Hello Christ Church and Friends,

We are flourishing in the parish! This issue of the newsletter contains updates from the wardens, our Sunday School teachers, our food pantry coordinator, and our music director. Do have a look at some of the exciting things that are going on.

Our Pentecost service was a glorious celebration of the Holy Spirit. Several parishioners spoke a portion of the lesson from Acts in “other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability,” so we could imagine what the disciples’ experience might have been like. Both the adult choir, and the children’s choir offered anthems, and we had 75 people in attendance—most of whom wore red to symbolize the flames of the Spirit. This service is available both on our website, and on our Facebook page, if you want to have a look. After the service we had a wonderful parish picnic, with fried chicken, delicious side dishes and desserts provided by parishioners, and Bloody Marys, iced tea, and lemonade.

I am grateful for this community daily, and feel very blessed that you called me to be your rector. This first year together has been remarkable. As we move into the “Ordinary Time,” or the “Green Season” of the Sundays after Pentecost, I realize that many of you will be on vacation. I’m looking forward to hearing about your vacations and travel. We will, of course, continue with worship, and have an occasional Adult Forum this summer. The choir will be on vacation, too, but we will still have Szymon’s great music, and the occasional vocal, or instrumental soloist.

Our ministry to the community will continue in full force; warm weather does not rid us of poverty, nor of the struggle for food. I’m so grateful for your ongoing generosity to our neighbors in need.

Grace upon grace,

Melanie+
Ride With Rotary Charity Bike Ride

This is the second year in a row that Christ Church has provided rest and sanitary facilities for the riders in the Rotary charity bike race. On Saturday, April 29th the race started in Front Royal, and riders could choose to do 10, 24, 50, or 64 miles. Proceeds from the race went to Concern Hotline, a crisis and suicide prevention network. Events like this provide a great opportunity for us to serve the community on several levels.

Nursery is available each week during the 9:30 a.m. service.

We worship at Old Chapel at 6:00 a.m. on Easter Day, and at 9:30 a.m. on the second Sunday in September.

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Parish Vestry (year term expires):
Jeff Harris, Senior Warden (2023)
Cathy Frederickson, Junior Warden (2023)
Terry Chandler, Treasurer (2024)
Macon Uskurait, Recorder (2024),
Natalie Greenhalgh (2024)
Page Allen Groseclose (2026)
Chuck Roberts (2026)
Ian Williams (2026)

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Terry Chandler and the Easter Bunny.
Easter Egg Hunt on April 9, 2023

Easter Bunny meeting the kids.

Thatcher showing off his eggs!

Rosie showing off her eggs.

Gigi smiling for the camera.

Graham egg hunting.
Some kids searched in groups of two, since they were going to add the eggs together and divide them in half.

Left to right: Sienna, Chloe, Thomas and Clara

Gigi and the Easter bunny.

This little guy found a green egg.

Mary posing for the camera.
Christ Church Cares Food Pantry
Spring Update

“Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those throughout the world who live and die in poverty or hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread; and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.”

Mother Theresa

The spring months have been amazingly busy at the food pantry. First and foremost, we are seeing an increase in need, as we had anticipated, now that the SNAP benefits have been cut. Additionally, we are seeing a rise in homelessness, especially among young adults who are being displaced because of drug addiction issues, or their sexual orientation. If there was ever a time when the community needs our love and support, it is NOW!

In mid-May, we learned that we have been awarded a grant from the United Way, in the amount of $5,000. This grant was awarded to us to allow us to partner with another local farm or two, to increase the fresh food offerings for our clients. We could not have gotten this grant without the help of our community council liaison Connie Cermak, and two of our food pantry clients, who participated in our presentation to the United Way, and shared how Christ Church Cares has made a difference in their lives. Further, now that we have gained the support of the United Way, as long as we keep up with the quarterly reporting, we will be eligible for their funding each year.

