

Parish Profile

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# Christ Church Rochester



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## Who We Are

Our mission statement for Christ Church is: "We seek to mirror the love of God and the hospitality of Jesus in our worship and our service to others. We are a community welcoming all races, ethnicities, faiths, genders, orientations, and abilities."

These words are a reminder and guide for us. Our congregation includes people of all ages, some more affluent than others, families and single people, cradle Episcopalians and others who have found our church and teachings later in their lives, and people who reside in and around the Greater Rochester area. We are diverse and accepting people who embody the words "all are welcome at the table," and we strive to follow that message in our daily lives. Several of our more recent additions to our parish family have sought and found comfort in our message of the abundance of God's love in today's world.

Greater detail about our volunteer opportunities, history, the importance of music in our liturgies, community involvement, service within the parish, the significance of our building's size and location, our finances, a summary of the greater Rochester area, and what we perceive as the blessings and strengths that we seek in a new rector, are covered in this Profile.

We see visitors frequently, and as our "main" sung Sunday services are held at 11:00 am, we offer a brief "tour" here as an introduction.





The Nave of Christ Church Rochester

Visitors, guests, and regular parishioners who enter Christ Church are welcomed by our friendly ushers, given the day's service bulletin, and guided to a pew in the main church. Our sanctuary and the surrounding space is a large, open

area, with mosaics, stained glass windows, a rood beam, huge pillars, stenciled walls, the reredos and high altar, Baptismal font, and the Mary chapel (part of the original church building) located off to the side



with its starry ceiling, which was designed to replicate the heavens at the time of Christ's birth. Prior to and during the 11:00 service, visitors will notice the music and its high quality. We are in close



The Chapel of Christ Church



proximity to the Eastman School of Music, and several Eastman faculty and students worship with us and participate in our sung services. Their talents and commitment, through highly skilled instrumental and vocal performances, greatly contribute to and enhance our services. Accordingly, performing here is also an important feature of the students' preparation for their futures in the field of sacred music.

During the service, visitors can participate confidently in unison with everyone, as the weekly bulletin contains all congregational responses. The rite calls for the witness and involvement in the reverent flow of Episcopal worship, including the presence of the crucifer, acolytes, thurifer (special occasions), and other key participants who move at their appointed times during the ceremony.



Coffee hour at the back of the Nave

Good, engaging sermons are important to visitors and to us. We listen for and rely upon intelligent sermons that help us to understand the Scriptures and to remember that we are living today in the presence of God, in God's world.

After the 11:00 am service, visitors are invited to join our casual coffee hour, held in the nave near the narthex; they might also catch a whiff of the food being prepared in the nearby kitchen for our A Meal and More guests.

There is also a weekly spoken service held each Sunday at 8:00 am in the chapel. Worshippers at this Eucharist appreciate the quiet reverence that surrounds the service and the focus on the Word. This 8 o'clock service offers prayerful intimacy within a smaller part of the larger sanctuary.

Several visitors and newcomers have enjoyed the rapport experienced at this service, seen by many as informal yet spiritual. Regulars and guests meet for their coffee hour at a neighborhood coffee shop that is near the church and Eastman School of Music.



Coffee at Java's after the 8:00



# Our Worship Services

## *Weekly Services*

Unless otherwise noted, the Eucharist is the central focus of parish liturgical celebrations, often with music as an integral component.

Sundays: Two Sunday Eucharists are held each week. The 8:00 AM Rite II service is a said (i.e., nonmusical) liturgy. Held in the side chapel, the service tends to be smaller, more intimate and more relaxed. The later service at 11:00 AM (also Rite II) is a more formal liturgy, with music integral to every aspect of the service.

In addition to Sunday Eucharists, during the academic year, Christ Church also hosts a Sunday Compline service at 9:00 PM. From the first Sunday in October to the last Sunday in April, the Schola Cantorum sings Compline in candle-lit darkness. A local publication described it as “The coolest, most unusual music experience in the city,” and the service attracts many who are not members of the parish. The service is preceded by a Candlelight Concert on the first Sunday of the month beginning at 8:30 PM.

Weekdays: Services of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are led by parishioners via Zoom. Morning Prayer is offered Mondays at 10:00 AM, and Evening Prayer is offered Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. Thursday Noon Eucharist is offered in the Chapel.



Compline



## *Major Seasonal Services*

### **Lessons and Carols:**

An annual tradition, the renowned Liturgy of the Word and hymnody is a parish favorite. For many, the liturgy constitutes a high point of the Advent season.



Lessons and Carols - Bishop Kara presiding



Christmas - Family at 6:00 PM

### **Christmas:**

Two services are held the evening before the Feast of the Nativity. An early family service is held for those who cannot attend the later service. The main 10:30 PM service is a glorious celebration of Our Savior's birth. The service is preceded by musical preludes half an hour before. On Christmas Day itself, one service is generally held for those unable to attend either of the other services.



