Preacher/Teacher events coming in the fall!

Worship Notes

A New(ish) Nicene Creed
In 2018, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church released expansive language versions of the four Rite II Eucharistic prayers in our Book of Common Prayer. The changes were linguistically fairly minor, changing “He” and “Father” to “God” and similar, but point to a greater movement in the Church to understand God as bigger than our human binaries, thus the term “expansive.” At Christ Church, we have been using these liturgies--approved for use by our bishop-- for the last year and a half.

When we made the switch to the new Eucharistic prayers in 2024, we stopped short of switching to the General Convention-approved expansive version of the Nicene Creed, opting to make these changes over time. But the time has come to try something new.

Beginning Ash Wednesday, February 18, we will begin using the expansive Nicene Creed at our 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. services and then at any seasonal services where we are using our Rite II Eucharistic prayers.

Have no fear! The changes to the Nicene Creed are as linguistically minor as the changes to the Eucharistic prayers. The biggest practical difference is that we will be saying the Nicene Creed together as a body (while the Eucharistic prayers are spoken largely by the priest) so it might

take us a few tries for our tongues to remember the new version.

Here are the two places where language has shifted:

Book of Common Prayer	Expansive Language
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: <i>by the power of the Holy Spirit</i> <i>he became incarnate from the</i> <i>Virgin Mary,</i> <i>and was made man.</i>	For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, <i>was incarnate of the Holy Spirit</i> <i>and the Virgin Mary</i> <i>and became truly human.</i>
We believe in the Holy Spirit,... <i>With the Father and the Son he is</i> worshiped and glorified. <i>He has spoken through the Prophets.</i>	We believe in the Holy Spirit,... <i>who with the Father and the Son is</i> worshiped and glorified, <i>who has spoken through the prophets.</i>

Changes to the Nicene Creed were not taken lightly or thoughtlessly and are not a flippant response to “woke secularism.” The General Convention’s Standing Committee on Liturgy and Music worked for several years to hold in holy tension the ancient theology of the Nicene Creed that binds Christians across time and denominational boundaries with a modern understanding of the needs of all members of humankind to see themselves reflected in our liturgies and to position ourselves as relevant for generations to come, not only for generations that have gone before. This version of the Nicene Creed was first published for trial use in the

Enriching Our Worship series in 1998 so it has been in the liturgical waters for nearly 30 years.

If, after reading this and trying out the new version of the Creed, you remain unconvinced that this is a positive change, you are welcome to pray the old version. The cadence of the two versions is very similar. You are also welcome to join us at 8am where we consistently use the Rite I, traditional language and will keep the older version of the Creed.

As always the clergy are more than happy to have conversations about our liturgies and their meaning and movement in our lives. Just call us!

Blessings On...

- The parishioners who shopped, cooked, and served dinner at the Carpenter's Shelter, Bob Carpenter, Monique and Mike de Quay-Jones, Bradley McAllister, Lenny Marsico, Robin Campbell and Cornelia Horner.
- Margo Rood for her many years serving as a docent.
- Julie Duke, Ann McMurray, Claire Chow, Sharon Schambra, Amy Bacon, Tom Suydam, Laura Humphrey, Russ Haymes and all the other volunteers who serve our Lazarus Financial Ministry.
- Panera, Trader Joe's, MOM's Organic Market and ALIVE! for their weekly donations of food to our Lazarus Food Pantry.
- The parishioners who pick up donations at Trader Joe's for our Lazarus Food Pantry, Andrew, Jess, Bridget & Gideon Floyd, Richard & Christina Jones, Claudia & Van Ellet, Andy Sauter, Steve & Jan Slaton, Claire & Russ Haymes, Nicole & Jodi Wireman.
- Amanda Blue, Karen Hill, Emily Bryan, Emily Soapes, Maude Williams, Elaine Wick, Ruth Arnold, Mary Dixon and Jack Hutcheson, Roseanne Bennett for making and serving bag lunches at Meade Memorial Church.
- The parishioners who shopped, cooked, and served dinner at the Carpenter's Shelter last Friday, Barbara Boehm, Cornelia Horner, Kathy Bowdring, Robin Campbell, Ann McMurray, Rob Spillar, Joe and Carol Shull.
- For those who donated wreaths or participated in laying or picking up wreaths on a veteran's grave in the Alexandria National Cemetery at 1450 Wilkes Street.

Welcome

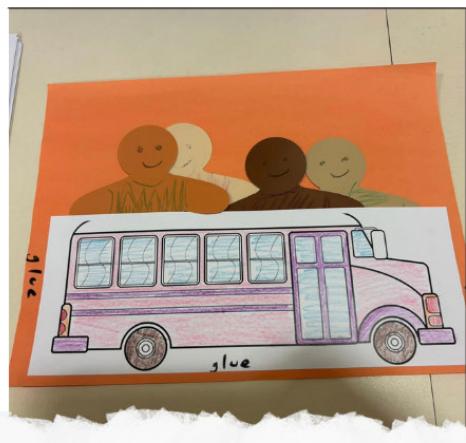
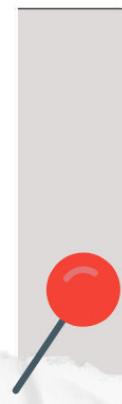
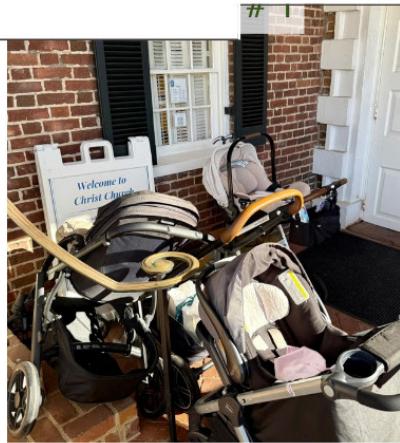
Emily Meeks is a postulant for Holy Orders to the priesthood in the Diocese of Olympia (The Episcopal Church in Western Washington). She is a second year student in the Master of Divinity program at Virginia Theological Seminary with a concentration in Christian Spirituality. Emily is passionate about intergenerational ministry, spirituality and aging, and eco-theology.

Prior to seminary, Emily worked in healthcare communications and operations where she focused on older adult engagement. Emily received her undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Georgia.

She met her husband Stuart while studying abroad in Italy. They enjoy outdoor adventure travel and searching out a good slice of pizza.

Emily is grateful for the opportunity to serve with Christ Church this semester and looks forward to hearing your stories and experiences as we journey together in following Jesus.





BAPTISMS, SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND SNOW!