



2024 ANNUAL REPORT  
CHRIST CHURCH DETROIT





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rector's Reflections	1	Centering Prayer	18
Vestry Reflections	3	Art Ministry & Annual Picnic	19
Worship	5	Breakfast Ministry	20
Music Ministry	7	Coffee Hour	21
Youth Choir	9	Community Engagement	22
Beginners' Bell Choir	10	Outreach	23
Youth Acolyte Program	11	Welcome Committee	25
Altar Guild	12	Communications	26
Flower Guild	13	Stewardship	27
Audio Visual Ministry	15	Finance & Counters	28
Ushers	16	Buildings & Grounds	29
Pastoral Care	16	Safety Committee	30
Youth Formation	17	Renovation Action Committee	31
Adult Bible Study	18	Capital Campaign	33

## RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS

*The Rev. Emily Williams Guffey*

Throughout 2024, we have grown in hope and perseverance. We have risen to challenges and become stronger in the process. We have engaged our community more fully with curiosity, care, and hospitality. We have thrived in creativity, inspiration, and love.

We have enjoyed with relief a little more stability than recent years afforded, 2024 being the first year since 2019 when our general practices and operations were not affected directly by the pandemic; we did not need to limit or modify our gatherings in any particular ways. Of course, we have changed so much through the challenges we've all endured since 2020 - we have experienced both profound loss and hopeful new life - and do not take anything for granted. As Paul says in his letter to the Romans, suffering does indeed produce character--and perseverance, and hope (5:3-4).

I continue to be inspired daily by the faith of this church, for the forbearance so consistently afforded, for the wonder and joy in true beauty, for the pursuit of the kingdom ever near, for the trust in the communion of saints; for the offering of myriad skills and interests, for the emergence of new ministries, for the renewal of relationships, for the practice and art of leadership. Thank you, simply, for the opportunity to be among you.



No Christian is solitary; no follower of Christ could ever be or work alone. I am so grateful to work with some of the very best people ever, and wish to recognize our staff and faithful parishioners with whom I have the honor of working closely.

February 2025 marks Dr. Edward Maki-Schramm's ninth anniversary as our Director of Music & Organist: his profound virtuosity, constant dedication, ready collaboration, and especially his heart for hospitality and refuge strengthen who we are and grow our faith. Katrina Van Maanen, Soprano & Youth Choir Director, inspires our children with boundless energy, poise, and skill. Robyn Campagne, Bookkeeper, quietly and skillfully keeps financial ducks in a row. Beth Ann Tesluk, Associate for Communications, was going to have moved on in February 2024 when she and her family happened to move further away from the church; however, **thanks be to God and to Beth Ann**, she has stayed with us, working both remotely and at the church, lending critical attention to detail, creating beautiful communications, and sharing her compassionate heart with our community near and far.

Ashley Poulin served beautifully as our Event Host through May, when she graduated from college. Randy Gilchrist served faithfully as our Associate for Operations through July. Kim Monts was with us as Parish Administrator early in the year.

Gabby Pizzino joined us in April as an Event Host, Ari joined us in May as a Children's Assistant (following in his sister Dahlia's footsteps), Chad Hampton joined us in May as Youth & Family Ministry Coordinator, Artur Kolc joined us in June as Facilities Manager, and Joshilyn Hoisington joined us in August as Parish Administrator. Each brings dedication, talent, humor, and greatly-needed skills to our team.

Members of the Personnel Committee, an ad hoc group, lent their professional expertise throughout the several staff changes: Megan Norris (chair), Lisa Jones, John Leney, Seth Lloyd, and Anthony Mitchell.

Sandy Zull continued as our beloved honorary Pastoral Assistant, visiting frequently with newcomers and old-timers, making home & hospital visits, preaching regularly, leading healing services, and bringing cheer and faith to those in need. Her talented and kind husband, the Rev. Aaron Zull, graciously preaches, presides, and accompanies as needed. The Rev. Dr. David D. Dieter lends deep faith, pastoral brilliance, and dear friendship.

I am so grateful for the skill, dedication, and camaraderie of each member of the staff, and for the honor to work alongside them.

I am filled with gratitude for each of our Vestry and committee members, many of whom are included in these pages, and our 2024 diocesan delegates -- Ruth Boeder, Anthony Mitchell, Jim Treece, and Paul Abdullah (alternate) -- who collaborate among our diocesan neighbors and participated actively in the 190th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan in October. Your faith, fortitude, and good cheer are truly exceptional.

As God has brought us from strength to strength in 2024, we rest assured of God's providence in the year to come, since, to paraphrase Paul, any challenges or suffering that come lead us to double-down in perseverance. That perseverance builds our character and deepens our faith, both personally and as a congregation. And that trains our eyes and our hearts to look always for hope to illumine our path--and hope, as Paul affirms, does not disappoint.

# VESTRY REFLECTIONS

*James Treece and Mary Brown, Wardens*

The Vestry is charged with the temporal affairs of the church (e.g., money and buildings), while the Rector has charge of its spiritual life, including worship, our growth as Christians, and leading us as we find new ways to serve God and our neighbors.

In 2024, much of the Vestry's time was spent providing faithful oversight of Capital Campaign projects: reviewing and approving contracts for design, consulting, or construction; approving payments; or investing Capital Campaign donations received but not yet spent so that the church - as a good stewards of those funds - could earn interest income. That task was made much simpler because of the good, thorough work done by the Finance Committee, Renovation Action Committee, and Capital Campaign Steering Committee. In addition, the Vestry supported Rev. Emily and the Personnel Committee in their effort to get the church up to full staffing levels--not always a smooth road but a very worthwhile one.

We opened our meetings with Bible Study, often a preview of the lessons to be used in the coming Sunday's service, and learned to appreciate the insights and depth of faith that the various Vestry members bring to the table. We had healthy, sometimes lengthy, discussions on topics that matter. How to respond as Christians to the neighbors and communities around us. Whether, when, and how to use a diocese-recommended Congregational Assessment Tool. The importance of balancing any needed budget cuts with revenue increases. Our discussions did not always conclude with a clear decision or path forward, but then, seeking God's will is not always a quick or smooth process.

We gathered for a Saturday retreat in the fall, sharing meals, prayers, Bible study, and a couple of main conversations, one about "Models of Change" and another about our "Financial Picture". These conversations were somewhat connected in that organizational change can happen or not, but, if change is perceived as necessary, finances can help to catalyze change. All of this, and more, centered us in prayer, learning, and collaboration: a good day of moving forward together!







We celebrated special events and accomplishments throughout the year, as ministries grew and community ties were strengthened. We welcomed new members on Pentecost and blessed the pledges on Christ the King Sunday. We have stayed in touch with the City and the Michigan Department of Transportation about the upcoming I-375 reconstruction project, and, through the Renovation Action Committee, hired experts to assess to assess risk mitigation. The Vestry will continue to stay connected to the various agencies to ensure that Christ Church remains as protected and accessible as possible.

As you read the reports of the various ministries included in this annual report, we urge you to reflect on where you are called to serve. This church thrives not through the actions of just the dozen people on the Vestry, but through the service of dozens of volunteers. Therefore, an ongoing focus of the Vestry for the past two years has been helping people to identify and use their spiritual gifts. Please think about what gifts and skills you could offer to God, our neighbors, and your fellow parishioners.

Consider the example of junior warden Mary Brown (This is Jim writing here. Mary may be embarrassed by the spotlight, but she is a model of service.) Based on her awareness of her spiritual gifts and where she felt called to serve, Mary continued to focus her efforts on pastoral care. Related, she is also a member of the Welcome Committee. While welcoming new faces is everyone's job, but the Committee endeavors to do more by connecting repeatedly in meaningful ways. Plus, she has been part of a small group that continues to serve the Afghan family our church sponsored, helped in the office and choir library frequently, and launched a new Bell Choir for beginners.

Many, many thanks to the 2024 Vestry for your faithful and joyful service:

- *Class of 2025:* Claire Brown, David Jackson, Taylor Matthew, Caroline Widak
- *Class of 2026:* Paul Abdullah (*Treasurer*), Mary Brown (*Junior Warden*), Mary Herring (*Secretary*), Hope Hoffman
- *Class of 2027:* Sonia Charron-Jones, Jennifer Collard, Roberta Gaspar, Jim Treece (*Senior Warden*)

Unfortunately, two Vestry members had to resign towards the end of the year: Mary Herring to focus on her health and recovery, and Claire Brown to focus on her husband Bob's health. We wish them both well in 2025.