Twelfth Night Magi

### **Feast of the Holy Name:**

One spoken Holy Eucharist service is celebrated.

### **Twelfth Night:**

The Christmas Season concludes with a joyous celebration of Twelfth Night, which includes a visit of the Three Magi. At the conclusion of the Liturgy of the Word and hymnody, a reception is held in the Guild Room, preceded by the burning of the Advent wreath in the fireplace.



Burning of the Advent wreath-Auld Lang Syne



**Lent:**

Ash Wednesday: The Lenten Season opens with the solemn celebration of the Ash Wednesday liturgy, including the imposition of ashes. The schedule often includes a noon service to accommodate those who work in the downtown area.

**Triduum:**

Triduum is celebrated in full.



Maundy Thursday Vigil moves reserved sacrament to the Chapel.



New Flame



The Light of Christ procession at Easter Vigil

Easter Day – Offertory Motet: Surrexit Christus hodie, Samuel Scheidt (1587)- Christ Church choir



**Thanksgiving Day:** One spoken Holy Eucharist service is celebrated.



# History of Christ Church

Today, the Diocese of Rochester (created in 1931) includes metropolitan Rochester plus a significant portion of the Finger Lakes region of Western New York and extends south to the Pennsylvania state line. However, Rochester was initially part of the state-wide Diocese of New York, and later the Diocese of Western New York (created in 1839, headquartered in Buffalo). Rochester's growth from village to city was facilitated by the construction of the Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, connecting New York City to Buffalo, from thence to the Great Lakes. The canal created markets for early Rochester industries, leading to increased economic activity and population growth.

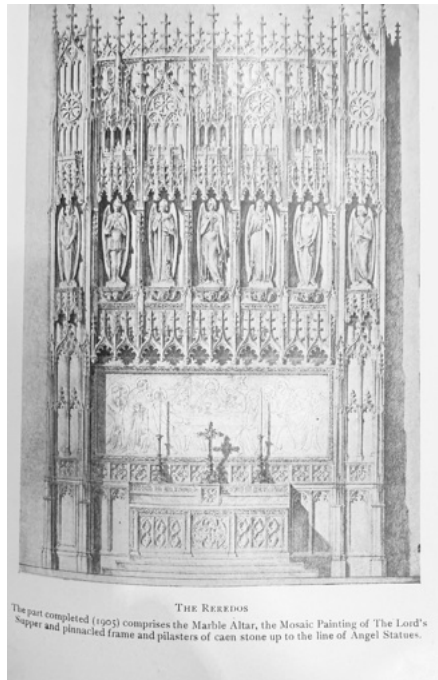


The oldest Episcopal parish in Rochester is St. Luke's Church, which was founded in 1817. Two other parishes were to follow: St. Paul's Episcopal Church (founded as Grace Church, 1827); and later Trinity Church (1845), then in the western and northern portions of the city. As the east side grew in population, a desire arose for a fourth congregation along the East Avenue corridor.

In March 1854, forty-five Rochester Episcopalians petitioned the Diocese of Western New York for a new parish to be added to the city. Bishop William Delancey was known to be sympathetic to the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement, as were many of the petitioners, who came out of the more evangelical Episcopal churches. The bishop consented and plans proceeded. The new parish was to have free seating, close attention to liturgical worship, and congregational singing. The parish is still renowned for the quality of its Anglican liturgy, with close integration of instrumental and vocal music.

In its 170+ year history, the parish has had thirteen (13) rectors. The first, the Rev. Henry A. Neely remained for seven years. Over the last century, the rectors' terms of service averaged 23 years. The Rev. Donald H. Gratiot served for 34 years, while the Rev. Linwood W. Garrenton served for 24. The most recent rector stayed for 14 years (2010-2024) but resigned to move out of state.

In its nearly two centuries of existence, the parish infrastructure has seen a number of changes. A lot was purchased in June 1855, and the new building was ready for use on Christmas Day that year. It included what is now the chapel and the part of the nave just to the north. A bell tower was added in 1864, with the corresponding bell installed in 1869. A formal



Original concept for the reredos

parish house was constructed in 1888, which included what is now Wilder Hall. The present chancel was completed in 1892, and the entire complex was consecrated in 1894.

Within the following decade, the marble high altar and the Tiffany reredos with the Lord's Supper in mosaics were installed, as well as Tiffany windows in the chancel and at the baptistry. A new tower was constructed in 1903.



THE JOHNSON MEMORIAL TOWER

The parish house complex was renovated in the 1920s. The renovations included the addition of the Guild Room, a new modern kitchen, recreation rooms in the basement, expanded meeting rooms for women and children's groups, and apartments on the top floor for parish staff. The new additions opened in 1924 and were subsequently named for the Rev. David Lincoln Ferris, former rector of Christ Church (1912-1920), and later first Bishop of the Diocese of Rochester (1931-1938).

