



September 2025

extraOrdinary Times

this month at Christ Church

September 4

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

September 6

Labyrinth | 9:00 a.m.

September 7

Welcome Sunday

September 8

Hymn Festival | 7:30 p.m.

September 13

Stewards of the Dirt | 9:00 a.m.

September 14

Care of Creation Forum Series Begins | 9:00 a.m.

September 18

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

September 23

Vestry Meeting | 7:00 p.m.



A Season of Creation at Christ Church

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. – Psalm 19:1-4

Throughout our scriptures, we are reminded that the world we live in is given to us by God to tend and care for. But all around us, we are seeing the results of generations of neglect and hostility of our environment and our fellow residents of the planet. The climate crisis is dire, as is our loss of safe drinking water, depleting numbers of species, and increasing numbers of biohazards. This fall, Christ Church will spend time learning about and acting on our Christian mandate to love the world God has entrusted to us, with the intention of being better, more effective stewards and better, more effective Christians. You will see our

principles of creation care reflected in our worship and liturgy, in our formation offerings to all ages, and in our opportunities for service.

Care of Creation: A Christian Call
Sundays September 14, 21, 28, and October 5

9:00 a.m. in the Meade Room

The way we interpret our scriptural mandate to care for God's world drives the way we protect it. Join Rev Noelle for a four part series where we will look carefully at Old and New Testament passages to help us better understand how we can be stewards of creation instead of merely users.

Potomac Riverkeeper Cleanup
Saturday, September 20 and October 18

10:00 a.m. to noon

Be a steward of creation! Join Christ Church and the Potomac Riverkeeper Network for two river clean up days in Alexandria this fall. We will remove trash and litter from waterways, helping to restore

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August Happenings*

the beauty and health of this shared resource. All parishioners, including children in kindergarten and above, are invited. Be sure to wear clothes you don't mind getting muddy. Details about location and timing are forthcoming. Contact Ariel Rudy with questions arudy@ccalex.org

Love God Love God's World

Beginning September 23, 7:00 p.m.
Alternate Tuesdays, on Zoom
Love God, Love God's World is a nine-session, film-based curriculum created by the Episcopal Church for anyone on the journey with creation care and environmental ministry—from newcomers

looking to take their first step to seasoned leaders seeking a transformative small-group experience. Parishioner Libby Witt was part of the testing team for this curriculum and she will be leading us in it. Please email Libby for more information eawitt@hotmail.com

Virginia Interfaith Power and Light

Sunday, October 26
9:00 a.m., in the Meade Room
Virginia Interfaith Power and Light's mission is to collaborate among people of faith and conscience to grow healthy communities by advancing climate and environmental justice. Come learn about VAIP's work with over 200 faith

communities in the Commonwealth, the issues they are tackling and how we can collaborate.

Clean up with SOD!

Saturday September 13 and October 25, November 22
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Stewards of the Dirt, or SOD, are our volunteer gardeners for the Christ Church churchyard. They meet regularly to plant, weed, trim, and take note of what is growing and what needs attention. SOD will meet in September and October to work on fall cleanup and perennial planting and they can use your hands. Bring gloves and small gardening tools if you have them and the church has plenty to share if you do not.

No experience necessary. Small children are welcome to attend with parents to learn about how to make a garden grow!

Worship Notes

This fall, in September and October, Christ Church will focus its liturgical and formation attention on care of creation. One of the ways we will celebrate our responsibility for creation is by using Eucharistic Prayer C on Sunday mornings at the 10:00 a.m. service. Eucharistic Prayer C is the most expansive, inclusive, and interactive of the Rite II Eucharistic prayers in the 1979 BCP. It offers a modern and deeply theological expression of the Eucharist that places God's redemptive work in the full context of the universe.

Prayer C is the most controversial of the

four Rite II Eucharistic prayers, not because it contains dodgy theology, but because the language feels less familiar in its expansiveness. It is poetic and creation-centered, as its most famous line displays,
"At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home."

By reminding us that God created the entire universe and all included therein, Prayer C de-centers humanity, and recenters the Creator and the Creation.

I hope our use of Eucharistic Prayer C this fall adds to the depth of your Eucharistic practice

and your appreciation of the care our fragile earth deserves.

--*The Rev. Noelle York-Simmons, Rector*

Rites of Passage

Births

Thaddeus Stuart Dickey, son of Ginny & Austin Dickey

Deaths

Dan Thomas
Heather Moehle
Rt. Rev. Hays Rockwell
Maria Brown

Baptisms

Levi Leonard
Vaughn Leonard
Jude Luca DiLoreto
Leo Grant DiLoreto

Transfers Out

Kelly Longfellow
Harrison Price

Blessings On...

