

# Annual Parish Meeting

January 22, 2017



**CHRIST CHURCH**  
EPISCOPAL

THE MOTHER CHURCH OF GEORGIA  
ESTABLISHED 1733

## Annual Meeting Agenda

January 22, 2017

5:30 p.m. – Christ Church Nave

## SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

The past twelve months have continued to see our community of Christ Church live into and expand upon the foundational principles which were laid out in our Strategic Plan in 2015: All Are Welcome, Centered In Worship, Joyful Living, and Servant Leadership. We are now one and a half years into this plan, and it continues to guide us well.

All that we do is an amazing partnership between our committed lay members and our professional staff. Over the past year the vestry and the leadership of the church have been busy expanding and improving our church life. I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments of the past year.

The Reverend Sierra Wilkinson-Reyes has obviously been busy with many things this year. In addition to bringing Julia Mae Reyes into the world, she also found time earlier in the year to lead the EYC on a Lenten series on *Beloved Community* which was capped off with an EYC pilgrimage to Koinonia Farms, the Habitat for Humanity international headquarters and a Sunday School lesson with President Jimmy Carter. She also helped lead the *Marking Death, Celebrating Life* series during the Wednesday evenings of Lent. She and The Reverend Helen White organized the Youth & Children's Sunday during which 40 youth led the Sunday service.

Our Organist and Choirmaster, Timothy Hall, amazes us on a weekly basis with the most beautiful music in Savannah. He also assisted the Rev. Sierra in the *Marking Death, Celebrating Life* series during Lent. He announced the development of a Choral Scholars program and that Mrs. Emily Williams Burch will be assisting with children's music programs. We have been blessed to recently listen to the children's first offering during the Advent Lessons and Carols service. He coordinated the *Carols for a Cause* event for the third year which again was a successful fundraiser for the Emmaus House.

The Reverend Helen White has continued innovative programming for children's Sunday School with *Praying Along the Way* during Lent and *Genesis: Greatest Hits* this past Fall. The Lunch & Liturgy programs between these sessions were also well attended. In addition, Vacation Bible School, with the theme this year of *Journey with Jesus*, has continued to attract new attendees, and Children's Chapel has successfully transitioned to become a year round offering.

The Reverend Liam Collins launched a twice monthly Sunday evening contemplative service that continues to grow a significant following. In addition he has continued his extensive pastoral work at homes and hospitals throughout the area.

The Reverend Patti Davis continues her much needed outreach to nursing home communities throughout Savannah. Her collections of toiletries for the Emmaus House provide a needed resource to this outreach effort. The book group she helps lead continues to grow.

In addition to the wonderful sermons, music and readings that we have on the average Sunday, we have also had some very memorable services over the past year. Holy Week and Easter were again some of the best attended since being back on Johnson Square. The aforementioned Youth and Children's Sunday saw 40 young members of Christ Church leading every aspect of the service from the sermon and readings down to cleaning the silver at the end of the service. All Saints Day saw a recognition of the Saints in our Midst with inspirational stories from our most senior members. Rosalie Morris and her silver bells helped ring in the end of the service on September 11th. Finally, the Advent and Christmas seasons brought us an amazing Lessons and Carols, and of course the best Christmas pageant in Christendom.

The Mardi Gras party, Cabbage Ball picnic and shrimp boil, and Tybee Beach Day continued to be times of fellowship for parishioners outside the confines of the sanctuary and the Sunday morning service. Earlier this month the young families of Christ Church enjoyed a time of fellowship during an Epiphany celebration in the undercroft and Parish House. The ushering corps was also able to have a gathering in May in the undercroft to celebrate their shared ministry to the church.

Adult Sunday School offerings this past year have included several new series including *God Made Manifest* during Epiphany, *The Episcopal Way* led by The Reverend Michael White during Lent, and *Spirituality and Leadership* this past fall.