As the later renovation included meeting space for women's groups, one should note that such were part and parcel of parish life from the beginning, mostly as auxiliaries, staffing parish activities and fundraising. Decision making power, however, resided with the male rector and vestry



members. That began to change in 1943 when the qualifications for voting in parish elections and special meetings were changed to include women; however, vestry leadership remained exclusively male, as the Vestry *was to represent* women's interests, not include them. It wasn't until 1970 that women were accepted as lectors (which also entitled them to administer the chalice at communion). The following year a woman filled a vacancy on the vestry, paving the way for the full inclusion of women in parish governance. Today, half of the twelve members of the Vestry are female.

Among the women in ordained ministry at Christ Church was Deacon Lucille Alonzo, who was assigned here following her ordination in 1991. She assisted guests at A Meal and More, worked with refugee resettlement



Bishop Kara sharing dinner at A Meal & More

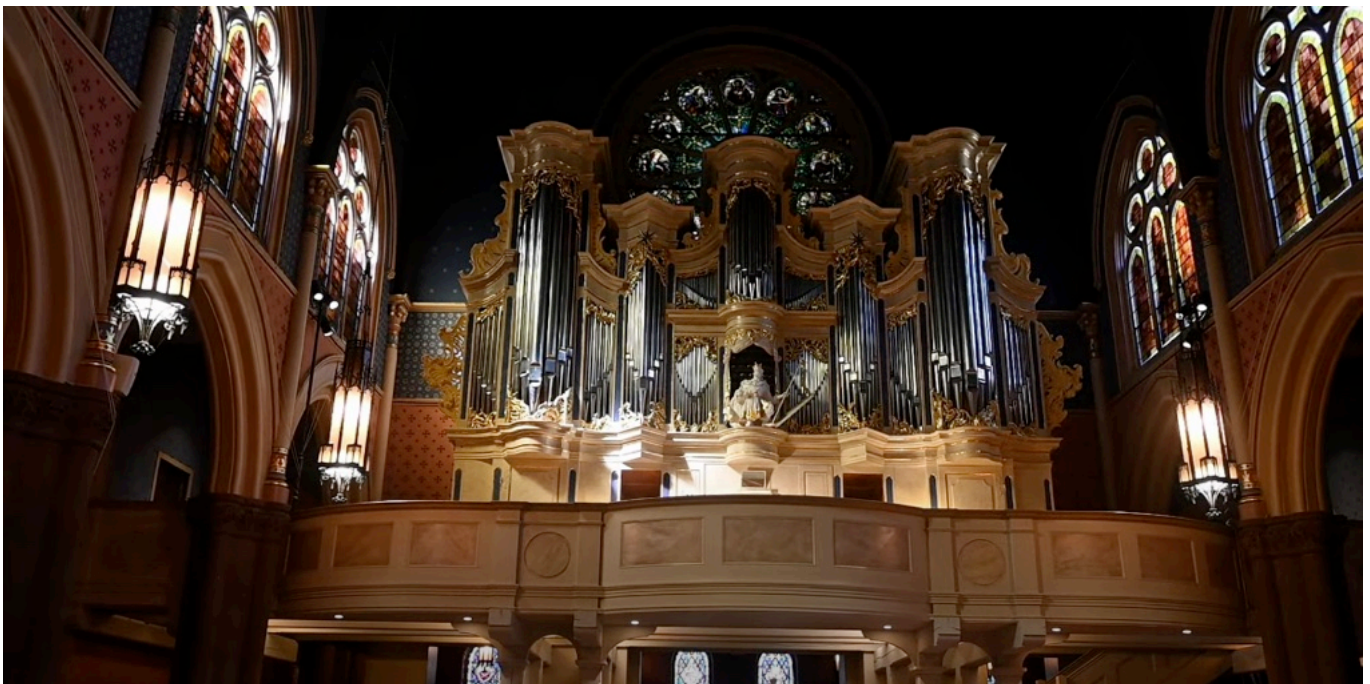
and RAIHN (now Family Promise, a homeless ministry). She received honors from the New York State Department of Health for her work in tuberculosis control. Another important minister was the Rev. Marilyle Sweet-Page, one of the first women to be officially ordained in the Episcopal Church in 1977, and the first ordained woman in the Diocese of Rochester. She was a member of Christ Church from her retirement in 2008 until her death in 2021. Christ Church called its first female rector in 2010.

Bishop George Barrett consecrated Christ Church as the Pro-Cathedral for the Diocese of Rochester in October 1965, and it continued to serve as such

through the 1970s. Since then, the Diocese has functioned without a cathedral, as it had before Bishop Barrett's time. The current diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer, was consecrated in July 2024.