- Kris Lebras for her many years of welcoming newcomers to our parish on the Christ Church Welcome Team
- Jayne Osgood, Anne Ramsey, Larry Sherrod, Robert Homer-Drummond, Megan Bower, John and Andrea McNicholas for participating in the gleaning ministry during this steamy July - collecting pounds of beautiful produce from the farmers market for our neighbors.
- Michael Bergin, Scott Harmon, Russ Haymes, Amy Prahar, and Tom Suydam for delivering checks for the Lazarus Financial Ministry.
- The parishioners who donated to the Christ Child Ministry during Christmas in July.
- Laura Humphrey and Sharon Schambra for volunteering as Lazarus Court Advocates at the Alexandria Courthouse helping people facing eviction prepare to speak to the judge.
- The volunteers who pick up donations at Trader Joe's, Mom's and Panera each week for the Lazarus Food Pantry, including: Janet Beckmann, Mary Beth Stein, Ann Spitler, Jay Bartol, Cindi Bartol, Bob Thomson, Paula Dubberly, Bear Ard, David Johnson, Steve Slaton, Claire Haymes, Russ Haymes, Rich Jones, Andrew Floyd, and Denise Jean-Claude.
- All those who donated peanut butter, jelly, and canned goods to the Lazarus Food Pantry in the month of July.
- The Summer Cookout Planning team, Alan Adenan, Elizabeth Trigg, and Andrew Floyd.
- Megan Bower, Jody and Nicole Wireman, Jayne Osgood, Andrea McNicholas, and Cornelia Horne for volunteering with the gleaning ministry collecting beautiful produce from the Old Town Farmers Market for our Food Pantry visitors.
- Trish Fineran, Megan Bower, Sophia McNicholas and Andrea McNicholas for volunteering with the Bingo ministry at the Ladrey high-rise for low-income elderly and disabled.
- All who volunteered for last week's Bag Lunch Ministry: Anne Land, Mary Dixon and Jack Hutcheson, Julie Zahn, Mary Hobbie and Jon Smoot, Emily Bryan, Christy Wyckoff, Liz Denson and family, Elaine Wick, Maude Williams, Emily Soapes, and Nancy Knapp.
- Cornelia Horner, Ann Hollingsworth, Anne Shackleton; Bradley McAllister; Mary Catherine Nelson, Jane Baird, Jessica Hughes, Susan Hahn, Maryann and Rawles Jones for shopping, cooking and serving dinner at the Carpenter's Shelter.
- JoAnn Ackerman, Jane Baird, Marie Cataffo, Mary Hobbie, Jeanne Hoenicke, Liz Jones, Kirk Kitchen, Bob McIntyre, Michele Smith, Jon Smoot, Ann Spitler, and Maude Williams for delivering Meals on Wheels on Wednesday, August 20. A big welcome to our newest volunteer: Bob McIntyre!
- David Johnson, Anne Shackleton, Cornelia Horner, and Emily, Ian, Evelyn and Max Bryan for collecting pounds of fresh produce from the Old Town Farmers Market that is distributed to our neighbors through our food

Mission Ministry

Stand with Mengo: Help Us Keep Lifesaving HIV Care Alive in Uganda

Uganda has made remarkable progress in combating HIV/AIDS, achieving significant reductions in new infections and deaths. Uganda's HIV/AIDS response, which currently treats approximately 1.2 million people, is highly reliant on external funding, with donors contributing about 60% of the total cost. However, recent disruptions to funding and services, according to UNAIDS and new reports, threaten to undo these gains. Recent funding cuts of 31.5% have already led to disruptions in the supply of essential medications and a reduction in the capacity of health facilities. This has resulted in:

- Interruptions in ART supply: Potentially leading to treatment failure, drug resistance, and increased transmission.
- Reduced access to testing and care: Especially for vulnerable populations like youth and key populations, impacting early diagnosis and treatment initiation.
- Strain on health workforce and systems: Contributing to staff layoffs, termination of benefits and increased workload for remaining healthcare workers.
- Increased advanced HIV disease cases: As fewer individuals present for early care.

The Mengo Hospital HIV Clinic in Uganda has been helping people with critical HIV prevention, anti-viral therapy and TB treatment since 1988. It is one of Africa's leading HIV clinics and has played a vital role in curbing the AIDS epidemic. The Mengo Clinic has virtually eliminated mother-to-child transmission, and clinic staff now care for more than 9,000 children, adolescents and adults who are living with HIV. Innovative workplace programs have helped reach underserved male populations, and its tuberculosis program is highly successful.

Now the clinic's life-saving services are threatened by US funding cuts. US funding cuts now threaten all this progress. Already Mengo, like many clinics across Africa, has been forced to lay off staff and reduce community access to life-saving medications, laboratory services and critical care. Thousands are at risk of treatment interruption -- and increased transmission.