# WORSHIP

*The Rev. Emily Williams Guffey*

In 2024, we strove to offer creative, timely, and compelling services of worship, grounded in the ancient, durable traditions of the Episcopal Church.

We celebrated our first full Pride Eucharist in June in joyful celebration of our LGBTQIA+ identities, friends, family, and neighbors, and offered hospitality that weekend at the Motor City Pride festival. A working group meets throughout the year to increase and strengthen our ministries of celebration, welcome, and refuge in the queer community.

On Pentecost, we celebrated Christ Church's 179th birthday and officially welcomed new members. Lauren Leney baked delicious, fresh Syrian-style bread for communion!

On the Sunday when the Detroit Grand Prix course impeded our ability to get to church, we celebrated communion at Jon Miller's farm in Detroit and prayed for the land and all who tend it.



In honor of All Souls', we observed a meaningful Choral Evensong & Eucharist, surrounded by candles and photos of our loved ones, and featuring new compositions by the amazing Dr. Ed Maki-Schramm.

On an evening in December, we celebrated a vibrant Advent Festival of Lessons & Carols, with diverse, poignant readings of poetry and scripture, seasonal music, and recognition of some, including our lead architect and owner's representative, who are helping to build and restore space for beloved community.

Woven throughout the special services are, of course, our weekly ones, the "bread and butter" - or bread and wine - that sustain us day to day. So many faithful people pour their hearts, hands, souls, and minds into these services week after week - indeed loving God and neighbor with their whole selves (Matthew 22:37-39) - and growing the ministries in the process.

Recognizing a need, pastoral assistant Sandy Zull started offering healing prayer services on Tuesday afternoons. She and Anthony Mitchell joyfully train new Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs), while Anthony has stepped into the role of scheduling LEMs and Lectors. The LEMs ensure that we can continue to offer communion expansively and inclusively, hosting communion stations at both the high altar and at the floor level, so that steps are not required, and offering both consecrated wine and juice in several ways.



Sandy and Mary Brown have been reinvigorating the Lay Eucharistic Visitor (LEV) ministry, Richard growing the Flower Guild, Desmond expanding the Live Stream Team into a full Audio-Visual Ministry, Sonia coordinating the Ushers, Liza and Josephine leading the Altar Guild, Cathy guiding the Acolytes, Paul starting the Welcome Committee, Ed conducting all music ministries, Katrina training the youth musicians, Mary initiating the Beginners' Bell Choir ... and so many more are serving, sharing, exploring, and nurturing faith. Our worship together - liturgy - is the work of the Body of Christ, by the Body of Christ: the gifts, actions, memories, and hope of God, for the People of God.

In 2024, we celebrated the **weddings** of Megan Fleming & DJ Brinton, Lara Richli & Rob Rasmussen, Neha Gupta & Kevin Lynch, Jocelyn Burrell & Tony Buglione, Mona Rashidi & Salwan Georges, Inese Kushelman & Kevin Klopocinski, and Simeng Sun & Jianghui Huang. Liza Parkinson, Darlene Jackson, Gabby Pizzino, Richard Thomas, and Joshilyn Hoisington assisted at the weddings.

We mourned the **deaths** of beloved friends and relatives, including Joe Katulic (March 1), Rosemary Esse (March 8), Joseph Howard (March 26), Josephine Mashour (June 5), Tom Solomon (November 11), Cecilia Dib (November 22), Bill Elster (December 2), and Wendy Ford (December 8), and we remembered and celebrated their beautiful lives at funerals and memorial services.

We often have prayed the "Restore, Renew, Rejoice" prayer, and sought to live it:

*Faithful God,  
you call us to be living stones in a spiritual temple.  
Bless the mission and outreach of Christ Church Detroit.  
By the power of your Holy Spirit, enable us to restore its fabric,  
trustfully renew our vocation, and boldly rejoice in our ministries.  
Make this place a house in which your love dwells  
and in which all people find welcome and strength.  
Grant this, we pray,  
through the One who leads us ever onward in your service,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*



# MUSIC MINISTRY

*Dr. Edward Maki-Schramm, Director of Music*

2024 was a year of many musical triumphs. I continue to be so grateful to the choirs who continually reach new heights in their music making. The Choir and Bell Choir continue their weekly rehearsals and services in praise of God who calls us together in community to worship and have music that reflects our faith in some of the most creative ways.

In April, we welcomed the brand new vocal group Lyra, which is managed by our friends in Voces8. Our friendship with Voces8 allows us to continue to be at the national forefront of this internationally-recognized singing foundation. Lyra sang in our Sunday morning worship service on April 14th, and their afternoon concert was truly amazing. I am happy to report that they now have secured a contract with Warner Records. Their album will be released in later 2025, but you can say that you heard them first at Christ Church Detroit!



More reasons to celebrate:

- In Lent, we hosted our sixth season of Deep River: An Exploration of Spirituals. We heard from fantastic soloists and speakers, and sang our way through the *Lift Every Voice and Sing* hymnal that is in our pews.
- In June, I was honored to represent Christ Church Detroit at the Anglican Association of Musicians' (AAM) national conference in Minneapolis. The conference offered a wide diversity of music and a helpful glance at the national church and its long tradition of musical excellence.
- In the fall, we welcomed both the Community Chorus of Detroit and the Detroit Women's Chorus to Christ Church Detroit as their new musical home. Rehearsals and performances all take place at the church, which helps widen our reputation as a great place to be. Both choruses' holiday concerts were at capacity and filled the church with joy and excitement. We said goodbye to Opera MODO as they have ended their operations. We wish them all the very best and are glad to have initiatives such as the new choirs in place to make our church home ring with joy.





In November, on Christ the King Sunday, the choir presented Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* to an interfaith crowd in an evening concert sponsored in large part by Lucinda Keils in memory of her father, Philip. We are so grateful to Lucinda for this gift, which drew together Christ Church and the Downtown Synagogue, with Rabbi Ariana Silverman, for a group conversation in Ledyard Hall as well.

On December 18th, we presented Advent Lessons & Carols, and on Christmas Eve, the choir sang anthems by Holst and Vaughan Williams as a prelude to the late service. In the fall and winter, we also were honored to host to local musicians for wonderful, well-attended concerts: the CORE 375 Project world premiere, the Madrigal Chorale, and Candlelight Concerts.



These are just the highlights over the past year of so much work by individuals and the collective groups to provide a reflection of our parish, a vibrant and living beacon of hope in the city of Detroit.

Thank you, choirs!

### **Parish Choir**

Paul Abdullah, Anna Baseley, Alice Bell, Ruth Boeder, Mary Brown, Jocelyn Burrell, Joy Crawford, Lily Czartoski, Jenny Cresswell, Dorian Dillard II, X. Alexander Durden, David Faust, Wendy Ford, B. G. Hodge, Richard Householder, Sally LePla, Eileen MacDonald, Roger Maki-Schramm, Howard Matthew, Elizabeth Medvinsky, James Moore, Jr., Megan Norris, William Peck, Katya Powder, Michael Rowan, Loretta Ryder, Dylan Slamka, Mariyon Turner, Katrina Van Maanen, Greg Williams

### **Bell Choir**

Anna Baseley, Mary Brown, Jocelyn Burrell, Joy Crawford, Dennis Parker, Vickie Rice-Parker, Sue Webb-Dickson, Greg Williams, Mary Ann Williams

# YOUTH CHOIR

*Katrina Van Maanen, Director*

2024 has been a remarkable year for our Youth Choir, characterized by increased participation and enriching experiences that foster spiritual growth and strengthen community connections. Our Youth Choir meets every Sunday morning from 9:30-9:45 a.m. under the leadership of director Katrina Van Maanen. Rehearsals serve as a welcoming space that prepares our youth for their spiritual development, continuing with Godly Play immediately after Youth Choir. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Mary Brown and Rev. Emily for stepping in as needed to lead rehearsals during Katrina's absence!

Most Sundays, our ensemble consists of a wonderful group of youth, Pre-K through middle school, including Alex, Alexander, Ellie, Ezra, Isadora, Juniper, Lucy, Owen, and Tommy. We embrace youth of all ages and backgrounds, and we especially enjoy welcoming friends, cousins, and siblings who drop in throughout the year! While our rehearsals typically take place in the Lower Level classrooms, we happily moved to the sanctuary in the fall while the Lower Level areas were being waterproofed.