In the 1950s and 1960s, as ever more city residents fled to the suburbs, the character of the city changed, leading to civil unrest. Christ Church reacted to the changes by establishing various new ministries, such as a thrift shop to serve impoverished and homeless individuals. The gym was opened for recreational use by the community, a weekend teen coffee house was established, and after-school tutoring was offered. In 1979 another ministry was established, A Meal & More, a community kitchen providing a hot meal twice weekly (Sunday and Wednesday) to downtown residents. In recent years, A Meal and More has become an independent not-for-profit organization in order to expand funding possibilities. A small, hired staff is supported by volunteers from a number of parishes, including Christ Church.

Several qualitative additions have been made in recent years to liturgical offerings. A Compline service was begun in 1997 by the Director of Music,



Stephen Kennedy, who also serves as Assistant Professor of Sacred Music at the Eastman School of Music. His Schola Cantorum performs sacred chant, Renaissance polyphony, Romantic and contemporary works, and



improvisation within the ancient monastic office. In recent years, he has added period instruments. Many guests besides church members attend the service due to its beauty and the human need for spiritual experience that it meets. It is part of the ongoing development of Christ Church.

In 2000 the table altar was built for Christ Church by wood worker and former parishioner Joseph McCutcheon. In 2007, an organ loft was constructed at the back of our nave, and a magnificent new organ was installed. The organ is a reconstruction, using eighteenth-century techniques, of an organ by Adam Gottlob Casparini, built in 1776 for the Holy Ghost Church in Vilnius, Lithuania. The new organ was built at the Gothenburg Organ Art Center (GOArt) in Sweden and is named in honor of former Eastman School of Music professors David Craighead and Russell Saunders. In 2012 a second organ was installed in the chancel so that the organ students could experience a Romantic-period instrument. That organ was built in 1893 by Hook and Hastings of Boston for St. Dominic's Church in Portland, Maine, and restored by David Wallace of



Gorham, Maine. Both organs belong to the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. The instruments are part of the Eastman Rochester Organ Initiative, "EROI", and joint use of them has been made possible through a unique partnership between the University and Christ Church. In addition to their use in the liturgies of Christ Church, both

organs are used daily by the Eastman School of Music for teaching, practicing, and concerts.

In 2008, Christ Church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, enabling the parish to apply for significant grants for needed

repairs. In the 2010s, the roofs and the gutters were replaced, and repair work of some windows and the tower undertaken. The parish grant team has been successful in securing important funds to continue to maintain the space.



Scaffolding for church renovations during the COVID pandemic.

In 2022, the church received a Landmark Society Merit Award for more recent work in repairing failing parts of the building (the Lawn Street wall, falling plaster, additional window repairs), as well as repainting the interior. The repainting included stenciling, which was another step in making church decoration what its earlier designers had intended, mimicking the artwork in Old World Gothic churches. This work required extensive scaffolding. As the work took place during COVID, when the church was not used for in-person services, no interference with normal church activities was experienced. The rector led services remotely from her own living room, with her two daughters as participants. The success of that experiment led the parish to continue to stream Sunday worship even after returning to in-person services.



# Music at Christ Church

The importance of music at Christ Church cannot be overstated. Vocal and instrumental music enrich our worship services and inspire people within and beyond our parish. We are blessed with the expertise, creativity, and commitment of our Director of Music and Organist, Stephen Kennedy, who has been with Christ Church for over thirty years, founded Christ Church Schola Cantorum in 1997 (more on this below), serves as Assistant Professor of Sacred Music at Eastman School of Music, as well as Instructor of Organ for Eastman's Community Music School. Our Music



Candlelight Concert

program accomplishes a vital part of Christ Church's outreach to the community and beyond. Christ Church also benefits from having our fingers on the pulse of current trends in sacred music.

According to Stephen Kennedy in his report at the 2025 Annual Meeting of Christ Church:

*Many people tell me how they experience solace, joy, and inspiration from music at Christ Church. They say how music in our liturgies is essential -- how it touches them, gives meaning, and transforms them. Our music program is bringing about positive change, harmony, and balance in people's lives. Key to this is the quality of the music, borne out of the weekly rhythm of practice, pedagogy, and performance. At Christ Church, our historic building, liturgical heritage, acoustics, and partnership with a leading music school result in an unusual and distinctive program. We perform our musical tasks with generosity and love which help us to appreciate and care about each other. We consider ourselves fortunate to serve our liturgies, nurture our parish and community, and further the education of future leaders in the profession of sacred music.*

The long-standing relationship that Christ Church enjoys with the Eastman School of Music has allowed our church to gain and maintain its standing as a noted musical venue in Downtown Rochester, and our reputation and commitment have facilitated our ability to engage the talents of noted musicians from Rochester and beyond. Our sanctuary's acoustics are great too!



Christ Church choir

The Christ Church Choir sings for the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Eucharist. It is an auditioned choir and includes parish and community volunteers plus paid Choral Scholars from Eastman. The repertoire is quite broad and varied in music styles, and includes Gregorian Chant, Anglican Chant, motets from the Renaissance to the 21st Century,



and, of course, the traditional hymns that have been beloved by us for many years. In the past year the Christ Church Children's Choir was formed and we look forward to its growth.

