

Wardens'/Vestry Report: The Body of Christ in Movement

Contributed by Ruth Boeder, Sr. Warden, and Mary Brown, Jr. Warden

*The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and for evermore.*

Psalm 121:8



Like any other body, the body of Christ is dynamic. It lives, breathes, and moves. We have come to appreciate that in a new way as Wardens this year, as there have been a number of comings and goings.

Among the goings, the Vestry went on retreat twice this year. In April, we visited Emrich Retreat Center for an overnight stay; in October, we held a one-day retreat on site at CCD. During both events, we were able to connect with each other, forming and strengthening our relationships. In our sessions, we discussed the spiritual gifts we hold as individuals and a group and how to honor those gifts by using them in the work we are called to. We also explored the history of our parish and its physical structures and pondered the future of Christ Church and how our work gives life to our faith. This time together was a great blessing for us!

Of course, we've also had a number of staff departures during the second half of this year. CCD has been greatly blessed by the work and care given by KaClarence, Danielle, Dahlia, and Beth Ann. During this transitional period, various members of Vestry and the wider parish stepped into new or additional service to assist with the day-to-day work of running the church. We are grateful to everyone for sharing the gifts of your time and talents in this hour of need! We're excited to welcome a new parish administrator, Kim Monts, to our CCD staff, and hope that additional hires will come soon in the new year.

Other new things are coming to life among us, too. Our new Sunday School curriculum, *Godly Play*, will be a blessing to our youngest members—but it’s also been lots of fun for us “older” folks to experience it in Rev. Emily’s sermons occasionally! The Outreach Committee has ideas for new ministries to meet needs in our community. Our new bagged lunch program is already having an impact on food insecurity, and we anticipate it growing in the coming months. Of course, in the near future we’ll also start to see long-held dreams come to fruition as Ledyard Hall receives long-deferred maintenance and updates. And in the meanwhile, a newly-formed Safety Committee has been working to improve our structures and systems, to better preserve life and health in both small and big emergencies. Another new group is the Beacon Legacy Circle, which recognizes those who have planned a gift to Christ Church Detroit in their estate—contact the office if you’ve planned such a gift and would like to join! From the beginning to the end, from the foundation to the roof, the life-giving Spirit moves among us.

Of course, that Spirit has moved here for decades—for over a century. Christ Church’s history tells a story of expansion, acceptance, and welcome, celebrating the uniqueness of God’s creation in each of us. As an affirming parish, we’ve recently been seeking ways to better engage the LGBTQIA+ community in our area. This past June, we were on Hart Plaza for Motor City Pride, a unique opportunity to share a story of love that overcomes hate. We were also proud that the Vestry passed a resolution in October declaring that we would fly the Progress Pride Flag along with the American and Episcopal church flags, marking our public support of the queer community in Detroit in a new way for the traffic coming and going along Jefferson Ave.

An old hymn prays: “God be in my head, and in my understanding; God be in mine eyes, and in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my heart, and in my thinking; God be at mine end, and at my departing.” As one Vestry year ends and another begins, may the body of Christ in this place continue to walk the path laid before it with understanding heads, observant eyes, truthful mouths, and hearts filled with God’s love.