During the year, our Youth Choir participated in the 10:30 a.m. services on significant occasions such as Palm Sunday in March, the last day of Sunday School in June, and Christ the King Sunday in November. The choir learned and sang three new songs: "Hosanna!" by Helen Kemp, "This Is My Commandment" arranged by Katrina, and "A Love Round" also arranged by Katrina.

In line with our overall Youth Formation goals, we introduced Youth Choir participation in mid-week offerings, incorporating time for youth music on Maundy Thursday evening, accompanied by Godly Play and supper, creating unique opportunities for youth to engage in Holy Week in new and meaningful ways.

The Youth Choir also presented the annual Christmas pageant at the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service, and it was a delight! We welcomed new participants, including Cedric, Juniper, Lucy, Olive, and Tommy, and cousins who visited! Returning youth included Alex, Alexander, Ellie, Ezra, Isa, and Owen. We utilized the script we debuted in 2023, titled "Spreading the True Light of Christmas", written by Katrina Van Maanen.



The Christmas pageant offers our youth an exciting and familiar tradition to celebrate Christ's birth, while parents often see it as a cherished benchmark as they witness their children grow in faith each year. We also enjoyed wonderful instrumental solos during the pageant, performed by Alexander on piano and Owen on saxophone, accompanied by his father. It is truly a joy to see each of our youth continue to find their "voice" through opportunities like the pageant.

Our Youth Choir rehearsals have consistently provided a platform for our youth to shine, as demonstrated by their participation in Sunday services and our annual pageant. As we look forward to the coming year, we remain committed to nurturing the voices of our young performers and fostering an environment where they can engage meaningfully in their spiritual journeys.

## BEGINNERS' BELL CHOIR

*Mary Brown, Founder & Director*

The Beginners' Bell Choir started in 2024 and has morphed several times during its first year. The ensemble made its debut at the 5:00 p.m. Family Eucharist on Christmas Eve. Kudos to the group who played that evening!



In May, we had started basic music learning sessions: reviewing time signatures, note values, and other basics, including how to hold and ring the bells. The group learned to play "Ode to Joy" and "Amazing Grace". We also met off and on during the summer and the fall.

The purpose of the group is to provide music education and low-pressure, team-oriented performance opportunities. After all, music is a team sport!

In early 2025, we will meet to lay out rehearsals for the coming year. Please feel free to come and join us! It's actually fun!



# YOUTH ACOLYTE PROGRAM

Cathy Berlage, Acolyte Coordinator



Christ Church is truly blessed to have dedicated young people taking part in our Acolyte Program. They serve our church in several capacities, some of which include Crucifer, Gospel Server, and Torch Bearer. Many have also served as teacher and/or mentor to our newcomers over the past few years. Student acolytes range in age from college graduates down through our youngest lower elementary school members. Children who fall within this age group are always welcome to participate in this ministry.

In 2024, the following dedicated youth participated throughout the year as Crucifer, Gospel Server, Communion Assistant to the Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs), Torch Bearer, Ribbon Bearer, Banner Bearer, and Children's Bell Ringer: Adilem, Alex, Alexander, Ava, Brenna, Cedric, Ezra, Isadora, Lucy, Marleen, Olive, Owen, Stella, and Tommy. We are also blessed and grateful for the johnnie-on-the-spot acolyte assistance from our college students/graduates: Elizabeth, Eric, Mira, Olivia, and William.

*Heartwarming Note:* Two of our youngest Sunday School students, Ellie and Juniper, have demonstrated joyous enthusiasm at the prospect of becoming future acolytes. Our future is bright!

*With Great Thanks:* I am so very grateful to Gwen Ald for her assistance, whenever the call arises. Thank you, Gwen!

The Acolyte Ministry is a visible reminder of the importance that children have in the ongoing life of our parish. Please join me in thanking these wonderful young people for their dedicated service to Christ Church!



# ALTAR GUILD

*Liza Parkinson and Josephine Powell, Co-Chairs*

*Heavenly Father, we praise you for the joy of ministering at the altars of this parish.  
Grant us the grace of humility that we may honor you. Amen.*

The mission of the Altar Guild is to prepare all things necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist and any of the other sacraments and offices of the church, including flowers and decorations. The Altar Guild serves under the direction of the clergy, who have overall responsibility for determining how Altar Guild duties are performed. In 2024, the Altar Guild continued to fulfill its mission.

We have continued to assist our rector, Rev. Emily, as she has ensured that the sacrament of communion is accessible to all who desire and are prepared to receive it. We continue the inclusive practices we began in fall 2022, which involve several ways to receive wine or grape juice, and to share communion at the floor level as well as at the high altar. This year, we identified a couple of new vessels--a new tray and a new flagon (pitcher)--to help this go more smoothly.

Members of the Altar Guild and our congregation have shared their expertise to ensure that the church brass and silver shines. In addition, special thanks go especially to Richard Thomas and John Booth for their meticulous work polishing our pulpit, lectern, crosses, and various memorials around the church.



In advance of Easter, Marguerite Carlton designed and fashioned a custom paschal candle for 2024, which features custom images that are very meaningful to our community. We are grateful for her artistry!

Members of the Altar Guild quietly support the sacraments of baptism, marriage, and burial for our congregation. All Saints', All Souls', Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter shone brightly with the work of the Altar Guild on display. The joint efforts of the Altar Guild and Flower Guild enhance our worship and are offered to the glory of God.

We are thankful for the work of our members: Gwen Ald, Jane Forbes, Roberta Gaspar, Hope Hoffman, Terry Lloyd, Carolyn Maher, Roger Maki-Schramm, Liza Parkinson, Josephine Powell, Alma Simmons, Letha Ann Steward, and Richard Thomas, and all who helped at polishing sessions, the Hanging of the Greens, and taking the greens down. We send love to Mary Lou Solomon and Sally Wheeler, who have moved away. In June, we were honored to pay tribute as an Altar Guild to beloved Josephine Mashour at her funeral. We miss her dearly.





# FLOWER GUILD

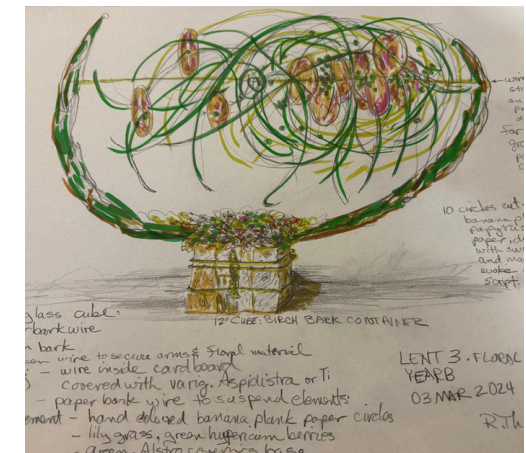
Beth Ann Tesluk

Parishioner Richard Thomas practices the art of floral iconography. Inspired by Scripture, he crafts, or more properly writes, floral icons, taking flowers and plant material and transforming them into sculptural interpretations of the Word, in light of liturgical seasons or events in the life of our community.



These visually arresting arrangements very often include local or native plants, and parishioners have come to treasure Richard's descriptions of the work almost as much as the works themselves. There have been icons to celebrate individual feast days and special occasions, such as weddings and funerals, and series of icons that evolve over a season. Richard's deep love of liturgy informs and inspires his craft as does his deep knowledge of the plant world.

What began as a way to celebrate occasional feast days has grown into a consistent Flower Guild, with several talented members generously participating throughout the week. Hope Hoffman, Barbara Perez, and Ruth Boeder have contributed to numerous floral icons and arrangements. John Booth and Jen Sainte-Laurent stop in during flower preparations to polish and repair wood, brass, and bronze. With Richard's mentorship, Marguerite Carlton designed a custom paschal candle for Easter 2024, and Mira Hughes has created one for Easter 2025. What started as small seeds now transforms our life together.







Upon clergy request after services, Flower Guild members also break floral icons or arrangements down into small bouquets that clergy or other visitors then deliver to parishioners at home or in the hospital.

And the Flower Guild thoughtfully places and tends fresh, potted plants such as orchids and peace lilies in the Atrium, and designs occasional small arrangements for Ledyard Hall, as gestures of hospitality.

The Flower Guild assists the Altar Guild and other volunteers with the annual palms on Palm Sunday, the lilies on Easter, and the greens and poinsettias for Christmas. Meaningful dedications for special flowers - and music - in honor or memory of loved ones for Easter, All Saints', and Christmas fill the church with love. At any time of year, parishioners and friends are invited to ask the Flower Guild to arrange flowers in honor of loved ones or to celebrate significant events like birthdays or anniversaries. To make a floral dedication, please look for sign-up sheets in the Atrium or the eNews, or contact Richard or the office.