In addition to our Sunday Sung Eucharist services, Compline is performed in the church by the previously mentioned Schola Cantorum; Schola, as it is also known, is critically acclaimed, highlights highest-quality liturgical music, and attracts attendance by many people in addition to our congregation; Compline is celebrated each Sunday from October through May at 9:00 p.m. The reputation of Compline and Schola Cantorum has increased year by year and has been cited quite positively by NPR's Pipedream as well as other eminent sources. Attendance has reached about 300 people on occasion. Professionals as well as faculty and students in the Rochester area participate in Schola. Compline is preceded on the first Sundays of those months by Candlelight Concerts performed by various accomplished instrumental as well as vocal artists.

Tuesday Pipes has become a popular part of our Music Program. A world class 25-minute pipe organ concert, performed weekly at no charge to attendees and in collaboration with Eastman School's Organ Program, is enjoyed by many Downtown workers/residents, and other parishioners and visitors.



Compline

# Formation

There are several opportunities for faith formation for all age groups of parishioners at Christ Church. The following are opportunities that we have shared and enjoyed.

During baptisms of infants, other children in the congregation are encouraged to gather around the baptismal font so that they too can sense their involvement in this holy sacrament. After the babies are baptized, the priest carries the child throughout the sanctuary to introduce them to their new church family. To commemorate the occasion, the infants also receive and wear a keepsake quilt made by one of our cherished church family members. We also assure parents that baby noises made during church services are common and cause no concern at all.



Adults have also wished to receive the sacrament of baptism. After the ceremony, they similarly greet the congregation, receive hugs and warm wishes, and are presented with and wear a quilt made by the same talented parishioner who created ones for the infants. In preparation for their baptismal ceremony, these adults may also have received guidance and instruction from two individuals each in the congregation who share stories about their own faith journeys, describe and discuss their



experiences living as Episcopalians, and act as “sponsors” on the day of the baptismal ritual.

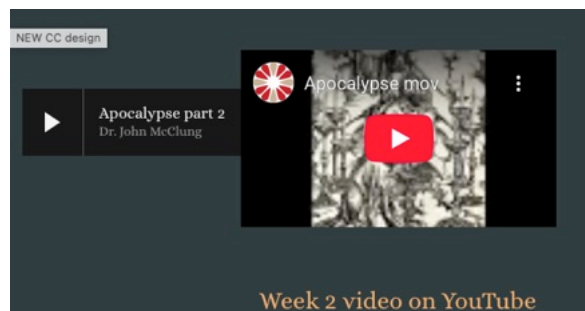
As needed, we conduct a series of get-togethers for inquirers and those wishing to be confirmed into the Episcopal Church. In early 2025, eight adults elected to be confirmed at our church, the most to have done so at one time in recent memory. Encouraged by the great interest shown this year, we hope to offer more learning and discernment opportunities in the future for others also interested in joining our faith community.

Our programming for nursery and church school is led currently by two students from St. John Fisher University. These students plan art projects that relate to the weekly Scripture readings and are completed in a separate classroom while the first part of the church service is conducted. During the service’s exchange of Peace, the children return to the sanctuary to join their families for Communion.

As adults, we hope to continue learning through sermons and seasonal study groups that meet at the church, usually initiated by the rector. In the past, the rector hosted bi-weekly potluck-style conversation groups during the seasons of Lent and Advent in our Guild Room. These thematic dinners bring together parishioners to break bread and connect deeply through discussing their own faith, responsibilities, and connection to God.

Two weekly Bible study groups are also led by parishioners and have been held on Zoom since the COVID

pandemic began in 2020. There is a hunger and interest for more opportunities to gather as a congregation and connect about our faith.



## Service Within the Parish

Very important to the parish, and much appreciated, are the wardens and those who serve on the vestry, the finance committee, the property committee, the search committee, and on other temporary groups that are formed from time to time to oversee special projects and occasions.

Along with the rector, many dedicated parishioners are involved in fulfilling various liturgical roles. Active volunteers serve our worship as members of the altar guild, lectors, ushers, “chancel crew” of acolytes and thurifers, and counters.



Lay Lectors

The Christ Church Choir provides us with beautiful anthems and supports us in hymns and service music. It includes both members of the



Christ Church choir



congregation and Eastman School of Music students. They attend practice in the church each Wednesday and before the 11:00 am service on Sundays. The choir does not participate as a group during summer months, but we are a singing congregation, nonetheless.

Our hospitality team provides and displays beverages and snacks (our “coffee hour”) for us at the back of the sanctuary to be enjoyed after the 11:00 AM service as we greet one another and chat with visitors. When a family welcomes a new baby, the church congratulates them with a dinner made by parishioners.

A member of the parish supervises the Sunday School program, and other members provide transportation to and from church for those who need it. Lay visitors take Communion as appropriate to housebound parishioners, and others visit shut-ins independently.