Private sector donations play a vital role in strengthening Uganda's health sector, especially given the challenges of limited government funding and potentially dwindling donor support. Christ Church has been supporting Mengo Hospital for over 40 years and its HIV clinic for 25 years. The Friends of Mengo group is

working to provide bridge funding for the Clinic until a new, more permanent funding mechanism can be identified.

Considering the chronic underfunding of Uganda's health system and the anticipated decline in external aid, private sector and philanthropic contributions are indispensable. They not only provide immediate, life-saving benefits but also help lay the groundwork for a more resilient, equitable, system. These efforts are essential as Uganda works toward Universal Health Coverage and strives to reduce out-of-pocket costs for its most vulnerable populations.

As a community of faith, we believe it is our calling to act on Jesus's word by supporting the Mengo clinic and the people it serves. We have set a fundraising goal of \$50,000 for the year ahead with the kickoff of our 2025 Mengo Raffle with 12 incredible prizes.

Your support today WILL help save lives. Please stand with us. For more information, contact: Witney Schneidman, Mengo Committee Chair - witney.schneidman@gmail.com, or Melanie Gray, Director of Outreach & Mission - mgray@ccalex.org.

Welcome



Abigail Merk is a Master of Divinity student at Virginia Theological Seminary. She is abundantly thankful and excited to join the Christ Church family this fall.

A postulant from the Diocese of New Jersey, Abby was led to the ordination process through a love of sacred music and the leadership of female clergy in her life. After singing in the Catholic Church throughout childhood, she studied music at Westminster Choir College and earned her bachelor's degree in 2018. As her program ended, she was offered a section leader position at an Episcopal Church in Moorestown, New Jersey. This position, although seemingly transient, would slowly change her life over seven years of singing, learning, and growing into her adult faith alongside her rector, Rev. Emily Mellott.

Abby is so eager to get to know you, serve, and worship with you. She firmly believes that God has planted her exactly where she needs to be, right here. She holds dear to this opportunity and can't wait to get started!

Outreach Ministry

For many years Christ Church has brought monthly fun and fellowship to the residents of the Ladrey Senior Highrise on 300 Wythe Street in Old Town with a rollicking evening of monthly bingo.

For those of you who are unfamiliar, the Ladrey Senior Highrise is an 11-story building with 170 units owned and operated by Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority (ARHA). It houses primarily low-income seniors, and people with disabilities. The building is in poor condition and is, finally, scheduled to be torn down later this year. Senior residents will be the first to move to a nearby building that is modern and still affordable.

Saying goodbye to a ministry is hard; even harder when you have been coordinating it for 20 years. As with any ministry, times change, needs change and we change. The Ladrey Bingo Ministry was started in the late 1990's and flourished under different parishioners' leadership (the Whites and Burchell's). Trish Fineran and Nick Wasilewski happened

upon Ladrey Bingo in 2005 when their 16-year-old son needed community service hours. They never anticipated that a 24-hour community service commitment would last 20 years! It turns out

inviting friends and neighbors as well as fellow parishioners to join them. Over the years, the bingo prizes evolved from mainly canned food to needed items like toilet paper, paper towels, personal

care products, laundry detergent and more. Participation rose from 15-20 to 40-45 in attendance every month. People with walkers, in wheelchairs and adults with special needs were encouraged to participate and assistance provided by volunteers or tablemates. Throughout the years many Christ Church parishioners have volunteered an evening with bingo helping make

it a success. Nick was known for his incredible humor, joke and story-telling skills, which made the residents feel more relaxed and comfortable. But the contact didn't end there; they would visit Ladrey residents in hospital, rehabilitation centers, celebrate birthdays, as well as attend memorial services. We became friends. After Nick passed suddenly at the end of 2022, Trish continued to lead Ladrey Bingo as part of his legacy with the help of Andrea McNicholas and parish and community members. Today, with the building closing, the residents moving, and a 20-year commitment to this ministry, Trish is ready for a new chapter and delighted to note that the residents are excited about continuing it on their own in the new facility! We thank Trish for her incredible passion and love for the residents of Ladrey.

--Melanie Gray, Director of Outreach & Mission



Trish and Nick were more than just a little called to this ministry and the current leaders were ready to step down. God had a plan.

In the beginning, their family had recently lost both sets of grandparents/parents so being around seniors provided everyone a different perspective on their needs and interests and sense of humor. Soon, the family found themselves

care products, laundry detergent and more. Participation rose from 15-20 to 40-45 in attendance every month. People with walkers, in wheelchairs and adults with special needs were encouraged to participate and assistance provided by volunteers or tablemates.

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AUGUST DAYS