All are welcome and invited to join the Flower Guild by participating in scheduled activities or just letting Richard know of your interest. Richard and all Flower Guild members are wonderful teachers, and always welcome the opportunity to share the craft. Many hands make light, beautiful work!

We are so grateful for the Flower Guild's ministry, and the congregation's generosity, as together we connect through the beauty of the natural world, our sanctuary, and our relationships, and bear one another's joys, wonders, and sorrows.



# AUDIO VISUAL MINISTRY

*Desmond Jones*

2024 was the second full year for the Audio-Visual group at Christ Church Detroit. We are currently doing a mixture of live streaming and video recording. The original team members are Chuck Atwater, Taylor Matthew, and Desmond Jones, and we were able to increase our capacity with the inclusion of Caleb Barger, plus we have received assistance from Jim Treece, Sonia Jones, Dean Simmer when regular members are not available. This has been great, especially as the needs and activities have grown.

Throughout 2024, we completed streaming and/or recording at 52 regular church services, 8 special services (Evensongs, Christmas Eve, etc), 8 celebrations of life (funerals), 3 Deep River sessions, 3 concerts, 2 weddings, 1 annual parish meeting. New AV events included the Better Cities Film Festival, the CORE 375 concert, the Chichester Psalms, the Community Chorus of Detroit Concert. We also provided audio support as needed for Candlelight Concerts. In 2024, then, with the increased events at the church, we also have seen a 40% increase in the need for audio-visual support. Based on the trend, we should expect further increase in 2025.

Technically, it's very important that we stay ahead of the game regarding our equipment and ability to deliver, based on the needs. The most urgent concern is audio and the requisite equipment in both the sanctuary and Ledyard Hall. In areas where we fall short, we have been able to rent equipment to fill the gap, but it would be easier and more cost-effective if we had our own. We are currently engaging service providers for quotes, with the hope that most, if not all, of the AV equipment needs can be met in 2025.

Our streaming platforms are Facebook and YouTube, but we continue to have intermittent challenges with Facebook, so for most individuals, YouTube has become the platform of choice.

Many thanks to the AV team members, who have delivered on every occasion. Even though it can be challenging at times to accommodate all the requests, it's our joy to assist.

To those members of the congregation who are curious about the AV activities...why not come on board! It will be satisfying, there is a lot to learn, there is a lot to enjoy. We will welcome you.

**This ministry is here to stay at Christ Church Detroit.**





# USHERS

*Sonia Charron-Jones*

The mission of Christ Church's Usher Ministry has continued to thrive and grow in earnest during 2024. This happy band of volunteers anticipates and meets the needs of our congregants at our 8:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services. Of course, we also serve during weddings, funerals, picnics, and other gatherings.

Our duties include:

- Greet with a smile, handshake, hug, peace sign, etc.
- Distribute bulletins
- Seat congregants
- Invite congregants to assist with the presentation of the gifts (bread and wine)
- Collect the offering
- Secure the entrances and exits
- Record the attendance
- Assist with communion, to name a few



Our ministry fair garnered interest from some of our younger congregants, and we look forward to welcoming new volunteers in 2025.

A special thanks to: Roger and Mary Basse, Chris Beck, Bob & Claire Brown, Kerry Crenshaw, Albert Dib, Allan Dib, Ezra (our youngest), Mary Herring, Guy Jackson, Sonia and Desmond Jones, John and Lauren Leney, Terry Lloyd, Anthony Mitchell, Jon Miller, Jen Sainte-Laurent, John Staif, Jim Treece, and Patrick and Betty Warner.

## PASTORAL CARE

*Mary Brown*

Sandy Zull and I, with Rev. Emily's invaluable input, have been working on the reconfiguration of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEVs) for some time now. During the pandemic, the LEVs were not active as they had been before.

In the resurrecting and reconfiguring of the LEVs, it has become apparent that new Visitors are needed to fill the gaps, some needing training and some needing retraining. Also, we have continued to update the list of people needing to be visited and/or given communion, been aware of others to receive flowers at certain holidays, and visited those who need imminent care. We hope to get all LEVs prepared and paired shortly.

Homebound parishioners are often visited by dedicated friends from church as well, and some of us keep in touch by calling or sending bulletins, *Day by Day* devotional booklets, cards, texts, or emails to those who can't get to church regularly.

# YOUTH FORMATION

*Rev. Emily Williams Guffey*

In January 2024, we launched Godly Play, a Montessori-style curriculum for ages Pre-K through middle school. A “cousin” of Worship Center, the creativity-based curriculum that served our elementary kids well for many years, Godly Play is enjoying renewed attention and resources in the wider church and is a joyful addition to our Sunday School offerings. It is already becoming a signature program for our youth, alongside Rite 13 (upper middle school) and J2A (high school).



In May, we joyfully and gratefully welcomed Chad Hampton to the role of Youth & Family Ministry Coordinator. Chad has jumped in with both feet, enthusiastically learning Godly Play, coordinating the Nursery, cooking amazing chili for Family Suppers, and generally being wonderful addition to the team. We also have been thrilled to welcome Ari to the role of Children’s Assistant, and Gabby to the role occasionally, and to see Dahlia when she is home on breaks from college.

Responding to ideas and interests of our young families, we offered a children’s program on Maundy Thursday evening, complete with singing and Godly Play, and facilitated a series of Family Nights - with Chad’s now-famous chili and Jared’s delicious homemade pasta - throughout the fall.

We also observed many beautiful Sunday School traditions! In March we enjoyed the annual bowling party, with thanks to Roger Basse and Anne Hughes. On Palm Sunday, Lauren Leney taught children (of all ages!) to make palm crosses. On Easter Sunday, children participated in filling the lily cross, and enjoyed an outdoor Easter Egg Hunt afterwards! On Mother’s Day we applauded Adilem in her Senior Speech and were so proud to see her graduate from high school and begin college! In October, we celebrated the Blessing of the Animals with a visit from Party Animals and Dan the Creature Man, and later in the month enjoyed a Halloween-style Ministry Fair in which our intrepid trick-or-treaters were greeted by ministry leaders all over the church and scored a lot of candy in the process. In November, we turned our focus to preparing for the Christmas pageant, with which the students had lots of fun!

On a Sunday morning, students gather at 9:30 a.m. to start the day in the best way possible: Music with Ms. Katrina! At 9:45 a.m., they participate in Godly Play. Then at 10:15 a.m., some head to the sacristy to get ready to serve as acolytes, while others continue with Godly Play, join their families in the sanctuary, make arts & crafts - or weather permitting, play outside! - until communion.

It takes a village to raise our children, and our village is strong and growing. In 2024, twenty youth, from infants through high school, participated regularly in ministry programs, while another ten visited or participated occasionally.

Christ Church provides a loving, inclusive community in which to raise our children and grow in faith, joy, and wonder. Families of all kinds, from all backgrounds, are warmly welcomed at all times. Further, we celebrate that a child’s place is always in worship. Children of all ages are joyfully welcomed in services; babies’ cries and toddlers’ comments are among our favorite sounds! To make the sanctuary more accessible for children and their families, we continue to provide a “soft space” with a comfy floor rug and numerous quiet activity materials, including books, blocks, crayons, and coloring pages.



# ADULT BIBLE STUDY

*Barbara Cushing*

The Sunday morning Adult Bible Class enjoys reading together and pondering the depths of meaning in the Biblical text. Our year of reading follows the academic year from mid-September to mid-June. At the beginning of January 2024, we were well into the Hebrew Bible book of 2 Chronicles, a partial history of the time from Judah's King Solomon through the Babylonian exile of the 6th century BCE. During Lent, our readings included the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, telling the later events following the return of many Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem under the Edict of King Cyrus of Persia. Throughout the Easter season, we looked at the available partial texts of "gospels" written in the early centuries after the canon of the New Testament was closed: those of Peter, Thomas, Mary, and Judas. And we completed the 2023-2024 year of reading with the lovely little late Christian Epistles of 1 Peter and 2 Peter.