We have members who assist us with technology, for example, setting up Zoom for meetings as needed, and putting our services online for those who cannot attend in person. Volunteers also lead weekly Morning and Evening Prayer on Zoom. A parishioner has created and maintains our website and newsletter.

Assisting with Compline is also a way to serve within the parish. The



candles must be set up in advance and are often done so soon after conclusion of the 11:00 am service. Ushers also need to attend and assist cleanup afterwards. Once a month there is a cookie reception after Compline, provided by an exceptionally hospitable parishioner.

Gardening volunteers work together with neighbors from the Sagamore condominium building located across East Avenue, to care for and maintain the beauty of our front lawn green-space; in essence, these workers serve not only the parish but all who enjoy this small oasis in the city.



## **Ministry Beyond the Parish**

Outreach at Christ Church is carried out by a diverse, sturdy group of parishioners who share their faith through their time and talent. Because we are an urban parish many of our activities need to be coordinated with travel consideration.

### **A Meal & More**

On Sundays and Wednesdays our building supports a soup kitchen, A Meal & More, supplying a noonday meal to members of our Rochester community. Volunteers are from various parishes in the diocese, including Christ Church. A Meal & More began in our building in 1979 and in addition to serving meals, staff and volunteers refer guests to other agencies for emergency shelter, public assistance, or job opportunities.



## Compline

We see Compline itself as an outreach to the community, offering a time of peace and contemplation to so many. Sunday evenings, during the school calendar, volunteer ushers greet those wishing to attend the service of Compline. As we are an urban parish, our volunteer staff provides necessary security for the service that begins at 9:00 pm. Usual weekly attendance is 200-250.

## Tuesday Pipes

Tuesday Pipes is a lunch hour free concert featuring the two magnificent organs: the Romantic Hook & Hastings and the Baroque Casparini organ. Music is provided by Eastman organ students, professors and guests. Several attendees include downtown workers.

## Let's Build Together – A LEGO® Building Club (open to all)

Our city neighborhood was recently dubbed the “Neighborhood of Play” due to our proximity to The Strong National Museum of Play. The building club is another branch of the Christ Church effort to feed the larger community by providing a play experience for families. Children on the autism spectrum were part of the original impetus. The Club meets Sundays, after the 11:00AM service, from 1-3PM, in the Sunday School room. All LEGO® elements are supplied by donation. Through active promoting in the autism community, and word of mouth, it has reached others in the wider Rochester area and attracted a diverse group. The atmosphere is relaxed, safe, with no program or agenda, conversation is casual, and the creations can be taken home to keep. We have discovered that we can't give away more LEGO® than God gives us back.



Let's Build together



Let's Build together

## Seasonal Outreach

A Christmas Angel Tree lists types of toys and games that we gather unwrapped for children who spend the holidays in a shelter; an annual project that collects hats and mittens for Meal and More guests; donations of school supplies in the fall for classrooms in need.

## The Company Theater

Christ Church is newly home to The Company Theater, who lease a portion of our historic building that includes a theatre space. Support for the arts in our urban neighborhood is a strong part of who we are.



The Christ Church Theatre



## Parish Leadership

### *Parish Staff*

Clergy: Interim Rector Julianne Buenting

Music Director: Stephen Kennedy

Administrative Assistant: Lori Frank

Sexton: Steve Iaia

### *Lay Leaders*

Warden: Val Jutsum

Warden: Deb Vanderbilt

Search Chair: Meg Love

The new rector will work with dedicated parishioners. Christ Church has very capable and collaborative lay leaders — hard-working and committed wardens and vestry members, a faithful chancel crew, an experienced treasurer and finance committee, and a busy property committee. Our parishioners provide active volunteer efforts for our worship, leadership and committee roles, and our outreach to the community.

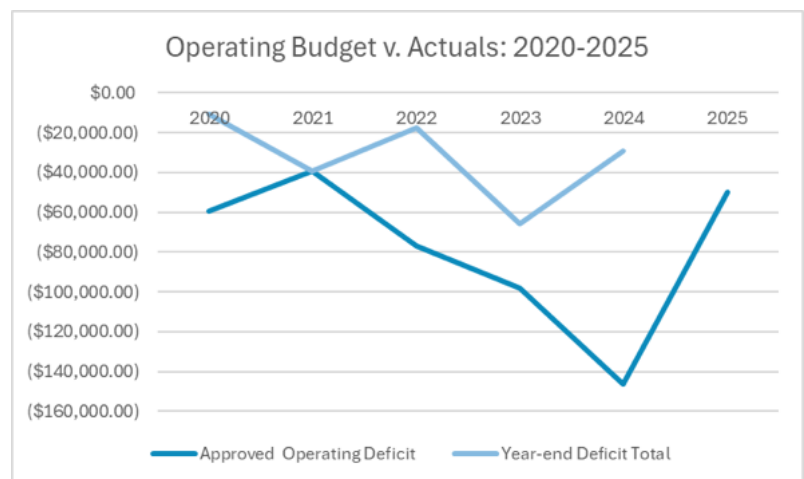
# Finance

Christ Church Rochester has successfully managed the financial headwinds associated with an aging congregation (and building) and declining church attendance, all in the midst of the pandemic. Although we have routinely approved a deficit budget at the Annual Meeting, this has been offset by the generosity of our devoted congregation, as well as some significant bequests.