The Christ Church website has undergone a much needed update. The congregation is forever in the debt of Catherine Gussler for her tireless efforts to accomplish this and to maintain it in an up to date manner. She was also able to design the website to allow for donations and pledges directly online which served the Stewardship Drive well this fall.

Several members of the congregation, Margaret Miller, Mary Raines, and Andy Wright, undertook a major project to locate, organize and deliver the historic records of Christ Church to the Georgia Historical Society for indexing and long term storage.

We weathered Hurricane Matthew without virtually a scratch. I would like to thank Tommy Gennuso for his tireless help securing the buildings before the storm and helping to check for problems in the immediate aftermath.

In October, the Vestry approved a comprehensive restoration project focusing on the main church building on Johnson Square. This will involve repainting a significant amount of the interior of the sanctuary, undercroft and exterior of the building. Also, the windows in the main sanctuary will all be reconditioned, and those not able to be salvaged will be replaced. This project which has just begun is anticipated to take approximately twelve months. Each year since we have been back on Johnson Square the Endowment Committee has recommended an amount of money which could be responsibly taken from the Endowment for capital improvements. In the five years since we have been back on Johnson Square, the Vestry has never utilized this resource until now. We feel that this is an important investment in the preservation of the beautiful sanctuary we now enjoy for years to come.

As we look to the future another project that the Vestry has explored is the restoration of the Ascension window. Through a generous donation we were able to bring Mr. Art Femenella an expert in the field of stained glass restoration to evaluate the Ascension window. Over the coming months we look forward to talking with the congregation more about the plans for its restoration and how we as a congregation can participate in this.

For almost a decade now Christ Church has sought through its rebirth to be something old and new at the same time. It has been wonderful to be a part of this dynamic as it continues to move us forward. I am proud of what we have achieved over the past year and look forward to where it takes us in the coming years.

William B. Wallace, M.D

## RECTOR'S REPORT

It continues to be a joy and privilege to serve God and God's people here at Christ Church, Savannah. Thank you to all of our Vestry members, especially those rotating off this year. Thank you to Dr. Will Wallace for his calm presence, guidance, and support throughout the year as Sr. Warden. He has been a true gift. Thank you to Jane Espy, who has served as our Treasurer for nine years and has led us through amazing growth in our financial blessings throughout this time. We would not be who we are without her dedicated service and skill set.

At our Vestry retreat in August, we went through *The World is our Parish*—our Strategic Plan that was developed by and presented to our congregation in May of 2015. As we looked through the many priorities listed, we began to realize that a majority of the items that we hope to achieve within the next five years were already well underway. Sound System: check! Increase Clergy Staff: check! Increase offerings of worship and small group opportunities: check, check! Develop signature music event for the city of Savannah: check! Increase ministry for our oldest and youngest members: check! As we continued through the plan together, it was amazing to witness the rapid movement we have already experienced in so many areas of our common life.