With the new educational year in September 2024, we began with a careful reading of the Gospel of Mark, the gospel from which our lectionary readings were taken. During the first two weeks of Advent, prior to Christmas break, we read the small book of the Old Testament prophet Malachi. At points in our reading, the text gave us the opportunity to explore literature or music that has found its inspiration through that text: for example, George Frideric Handel and his librettist used some verses in *The Messiah*. And as 2025 begins, we are reading the curious Old Testament prophet Ezekiel--curious in that the visions he is granted are at time quite bizarre. The 2024-2025 reading year ends with 1 Maccabees, from what is referred to as late Jewish "Second Temple" writings, relating to incidents occurring during the Greek Seleucid period in Palestine prior to the Roman era of Jesus' time.

We find that these Biblical texts have meaning in our complex contemporary world. These authors still have the ability to point us to evidence of continuing Divine action in our world, and how we may internalize that Presence for our individual and communal well-being. There is no homework; we read everything together in our class. Anyone interested is welcome any time!

# CENTERING PRAYER

*Kathryn Treece*

"In essence, contemplative prayer is simply a wordless, trusting opening of self to the divine presence. Far from being advanced, it is about the simplest form of prayer there is," says the Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault. When our lives become filled with agendas, ambition, and worries, we can too easily lose touch with that natural God-intimacy. Centering Prayer offers a way through, and the Centering Prayer group at Christ Church offers time to practice the simple instructions *together*.

We meet on Thursdays at 11:00 a.m., mostly by Zoom. The hour-long gathering and liturgy consist of an opening, twenty minutes of silence, prayer, a brief reading, informal sharing, and closing. Participants enjoy the chance to slow down and sit quietly in God's presence. We also pray together for the world, our own needs, and any special requests from the prayer box at church or that the office receives. Anyone is welcome to join the group at any time. If you are new to the practice, we offer guidelines. For more information, check out Contemplative Outreach at [www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org).

# ART MINISTRY

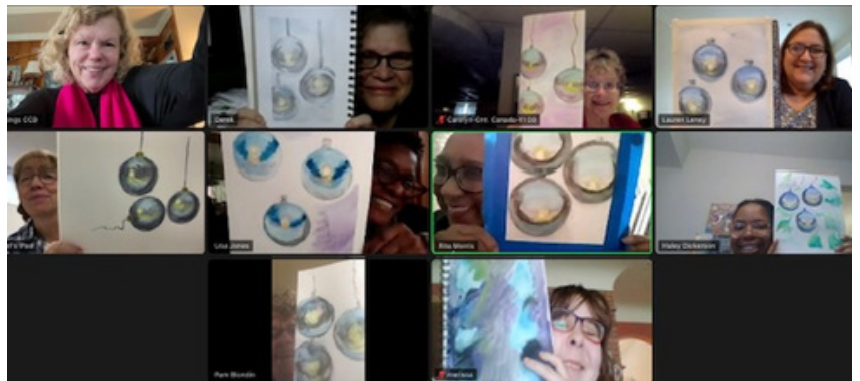
*Sally LePla*

Started as a spiritual diversion for Christ Church Detroit's membership during the pandemic, this fun art fellowship--originally called "Drawing with a Tea" and now called "Creation Continues"--has developed into a widespread worldwide community of caring, loving, creative friends. With the only commitment being to show up when you have the time and inclination, the group changes a bit from week to week. But the spirit of support and love is a steadfast pillar of this ministry.

Much like a prayer group, the assembled participants have the opportunity to put worldly pressures and deadlines aside to dig deeply into their creative selves (yes, we all have them!) and live in moments of creativity, spiritual awareness, and nonjudgmental fellowship.

Since each meeting is usually a completed watercolor painting (taught with step-by-step slides that are later sent to the artists), anyone can drop in for the fun whenever there is a meeting.

According to many in the group, participating creatively can be a life changer. Why not give it a try in 2025?



# ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

*Mary Brown and Betty Warner, Coordinators*

The 2024 CCD picnic took place on Belle Isle on August 25th. More than 100 people attended the event in Shelter 8, a double pavilion on the north side of the island. The service was lovely as always with flowers, recorder accompaniment, and robust singing intermingled with readings, Rev. Emily's sermon, and Eucharist. It was a warm, humid day with bees, but there was also a breeze throughout. The congregation members were animated, mingling, and enjoying a pleasant day.

The picnic portion was successful as well, thanks to the organizers and the shoppers, the food and money contributors, and the grillers and the servers. An excellent crew! The feast was enjoyed by all.

In the last few years, we have developed an on-going, hard-working picnic committee whose members know the in's and out's of how to make this event run smoothly. Many thanks to them as well as to the many other folks who have always - or just once - given their help to this picnic. Much appreciation to all of you! Believe it or not, summer will come again!





# BREAKFAST MINISTRY

*Betty Warner, Coordinator*

The Christ Church Breakfast Cook Team Ministry thrives! Breakfast teams arrive at 7:30 a.m. to prepare a variety of delicious dishes. From scrambled eggs, sausage, and biscuits to each team's unique specialties, their dedication ensures a hearty breakfast for attendees of the well-attended 8:15 a.m. service and early arrivals for the 10:30 a.m. service.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to the dedicated Cook Team Ministry volunteers, with special recognition to shopper Letha Ann Steward, kitchen coordinators Kathryn and Jim Treece, and frequent coffee maker Jon Miller for their leadership and commitment.

2024 Breakfast Ministry Members: Jon Miller, Eamon Harnois, Lurdes Arambula, and family; Lisa Jones and Clarke Mason; Anthony Mitchell, Guy Jackson, Ryan Tyler, Wendy Ford (in loving memory), Edwina Simpson, Hope Hoffman, Mary Herring, Seth Lloyd, Letha Ann Steward; Phil, Beverly, and Bing Brown

Continental Breakfast Volunteers: Bea Loren, Taylor Matthew, Sandy Zull

Fall/Spring Cooks: Gary MacDonald, Betty Warner, Patrick Warner

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication in making this ministry a success!



# COFFEE HOUR

*Kathryn Treece, Coordinator*

Coffee Hour after the 10:30 a.m. service is an important and joyful part of our Sunday morning ritual. It's a time for parishioners, visitors, and potential members to connect in an informal atmosphere. In 2024:

- We continued our new plan of asking 2-3 volunteers a week to bring just one item for Coffee Hour (rather than hosting the whole event). Thank you to everyone who contributed throughout the year!
- The plan requires a kitchen manager each Sunday for set-up and clean-up. Thanks go to Gwen Ald, Lauren Leney, Carolyn Maher, and Jen Inchiostro for stepping into the role when Jim Treece and I weren't available. We could use more people to learn this simple drill.
- Coffee Hour is not just about food. We are grateful to Betty & Patrick Warner, Hope Hoffman, and Richard Thomas for providing beautiful flowers; to Beth Ann Tesluk for timely updates; to Chad Hampton for hands-on support; and to anyone who has laundered dish towels and tablecloths--an unseen, necessary job. FYI, we also intentional about keeping food waste to a minimum, composting when possible, and using environmentally-friendly products.
- Coffee Hour needs coffee! Thank you to Betty Warner, Lisa Jones, Clarke Mason, and especially Jon Miller, Ashley Poulin, and Gabby Pizzino for arriving early on Sunday to get the brewing started.
- "Lemonade (and cookies) in Ledyard" worked very well for scaled-down times during the summer.
- Huge thanks also go to Jon Miller and Jim Treece who faithfully remove a large amount of paper, plastic, metal, cardboard, styrofoam, and glass for recycling every week. These materials shouldn't go into the trash stream, so please consider your own awareness of this issue (hint: no plastic water bottles or soft drink cans in the garbage!).



Every Sunday, the kitchen is full of energy and purpose: first with the Breakfast Team, then setting up for Coffee Hour, quickly followed by sandwich prep for the Bag Lunch ministry. Thank you to all the members of each team for your cooperation within our shared space.

As a vital congregational connector, Coffee Hour deserves our attention and nurture in order to run smoothly from week to week. If you have ideas on how to improve our time together--anything from organization to decoration, from being more inclusive to more eco-friendly--I welcome your thoughts, feedback, and participation.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & HOSPITALITY

*Beth Ann Tesluk, Associate for Communications*

2024 was a year for new friends, new partnerships, and new events! Opportunities to share with our community continued to expand, and the music played a major role in that expansion. In addition to our own celebrations and festivities, community partners made the most of our spaces, including the American Legion Honor Guard, Alcoholics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Holy Spokes, the Detroit Women's Chorus, the Community Chorus of Detroit, the Madrigal Chorale, the Chateaufort Place Cooperative, the Better Cities Film Festival, the Detroit Grand Prix, and Fever Productions (Candlelight Concerts). These organizations and the events they hosted brought thousands of people to Christ Church, sometimes hundreds in the same day! We also hosted several tours, including Detroit History Tours and Preservation Detroit, as well as impromptu visits from historians and church families.