There are several accounts/funds that support the ongoing operations of the church, as well as our music programs. Balances as of 8/1/2025:

- The Amsden Fund: \$ 299,892
  - A restricted fund for the support of seminarians and students who are actively considering a career in church ministries.
- The Bequest Fund: \$426,180
  - A fund comprised of unrestricted gifts from past parishioners.
- Investment Account: \$1,767,595
  - An account established following a significant, unrestricted gift from a past parishioner.
- Bank CD: \$159,268

The Finance Committee meets monthly to review performance against the budget and works closely with Vestry to advise on requests for funding from within the parish. We employ a professional accountant to manage our accounting records and utilize a professional financial planner to advise on our investment accounts.





# **Our Vision for a Rector**

We seek a welcoming person who will complement our congregation in greeting our diverse visitors with generosity and warmth, attempting to mirror the love of God and the hospitality and wisdom of Jesus in our worship and service to others.

We seek a priest well-grounded in Scripture, Church history, liturgy, and theology, a prayerful person of spiritual depth and sincerity, who is willing to help people with life's transitions and challenges, questions and fears, to visit the sick and the dying.

We need a priest who will thoughtfully plan liturgy for our two Sunday services, our seasonal services, weddings, and funerals. It is important to us to have a rector who can sing the appropriate parts of the liturgy in our sung worship services. We envision our 11:00 am Sunday Eucharist to involve the clergy, the congregation, and the musicians working together with a unity of purpose in worship.

We seek someone who welcomes the quiet reverence of our early Sunday spoken service and sees it as a loved, appreciated part of the worship experience for up to one-quarter of the congregation.

We want someone who will preach intelligent and well-crafted sermons that will help us to understand the Scriptures, to ponder them for their breadths of meaning, and to remember that we are living today in the presence of God, in God's world.

We expect our rector to work collaboratively with our lay leaders and our staff and, when necessary, to be a liaison with other groups who use our church buildings.

We want our rector to be mindful of our financial realities and to support us in promoting wise stewardship of our resources.

We do not have many children in the parish, but we take care of the ones we have, and they care for one another. We hope our rector will support us in our efforts to make the children feel welcome, to give them good memories of being in church, and to teach them what it means to be a Christian.

# Community & Way of Life

Christ Church is located in downtown Rochester in an area known as the “East End.” Our site is not only a place of worship, but also a well-grounded space in the immediate neighborhood and enjoyed by those who enter our building or just explore our surroundings. Our church’s adjacent garden provides a welcome respite, a shaded spot with trees, shrubs and flowers. Some of its maintenance is shared by church members and the condominium owners who live across the street.



Center City Rochester- The Fredrick Douglas & Susan B. Anthony Bridge

A few years ago, Downtown Rochester was mostly a corporate, retail, and financial hub, with lodgings, eateries, and noteworthy cultural/entertainment establishments that complemented the banks, department stores, and companies in the business district, plus just a smattering of housing, mostly in a small, historic neighborhood. Road and sidewalk traffic was heavier in those days and public transportation was more prominent than it is now. As Rochester adjusts to demands of the times, Downtown is now a more popular residential, event/entertainment, as well as business area – today’s companies are mainly small, technically oriented, or innovative/specialty. Cultural and entertainment venues are still very popular here, including a growing presence of musical and theatrical venues.

Within the past 15 years, residential construction has become a major activity in Downtown; some of our most prominent corporate, retail and banking buildings have been transformed into mixed-use structures,



including some higher-end condominiums and apartments plus more affordable residences. The people that call Downtown home run the gamut



Rochester International Jazz

of the socioeconomic spectrum. Homelessness can be found in Rochester, and a couple of the nooks in the church's exterior have been used as temporary habitats. Incidents that may require intervention have been minimal and handled with great compassion.

Our former major shopping mall, Midtown Plaza, located near the church in the center city, was demolished several years ago, and after much

community discussion about future use of that space, a large portion of the vacant land has been turned into a popular

grassy area where many Rochesterians and visitors enjoy musical events and even an occasional exercise class (!) "Parcel 5," as it is known, serves as a popular venue for some concerts, including some of the annual Rochester International Jazz Festival and other events. Plans are underway to also show movies there.



Parcel 5





Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park at Manhattan Square

Another park near Christ Church also holds community events and has an ice rink.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park

The Strong National Museum of Play is also well within walking distance.



The world renowned Strong National Museum of Play

The nearby Rochester Public Market, a very popular destination, draws people from throughout the area.