With the increase in need that we are witnessing, we have two exciting fundraisers in the works, with a gracious planning committee helping to pull it all together. In June we will launch a Friends of the Pantry campaign, and contributors will have their names engraved on a perpetual plaque. Watch both your email box and your mailbox for more information on how to contribute. The tiers of giving are listed below:

- **Seeds of Hope** - $250
- **Sprouting Generosity** - $500
- **Blooming with Grace** - $1,000
- **Fruits of the Earth** - $2,500
- **Friend of the Farm** - $5,000

Our second fundraising event will be a Farm-to-Table fundraiser, scheduled for September 30th at Audley Farm in Berryville. This event will be a wine and beef pairing event, with vegetarian options available as well. Tickets will go on sale at the beginning of July and all proceeds will benefit the food pantry. Ticket prices will include the wine and beef pairing, with beef donated by Audley Farm, produce contributed by Oak Hart Farm, and a number of local wines. Chef Erik Foxx-Nettnin, previously of Magnolias restaurant in Purcellville will be our chef. In addition to the event meal, we will also challenge him to create something scrumptious with some of our standard food pantry ingredients. Can’t wait to see what he comes up with! Tours of the farm will also be given to those that are interested. Those who contribute to our Friends of the Pantry campaign before the Farm-to-Table fundraiser will receive recognition at this event. We hope you will consider joining us! Not only to support the food pantry but to also show support to the farms that have so graciously supported the food pantry.

Lastly, we are thrilled to report, that by the time we collected the rest of the food brought in by the Clarke County Mail Carriers, we collected almost 1700 pounds of food!
Join us in our efforts to feed our neighbors as we hold our first Farm to Table fundraiser, sponsored by Audley Farm & Oak Hart Farm. Tickets go on sale July 1st, and all proceeds will benefit the Christ Church Cares Food Pantry.

Saturday, September 30
4-8 p.m.
Audley Farm

Vegetarian options will be available. For more information, contact Bette at cccares@cunninghamchapel.org or call 540-837-1112
Dear Parish members,

My learning curve has been steadily going up as I followed in Jeff Harris's very busy Junior Warden footsteps. The almost year-long process of bidding, ordering and installing the new furnace has proven worthwhile as we enjoyed heat and comfort this winter into spring. Now we are faced with seriously addressing the replacement of our faithful, but aging, air conditioning units. Strosnyder, our long-time service provider, is giving us an evaluation after the normal spring maintenance appointment last week. It will be followed by bid information for the vestry to consider later this month.

I have been learning the small but important "quirks" of our buildings: lighting, heating, security et cetera. This builds on the previous Junior Wardens’ efforts to provide Melanie, and future Wardens, with provider contacts and maintenance information.

As you have heard, the bellows motor for the organ, which has been so very faithful, is now in need of repair. It will be going to the specialty shop for repair next week and will hopefully be back for Szymon to play very soon. Some of the continuing issues with the sound system are also being addressed and we have had improvement!

We are also turning our attention to our grounds. Cleaning and repairing things like outdoor furniture has enhanced everyone’s enjoyment as the weather has improved. The church sign on Bishop Meade Road is in need of updating, now that we have established a new worship time. If anyone has a contact for that task, please let me know at your earliest convenience.

Thank you to one and all who have been so helpful guiding me and providing information about our very special church. If you have a suggestion or an interest in some of our ongoing projects, please reach out to me at church or through the office. All ideas are welcome.

Cathy Frederickson
Junior Warden
In a letter to the congregation about three months ago, it was suggested that the vitality and growth of the church appear linked to four ingredients: First is a Rector who is an empathetic listener when stresses cloud a parishioner’s life and one who is attentive to her congregation’s spiritual needs. Secondly, a successful church needs a music program that is appealing to the congregation. Thirdly, for longevity, it needs the arrival of young families and creative programs for their children. Finally, successful churches require good attendance for Sunday services and willing participation in the church’s many volunteer roles. More congregants at Sunday services seem to encourage more enthusiasm for the readings and hymns and to foster a warmer welcome for newcomers.