Our Lenten program, Deep River, returned in March and invited us to engage with music from the African American musical traditions, with simple shared meals beforehand. We are grateful to those who bring friends to come and see! A new ensemble from the Voces8 Foundation performed in April. Lyra is the only professional six-voice women's a cappella group in the U.S., and we were thrilled to host them.

June started off with Ledyard Hall's transformation into a race team canteen, as the Detroit Grand Prix made Christ Church their hospitality headquarters. They set up grill stations and a refrigeration container in the Jefferson Ave parking lot, and prepared breakfast, lunch, and dinner for all the teams, ensuring they were fueled for the high energy races. Since the church is literally in the center of the course, we had to relocate worship, and held a service of creation care at Jon Miller's farm. It is always a joyful service, made more so by the canine friends who share in the day.

We also participated in the Motor City Pride Festival again, staffing a booth and sharing welcome materials and handmade notes of encouragement with attendees. This is a meaningful way for us to extend not just hospitality but also a sense of welcome beyond our campus, and it would be great if more folks participated. The month ended with a bang, with over forty people attending the Fireworks party.

Gorgeous weather greeted us in August for the annual Worship in the Park service and Parish Picnic. We had to change our location due to construction on Belle Isle, but the larger shelter really let us spread out. Many thanks to Jon Miller for securing us our spot, and to Bill Peck for ensuring we had beautiful music, and to everyone who helped prepare delicious food, including John Leney's crew of intrepid grill masters.

If it's October, it must be the Feast of Saint Francis, and our Blessing of the Animals celebration. We enjoyed a visit from Dan the Creature Man, with his array of exotic friends, including a tarantula! Party Animals, the petting zoo, caused quite a ruckus! As an unexpected treat, Jon Miller's son Jacy Harnois brought the firetruck he serves on to the Woodbridge lot, and the kids got to try out the big hose.

We were thrilled to host the world premiere of the CORE375 Project in October as well. This concert is based on Michelle Andonian's multimedia installation of the same name, and spans the history of Detroit from the Ice Age to the present and includes magnificent storytelling by our neighbor, Marsha Music. A band led by jazz musician Dave McMurray raised the roof, while the concert raised close to \$4,000 for the Bag Lunch Ministry. Thanks to Seth Lloyd for shepherding our relationship with Michelle and her collaborators. We hope to host a record release party for them sometime in 2025.

# OUTREACH

*Seth Lloyd, Chair*

In 2024, the Outreach Committee continued some of its activities from previous years, started a substantial new program, and resumed a program that had been on hiatus since before the pandemic.

For many years, the Committee has sponsored “work days” at Gleaners Community Food Bank. That effort continued. On five or six occasions, a group of 8-10 parishioners and friends gathered at the Gleaners warehouse in Taylor (Gleaners has moved all of its volunteer activities from its Eastside facility to Taylor) for a morning of work packing food. This work is not heavy and is most satisfying. Typically, we pack food in 25-pound boxes in an assembly line process. In a typical morning, we pack (together with volunteers from other organizations) about 800 boxes, which are then distributed by Gleaners to individuals who are food-insecure, meaning that they need foodstuffs to supplement whatever they can afford on their own. Usually, the contents of these boxes can produce thousands of meals! So, two and a half hours of work on the part of Gleaners’ volunteers can make a dramatic dent in the amount of food insecurity in our region. We try to volunteer every 6-8 weeks. Unfortunately, Gleaners no longer has Saturday volunteer shifts, so the shifts occur only on weekdays.

We also continued our Advent Diaper Drive, this year collecting, through your generosity, over 21,000 diapers. Diapers are not inexpensive, and your generosity is an important gift to economically disadvantaged families. Special thanks to Eileen MacDonald, Sally LePla, Eamon Harnois, and Lu Arambula.



In November 2023, we started a bag lunch program for those in need, and that project grew substantially in spring 2024 when we shifted it from a monthly effort to a weekly one. Through our work at the Pope Francis Center, we had become aware that, while that organization serves hundreds of meals Monday through Saturday, no organization in our area provided any meals on Sundays. Anthony Mitchell distributed flyers at the Pope Francis Center advertising our program, and, from a modest beginning, the number of bag lunches distributed grew to about 60 in warm weather, about 30 in inclement weather. Recently, we have begun to offer hot soup as well. This program is funded from the parish Outreach Fund, but its cost has been supplemented by contributions from former and present parishioners and from community groups. Additional volunteers to assemble and distribute bag lunches are needed.





For between 30-35 years, the parish has hosted a Shelter Week, during which we house and feed between 30-40 homeless men and women. Our efforts begin with Saturday dinner, and end the following Saturday with breakfast. This effort enlists between 75-100 parishioners and friends. For the first 25 years of the program, Mary Basse and Margo Norris led the effort. For the last 8 years, Genet Barthwell and Seth Lloyd took over. The program, coordinated by Cass Community Social Services, was on hiatus during the pandemic and is being renewed in 2025. We will house our neighbors from March 8-15, 2025. The new coordinators are Jared Inchistro, Carolyn Maher, and, returning for another “shift”, Mary Basse! Look for volunteer sign-up sheets in the Atrium. The parish’s participation in this program is a wonderful event which makes a real difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters who lack housing.

The members of the Committee are Mary Basse, Tim Bledsoe, Ruth Boeder, Bob Brown, Kerry and Denise Crenshaw, Christine Galli, Emily Williams Guffey, the Inchistro family (Jen, Jared, Olive, and Cedric), Guy Jackson, Desmond Jones, Lucinda Keils, Matthew Kunjummen, Bea Loren, Eileen MacDonald, Carolyn Maher, Anthony Mitchell, Margo Norris, Barbara Perez, and Josephine Powell. Thanks to each of these members!

We welcome additional members. If you are interested in joining, you need only email me ([smlloyd4@gmail.com](mailto:smlloyd4@gmail.com)) expressing your interest, and voila, you are a member! The Committee meets, usually via Zoom, approximately six or eight times a year.

# WELCOME COMMITTEE

*Paul Abdullah, Chair*

2024 was the first full year for the Welcome Committee, and it proved to be a fruitful year for both analysis and action. This year, we completed a comprehensive review of the visitor experience that resulted in about 20 specific recommendations, many of which have already led to changes to our facilities, worship, and visitor follow-up. We hope to tackle more recommendations in the year to come.

The biggest initiative we started this year was rolling out Name Tags for regularly-attending members. This is still a work in progress, but thanks to the assistance of many, a large number of name tags have been produced and distributed. If you haven't received yours yet, you can count on receiving one soon. Not only do name tags make it much easier for new members to meet people, but long-time members also benefit from occasional help putting the right name to a familiar face. I invite you to make wearing your name tag a part of your Sunday routine and an act of hospitality for your neighbors, old and new.

Members of the Welcome Committee also assisted Rev. Emily and the staff with a Newcomers' Gathering early in 2024 and with our annual Inquirers' Course during Lent. The 2024 class was notably larger than in recent years and featured a wonderful series of discussions that highlighted both the rich tradition of the Episcopal Church, and the rich gifts our newest members bring from their varied backgrounds. We were thrilled to officially welcome new members at the Pentecost service in May.



Overall, I hope our longtime members have noticed the many new faces that have joined us this year, as well as the fact that so many of our newer members have brought tremendous energy, faithfulness, and gifts that are already changing us for the better.

If you have the spiritual gift of hospitality or any other gifts you would like to share, we would love to have your help. Our monthly(ish) meetings are held on Zoom and are open to any church member. We also welcome your feedback, suggestions, and introductions when you bring a friend to church! For more information, contact me ([abdullah.paul@gmail.com](mailto:abdullah.paul@gmail.com)), Rev. Emily, or any member of the committee.

In 2024 our members were: Paul Abdullah (chair), Mary Brown, Mary Herring, Hope Hoffman, Lauren Leney, Carolyn Maher, Kevin Maher, Greg Sivi, Jim Treece, and Sandra Zull.



# COMMUNICATIONS

*Beth Ann Tesluk, Associate for Communications*

In my role, it is my task to support the mission of Christ Church through a variety of ways, including email, social media, and advertising.