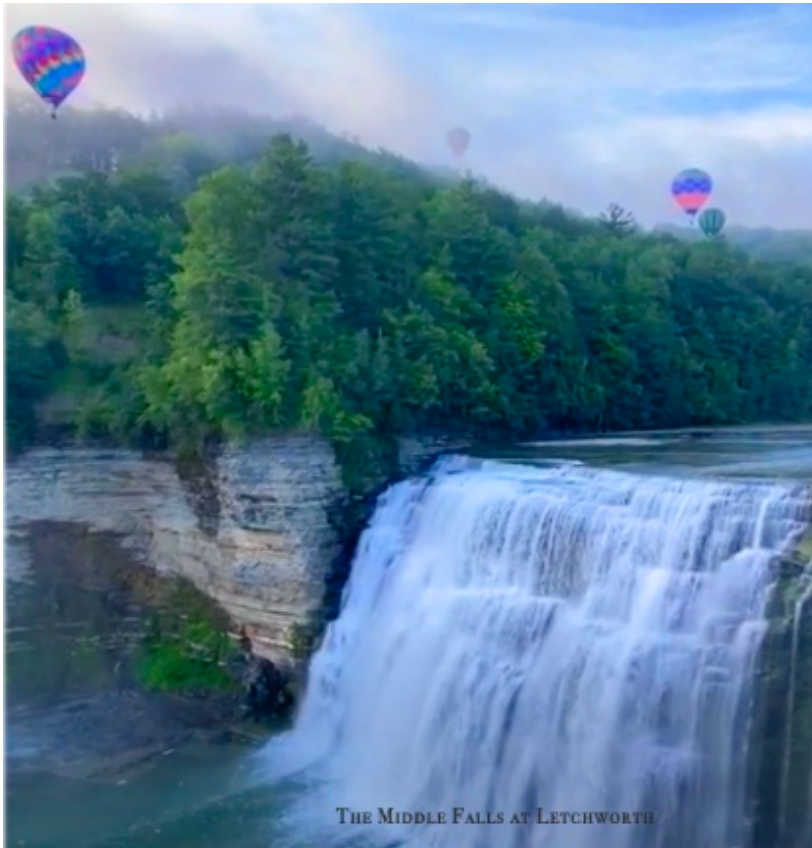
Rochester and Monroe County offer a variety of cultural features – performances, museums, parks, bike paths, and neighborhood, community-wide, and regional festivals; most of the latter are held,



understandably, during the spring/summer/early fall months. We have quality schools and hospitals, and significant, groundbreaking medical research is accomplished here, much of it by the University of Rochester. Quality health care is part of Greater Rochester's identity. Social services agencies, through government offices as well as private organizations, work to meet the various quality of life issues of our people.

Sports and fitness centers, including public and private golf courses, pickleball and tennis courts, etc., are readily available within the Rochester region. Winter sports are popular here too. Individuals as well as families enjoy many opportunities for life balance, variety, and enjoyment. Because Lake Ontario, the Erie Canal and the Finger Lakes are nearby, water sports,

fishing, and tourism are enjoyed by many participants.



THE MIDDLE FALLS AT LETCHWORTH

Western New York, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, is abundant in forestry, lakes, waterfalls, wild areas, and parks. Several wineries are found in the Finger Lakes area. We are located conveniently near major markets in the Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada, and we experience four distinct seasons. Metropolitan Rochester contains

amenities of a large city with a small town's comfort and ease of connectivity. The current city population (2025) is 204,882, and Monroe County's (also 2025) is 752,202. The countryside can be reached within a few short minutes. Agriculture, because of our temperate climate, is a major practice and way of life.

Housing is more affordable than the national average. We are in the top 10% for public education in the United States, and we are often ranked within the top 15% for quality of life in the U.S. Commuting distances are considerably lower than the national average. City neighborhoods and the suburban/village/town areas offer a range of modest to large-scale housing.

Because of the number and types of institutions of higher learning here, as well as the available workforce, several businesses and industries have found Greater Rochester an attractive place to settle. High technology, advanced manufacturing, energy innovation, optics, photonics, imaging/lasers, semiconductors, software and IT are prevalent here. The Rochester Institute of Technology and University of Rochester are two of the largest universities located in our metropolitan area. Eastman Kodak Company, Xerox Corporation, and Bausch & Lomb were established here and played prominent roles in shaping the aspects, progress and opportunities of the Greater Rochester area and its people.



The grave of Susan B. Anthony, at Mt. Hope Cemetery, is covered with “I voted” stickers on election day.



## For More Information

Respond to [transitions@episcopaldioceseofrochester.org](mailto:transitions@episcopaldioceseofrochester.org)

Website: [www.christchurchrochester.org](http://www.christchurchrochester.org)

News magazine: [www.songforchristchurch.org](http://www.songforchristchurch.org)

Parish YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@christchurchrochester8549>

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