In recent weeks, we have seen newer evidence of Christ Church’s vitality. Melanie has encouraged a number of new faces to be lectors and psalmists. Husbands and wives, and parents and children, have been paired as ushers. Young people have accepted reading roles during the service and a fledgling acolyte program has begun.

Over the same period, Szymon Czerniak has led the children’s choir in three performances to broad smiles and appreciative applause. While some of our choir members from Shenandoah University will be away for the summer, Adaugo and Violet will continue to add their lovely voices to summer services. Next Fall, Szymon tentatively plans to invite some SU student musicians to accompany our organ and piano with other instruments.

Our Sunday School has grown to two teachers. Julie Dillingham leads the older children while Ciarra Philpott has the preschoolers. Attendance varies widely depending upon the church attending habits of young parents. On some Sundays there are no kids, on other occasions there have been as many as 14. The “Whirl” program provides the teaching materials. Throughout the year its lessons coincide with that Sunday’s readings in church. Thus, the children have a short video with discussion, a reading from the Whirl children’s bible, and crafts or activities which complement what their parents are hearing during the Sunday service.

Melanie is eager for the children to take part in a portion of the church service, so Julie and Ciarra bring them over from the Parish House during the Passing of the Peace, permitting young families to take communion together.

The spirit of Christ Church is nowhere more evident than in the Passing of the Peace. Parishioners seem eager to deliver every wish for God’s Peace with an affectionate greeting. Admittedly, some observers feel we get a little carried away at times; but such warm enthusiasm is just another sign that Christ Church is a nice place to be and one which holds promise for continued vitality and healthy growth.

Best wishes, Jeff Harris

Thank you to those who generously shared the photographs included in this newsletter: Wendy Clatterbuck, Ciarra Philpott, and The Rev. Melanie Lewis
Sunday School

Julie teaching Sunday School during Holy Week. The children worked on Holy Week pinwheels to show the different days of Holy week.

Nursery Time

Making New Friends at Sunday Nursery!
Left to Right: Rosie and Mary
Both girls are quiet, but over the past few weeks they are starting to bond and enjoy playing together. They did finger painting before joining in the egg hunt.
Music has the power to evoke profound emotions and experiences that can enhance one’s sense of spirituality and I, myself, find solace, inspiration, and a deep sense of connection through musical expressions of faith. It is in this spirit that I, and all the musicians at Christ Church Millwood dedicate our service to our church’s continuing legacy.

In addition to music for worship, we have some exciting projects planned for the fall. Shenandoah University’s Harambee Gospel Choir, under the direction of Adaugo Ejekwu, will be joining forces with Christ Church’s choir for what I hope will be the first of many joyous and uplifting services. We also hope to build upon the success of the concert we hosted for Convivium, an a capella group on tour from Wheaton College in Illinois. Their performance showed us the inherent link between worship, music, and community. Look for concert announcements in the near future and I hope to see you all there.

With the summer season upon us, our choir will be taking a break. Our wonderful musicians have worked hard all year and I look forward to hearing about everyone’s adventures upon their return. Since the New Year, we’ve added Adaugo Ejekwu (soprano), Violet Neikirk (alto), Emmanuel Singletary (tenor), and my personal favorite addition, Sofia Czerniak (alto), as regular members of our choir. Together with our existing regular members, Jane, Millie, David, Paige, and Natalie, we have created more than just a choir, but a collective entity enriched by its diverse musical experiences. I want to personally thank each of you for your service. Music is the backbone of the spirit and each of you help to make our service a beautiful place for worship.

Adult choir practice will resume August 30th, and children’s choir will be TBA.
Convivium was formed in the fall of 2022 by five singers who met at the Wheaton College Conservatory of Music, nestled in the heart of Illinois.

Comprised of a soprano, an alto, two tenors, and a bass, the ensemble—which takes its name from the Latin word for "feast" or "banquet"—seeks to invite each listener to experience rich musical excellence.

From left to right: Melanie+, Bethany Wray, Parker Ohman, Sofia Czerniak, Szymon Czerniak, Luke Hochstetler, Michael Olson, Emma Ware.