Email continues to be the primary vehicle for communication for the parish, and the number of email subscribers is 421. This may look down from last year (424), but the reality is that we cleaned up the list, removing those who are deemed “undeliverable”. Open rates for the weekly eNews is over 60%, well over industry standards, which is to be expected. The weekly eNews is also mailed to several parishioners who prefer to receive the hard copy. Thanks to Sheila Sweeny for providing volunteer support and getting the print version to those who prefer the offline edition. We also send out incidental emails to promote events or encourage folks to volunteer, and those are all well-received, too. In total, we sent 143 emails over the course of the year, for a total of 48,852 individual emails sent!

Facebook and YouTube serve as means to extend the ministry of Christ Church through the livestream of the 10:30 a.m. Eucharist and other services. Unfortunately, we are experiencing significant challenges with Facebook in particular, as their AI tools sweep for copyright violations and mute any audio they find suspicious. This includes portions of almost every service, even though we license our music and are in no way violating copyright. YouTube does not engage in these practices, and all are encouraged to watch there. Through livestream we can invite friends and loved ones into our life together, so they may share in worship, including baptisms and funerals, even though they may be far away. Weddings and funerals especially contribute to our viewership, and we are grateful to be able to provide families and friends a way to be present when in-person participation is not an option. We now have nearly 300 subscribers on YouTube. Weekly services generate between 20 to 45 views per week, while weddings and funerals can reach over 100. While the YouTube experience is not as interactive as Facebook, it does allow us more control over the experience, including offering private videos for specific services.

Rev. Emily maintains the church’s Instagram presence, telling the story of Christ Church with beautiful images and short videos. By mentioning friends and neighbors in our feed and commenting on theirs, Rev. Emily continues to foster and nourish community relationships. We are now up to 950 followers, and our goal in 2025 is to exceed 1,000. Check out [instagram.com/christchurchdetroit](https://www.instagram.com/christchurchdetroit).

We continue to advertise in the Detroit Monitor, a free paper distributed to local businesses, as well as provide underwriting support to WRCJ. This underwriting is a cost-effective way to promote concerts to the classical music community and lets us support local public radio, too.

Vital elements to our communications are handwritten notes, including memorial gift acknowledgments and birthday cards. For many years, both of these ministries were tended by Jo Mashour, who we lost in 2024, and are now carried out by Sheila Sweeny (memorial acknowledgments) and Claire Brown and Terry Lloyd (birthday cards). Make sure your birthday (no year required!) is up to date with the Office so that you might be included!

# STEWARDSHIP

*Jim Treece, Chair*

The Stewardship Committee encourages parishioners to embrace a spiritual discipline of gratitude and generosity. One way to give thanks for all that God has given us is to serve Christ with our time, talents, and money. In practice, the Finance Committee and Vestry look to this committee to raise the pledges that will allow the Vestry to prepare a realistic budget for the coming year. Our pledge drive is an annual event. In 2024, though, we faced two added challenges.

First, after years of relying on the church's unrestricted reserves to cover deficit spending, those reserves had fallen dangerously low. There was a new urgency to raising more money, so that we would be closer to paying our own way, rather than dipping into what should be rainy-day funds to pay everyday expenses.

Second, for various reasons, Christ Church Detroit saw a notable dip in both the number of pledges and the total amount pledged a year ago, for the 2024 budget. We needed to make up lost ground. After all, this is a busy, active church with a full slate of programs. We need money to maintain that level of activity.

Those challenges were conveyed to the parish, and the congregation stepped up--to a remarkable level.

As of early January 2025, we had received pledges from 85 households for a total of \$397,560. That compares to 83 pledges totaling \$353,716 exactly a year earlier. Among this year's 85 pledges, 48 increased their pledge. Indeed, 37 households raised their pledge by 10 percent or more, including four households that doubled their pledge and three that tripled it. There were five new pledging households, while 26 households kept their pledge steady, three returned to pledging after skipping last year, and three reduced their pledge. There is a history of pledges coming in after the annual meeting, around the beginning of Lent, and even around Easter, so these numbers remain preliminary.

I am very grateful to all who raised their pledge. I am also very grateful to those who held their pledge steady, and those who reduced their pledge but made the effort to let Rev. Emily or other leaders know their plans. I do not know the circumstances--say, financial gains or setbacks, or health challenges--behind these pledges. For all I know, someone's act of keeping their pledge steady represents enormous faith in the year ahead.

What I do know is that the continued support financially, and with time and talents, by all congregants allows Christ Church Detroit to thrive as it seeks to serve God and our neighbors in the name of Christ.

I want to thank committee members Susan Higman Larsen, Dean Simmer, Beth Ann Tesluk, and Rev. Emily, plus the Finance Committee, which provided support, encouragement, and, as needed, additional prodding. All helped the committee fulfill its mission. But most of all, thanks to the entire congregation of Christ Church Detroit. Your faithfulness continues to inspire.



# FINANCE

*Jane Forbes, Chair*

Members of the Finance Committee in 2024 included Treasurer Paul Abdullah, the Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, John Leney, Seth Lloyd, Howard Matthew, Megan Norris, and Senior Warden Jim Treece. During the year, the Committee assisted the Vestry in managing the financial resources of the Church by reviewing statements and reports, overseeing receipts and disbursements (both for the regular parish operations and the capital campaign), preparing and revising proposed budgets, monitoring cash needs, endowments, and special purpose funds, and arranging for the short-term investment of general and capital campaign funds.



The Committee also takes on special projects when needed. In 2024, some of those tasks included:

- Working with the Capital Campaign Steering Committee in a successful effort to raise the additional pledges needed to undertake the exterior restoration of Ledyard Hall
- Identifying and interviewing firms to assist with the preparation of church financial records for audit and recommending the engagement of auditors for the 2022, 2023, and 2024 statements
- Preparing reports to the Vestry and to parish members and conducting informal parish meetings about church cash reserves and the ongoing need for increased annual giving

Thanks to each of the members of the Committee who served in 2024, and especially to Paul Abdullah for his help with banking, accounting, and investment issues. Special thanks also to Glen Olivache who helped to prepare and review 2021 church financial statements.

# COUNTERS

*Sheila Sweeny*

Each week, a small group of parishioners meets in Sibley House. Its task is to count the money received the previous Sunday. These offerings may include not only pledges but flower dedications, memorials, and checks from outside groups. At Christmas, the Counters also process the money from the Holiday Greens Sale. Its processes aim to protect the financial integrity of the church. The work requires both precision and discretion, and at least two people must work together at the same time.

Current group members are Jim Treece, Kerry Crenshaw, and Sheila Sweeny. If necessary, staff members are available to assist.

# BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

*Jim Treece, Former Interim Chair, and Teresa Lloyd, Chair*

The Buildings & Grounds Committee's work typically is a mix of routine maintenance and larger, often unforeseen problems that arise during the year. This year, the committee also worked around and in conjunction with the Capital Campaign's projects and work crews.

That included dealing with extra dust in Ledyard Hall and cranes and other equipment on the grounds. That meant both extra tasks, such as moving courtyard benches out of the way, and taking advantage of work cranes to install new roof-mounted air-conditioning for the nursery and atrium. Howard Matthew, Ruth Boeder, and Jim Treece tag-teamed to make sure the committee was represented at the weekly progress meetings with capital projects' contractors and architects.

As always, the church benefitted from many, many hours of volunteer labor by committee members and others. Just a few examples:



- Cedric, Olive, and Jared Inchiostro, Patrick Warner, and Seth Lloyd handled lawn-mowing duties over the summer, while a large contingent of parishioners lent a hand on several workdays to weed, trim, and add mulch to our grounds.
- When the pantry refrigerator died just before the Detroit Grand Prix's catering crews were to use our kitchen, Desmond Jones conducted extensive research on possible replacements, both new and used. He eventually recommended the model that is now in the pantry.
- Jennifer Sainte-Laurent, Howard Matthew, and Jim Treece cut down aging arborvitae in the front and rear of the church.
- Jon Miller and Stuart Grigg researched and carried out plans to add Rev. Emily's name to the Rectors' Plaque in the narthex, rectifying a longstanding slight.
- Terry and Seth Lloyd, plus Jim Treece, added bird decals to the atrium windows to prevent birds from flying into those windows and injuring or killing themselves.
- Caroline Widak continued to review our property for safety concerns, in particular making sure we have an adequate number of fire extinguishers on hand.
- Jim Treece researched the possibility of adding solar panels to Ledyard Hall's new roof.