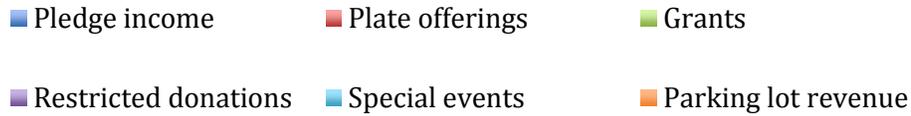
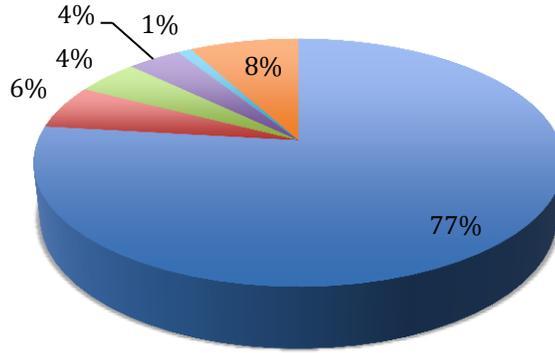
Over the past year our Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) increased by ten people per Sunday. Looking at the last few years, our giving has increased in total each year while our number of households making a pledge to the mission and ministry of Christ Church has remained relatively stable (150-160 pledging units). This indicates that those who are an active part of Christ Church are deepening their commitment to the presence and work of God in our midst. In *The World is our Parish* plan we acknowledged that much of our mission and service to God's world (such as Emmaus House, Interfaith/Ecumenical presence in Savannah, etc.) is not for the sake of growing our congregation but for the larger work of God. However, we did state and still recognize that God has given us an amazing gift in one another and in the experience we share in Christ Church. Part of our calling is to invite others into this community. In the early days of our rebirth effort it was understood that every member of Christ Church is a part of the "Newcomer Welcome Committee." We have necessarily spent the last few years focused on building a spiritual and structural foundation (developing Endowment, Financial, and Wedding Policies; refurbishing our historic facilities; developing programs for music, youth and children, service to others, spiritual growth, etc.). Now that the foundation is secure and stable, it is time to turn our communal energies, both physical and spiritual, toward inviting others in to this experience of God's love that we call Christ Church. At the end of this meeting, we will all be commissioned to *Invite, Welcome, and Connect* others into the life of Christ and Christ Church, a joyful response to all the gifts God continues to give us as part of this beloved community.

Michael S. White

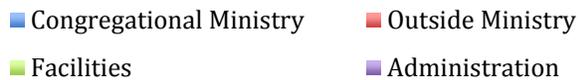
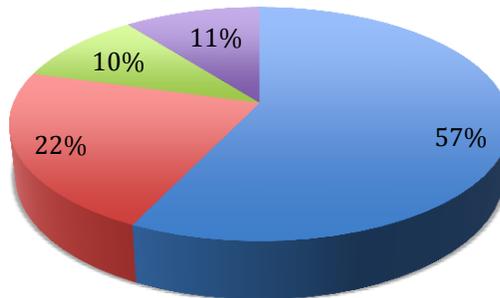
## BUDGET FOR 2017

Budget Presented to Vestry by Finance Committee and approved at the December vestry meeting.

### Projected Income for 2017 \$874,805



### Projected Expense for 2017 \$874,805



Finance Committee: Robert Bell, Karl Bohnstedt, Stephen Hooten, Jack Jones, Rosalie Morris, Mills Fleming, Michael White, Bill Haile (Finance Chair), Jane Espy (Treasurer).  
Offering Tellers Coordinator: Robert M. Davenport

## FROM THE 2016 PAROCHIAL REPORT

Baptisms	7
Confirmations / Receptions	19
Marriages	7
Burials	4
Easter Attendance	617
Christmas Attendance	640 (not including capacity crowd for <i>The Joy of Christmas</i> concert in December 18 as a benefit for Emmaus House)
Average Sunday Attendance	223 (for full year including summer)
Average Sunday Attendance for September – May	255
Sunday Church Services	116
Weekday Church Services	59
Home Communion Services	71 (visits to homes, nursing facilities, and hospitals)

## COMMISSIONING OF THE VESTRY FOR 2017

Bertice Berry, J. Ryan Chandler, Robert M. Davenport, Celia W. Dunn, Michael M. Franck, John Thomas Gennuso, Catherine M. Gussler, Kelly O. Lancaster, Laura C. Lawton, Gary M. Radke, Mary E. Raines, Denton W. Stone and Andrew M. Wright.

Thank you to M. Marie Dent, Ann Y. Miller, J. Kurt C. Oelschig, for their service to the Church as Vestry Members for the last three years. Thank you to William F. Wallace for his service as Vestry Member as well as Jr. and Sr. Warden. Thank you to Jane Espy for serving as Treasurer for the last nine years. All of these leaders have been a gift to our community.



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*Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel for the renewal, mission, and administration of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Book of Common Prayer, p. 818*