The committee also oversaw the painting of parts of the walls damaged by water in the east balcony (where the Bell Choir plays), and was actively involved in advising on the removal of pews and adding more accessible seating areas in the sanctuary.

The committee gratefully welcomed Artur Kolc as Facilities Manager in mid-year. He has proved very dedicated to the care of our facilities--keeping a watchful eye on minor problems before they escalate, dealing with plumbing emergencies, working to ensure that our aging boiler is working properly, and overseeing installation of the new air-conditioning units mentioned above.

Jim Treece served as interim chair of the committee for the early part of the year. He was delighted by Terry Lloyd's agreeing to return as chair of the committee, providing much-needed institutional knowledge and a steady hand to the oft-changing demands of the job.



## SAFETY COMMITTEE

*Caroline Widak*

The Safety Committee had four meetings in 2024. The meetings are held on a monthly basis via Zoom for about 30-45 minutes with the majority of them falling on Tuesdays. The focus of the committee is to identify health and safety hazards and brainstorm ways to solve them. The regulations that are often referred to are the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The main project we are focusing on is creating a formal and written Emergency Action Plan. Projects completed in 2024:

1. The annual extinguisher and sprinkler inspection was completed.
2. Emergency Action Plan maps were completed.
3. The courtyard gate was enhanced to include security mesh and an updated panic bar.
4. Window stickers were added to announce AED in the building.
5. Small first aid kits were updated and placed throughout the facility.

# RENOVATION ACTION COMMITTEE

*Laura Sanom, Chair*

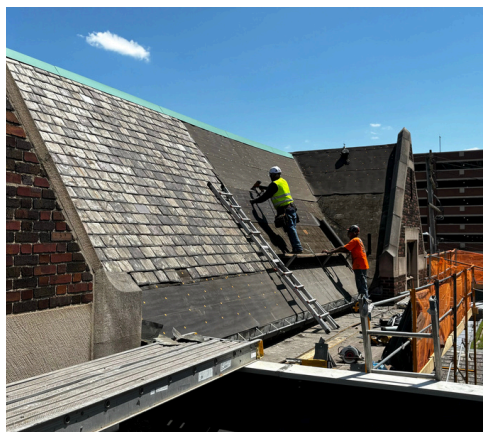
In January 2024, the Renovation Action Committee (RAC) reported on its 2024 goals to: (i) hire a general contractor for Phase 1 of the renovation plan, which included the Capital Campaign's exterior projects and waterproofing; (ii) start the Phase 1 work in spring 2024; (iii) complete Phase 1 in 2024 or early 2025; and (iv) start planning for Phase 2 of the renovation, i.e., inside the kitchen and Ledyard Hall.

With the hard work of Rev. Emily and the staff; the Capital Campaign, Buildings & Grounds, Finance, and Renovation Action Committees; and the Vestry, the RAC can report that each of its goals for 2024 is 99.9% complete, and it is on track to hire a kitchen contractor in spring 2025 and to start the kitchen renovation during the summer of 2025.

## **Phase 1 of the Renovation**

In particular, the church hired general contractor AM Higley to work with our owner's representative, BDC Consulting, and architect, Quinn Evans, on the Phase 1 exterior renovation project. A construction contract was executed in spring 2024 to: (i) replace the windows in Ledyard Hall with energy efficient and easy-to-access windows, (ii) replace the Ledyard Hall roof with a solar-ready structure and new slate on its side slopes, (iii) add a drainage system in the courtyard and waterproof the lower level of Ledyard to avoid the water infiltration issues we have experienced for the past decade, and (iv) restore and replace the loose stone and mortar around both the sanctuary and Ledyard Hall. As of January 2025, that work is almost complete except for some painting and a few stone replacements that will have to await warmer weather for completion. The entire Phase 2 exterior renovation project was completed within our budget.

In addition to the work that was contracted for Phase 1, a few additional renovations became necessary during 2024 that were addressed by the Vestry and the RAC. We contracted for change orders with AM Higley to (i) replace the plexiglass protective cover that fell off of a stained glass window, and (ii) cut out three accessible seating areas and removed the back row of pews in the nave. This sanctuary work was necessary to continue to meet the needs of our guests and congregants.





## Phase 2 of the Renovation: Planning for the Kitchen and Ledyard Hall Interiors

While the Phase 1 construction was underway, a subgroup of the RAC -- called the Ledyard 100 Committee -- worked with Rev. Emily and the Detroit Collaborative Design Company (DCDC) in this, Ledyard Hall's centennial year, to start planning for our kitchen and Ledyard Hall renovations to come next year. DCDC developed a plan to engage service providers and neighbors in our community to explore how CCD could renovate its interior spaces to best serve the needs of the community. CCD participated in multiple community engagement meetings, moderated by DCDC. From those meetings, we learned that there are several community needs that are consistent with CCD's mission for Ledyard Hall to be "an inclusive, versatile, vibrant space for celebration, service, and growth in body, mind, and spirit." Specifically, we are planning for a rentable commercial kitchen that is equipped as a teaching space and has storage for both commercial renters and our congregation. Additional goals for Ledyard's renovation--that will be postponed until further funding is available--include soundproofing between the lower level and Ledyard (essential for classroom use), air conditioning in Ledyard, and a divider wall between Ledyard and the Atrium (for energy efficiency and to allow multiple concurrent events/meetings).

With this information from our planning sessions with DCDC, we then met with Quinn Evans and its kitchen design consultant Gold Star Products, Inc., in December 2024 to start the kitchen design process. Preliminary designs are expected in February 2025. The goal is to bid the project and have a renovation contract to submit to our contacts at the National Fund for Sacred Places (NFSP) in spring 2025 to meet the requirements of, and receive, the \$100,000 NFSP grant. We hope to start the kitchen renovation during the summer of 2025. Fingers crossed!



# RESTORE, RENEW, REJOICE

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

*Lisa C. Jones and Seth Lloyd, Chairs*

The capital campaign can be described in three words: A GREAT SUCCESS!!! As you may recall, we began the campaign with a goal of \$2.7 million, which seemed at the time unreachable. This parish, however, responded as it always has, with overwhelming generosity. WE RECEIVED ALMOST \$3 MILLION IN PLEDGES!

Some of the results are visible: the new windows and slate roof for Ledyard Hall. Some of the results can be seen if you look closely: the tuckpointing and other repairs to the bell tower. Some of the results are less visible, but no less important: the waterproofing of the lower level and new drainage for the courtyard.

Some of the projects which are part of the campaign plans have not yet begun. The kitchen remodeling is the most important of these. We have budgeted approximately \$270,000 for the kitchen (including the \$100,000 National Fund grant). Will this be sufficient to give us the kitchen we long for? Unclear. We will likely have plans for the remodeling in February 2025 and likely cost estimates shortly after that. If the bids are in excess of the \$270,000, we will be required to cut back on the design or raise additional funds.

Our ability to finish the projects is dependent, of course, upon our receipt of payments on the pledges. If you have not yet paid the balance of your pledge, please do so as soon as your circumstances permit.

Many thanks to the Renovation Action Committee and especially to its chair Laura Sanom, to our historic preservation architects at Quinn Evans, to our owner's representatives at BDC Consulting, and all who are bringing these projects to fruition.

What's next? We still must continue work on our aging buildings. The front facade of the church on Jefferson Avenue still must be tuckpointed. Our stained glass windows are in need of repair, and an estimate for that work is expected in early 2025. The back porches of Sibley House require repair in the next future, and the front porch and steps of Sibley House must be rebuilt. Finally, we still wish to remove the front pew in the nave, in order to provide more room. In short, we still have needs that cannot be financed by our yearly budget.

The motto for our campaign has been "Restore, Renew, Rejoice". We have restored and renewed. Even though we are not finished with these first two goals, it is time to REJOICE in the incredible generosity of our members and in the wonderful, historic buildings we call our church home.





Photo credits:

Ed Maki-Schramm: p. 4 (right), 6 (right), p. 22 (left)

Simeng Sun: p. 6 (middle)

Beth Ann Tesluk: p. 6 (left)

Cathy Berlage, p. 11 (left)

Richard Thomas, p. 12

Ruth Boeder, p. 16

Sally LePla: p. 19

Jen Sainte-Laurent: p. 30 (middle)

Emily Williams Guffey: the rest



*For 179 years, A Beacon of Hope in the Heart of Detroit*

960 E. Jefferson, Detroit MI, 48207  
313-259-6688 | [www.christcd.org](http://www.christcd.org)  
@christchurchdetroit