

Christ Church
Manhasset, New York
Annual Parish Meeting
February 2, 2014

Reports of 2013

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
CHRIST CHURCH, MANHASSET, NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 2, 2014
10 A.M.
AGENDA**

- I. Opening of the Meeting with the Holy Eucharist**
- II. Opening of the Polls**
- III. Report of the Rector**
- IV. Appointment of a Clerk and Minutes of the 2013 Meeting**
- V. Report of the Nominating Committee**
 - Warden – Bill Siener (two years)
 - Vestry – Kathy Bindert (three years)
 - Vestry – Gloria Ryan (three years)
 - Vestry – Dan Wright (three years)**Nomination by Petition**
- VI. Treasurer’s Report**
- VII. Parish House Report**
- VIII. Search Committee Report**
- IX. Reports of the Standing Committees and Parish Organizations**
 - A.** Wardens’ Report
 - B.** Altar Guild
 - C.** Christian Education/Church School
 - D.** Fellowship
 - E.** Music
 - F.** Public Relations
 - G.** Youth Ministry/Children
- X. Old Business**
- XI. New Business**
- XII. Installation of the Vestry**
- XIII. Adjournment and Benediction**

WARDENS' REPORT

The following details some of the Vestry activities in 2013:

The Vestry conducted their annual retreat in March, focusing again on 5 areas of church life – Worship, Sunday School and Youth Programs, Fellowship, Communications, Outreach and Mission. As part of the retreat, Canon Betit joined the Vestry to detail the upcoming Rector Search process, the timeline and sequence of events, and the support the Diocese would provide. Already as of March 2013, the Diocese had assisted Christ Church to hire as Interim Rector the Reverend Dr. Charles Colwell, and as Search Consultant Father Bruce Griffith.

In April, the Vestry held an all day session with Father Griffith to participate in the Appreciative Inquiry [AI] process, prior to the entire parish participating in its own AI in the Fall of 2013. The AI process identifies what Christ Church believes is valuable about church life and what Christ Church wants for its future. With this AI session, the focus of 2013 increasingly became the Rector Search, with Father Lowry's retirement anticipated in the late summer of 2013.

To celebrate Father Lowry's nine years as Rector of Christ Church, a special Holy Eucharist was held on August 25th, with various dignitaries in attendance, among them Reverend Steven Pierce from the Community Reformed Church; Pastor Paul Chung from the New Heart Mission Church with 30 of his parishioners; Father Chris Ballard, former seminarian and Sunday school teacher at Christ Church, who is now an ordained priest in Brooklyn; Mother Lauren McLeavey, former Christ Church seminarian and now an ordained priest in Riverhead; Mother Barbara Hutchinson, former Interim Rector at St. Stephen's Church in Port Washington, who made the trip from her new church in Pennsylvania; Christ Church Interim Rector Father Charlie Colwell; Yeou-Cheng Ma of the Children's Orchestra Society; and Janet and Michael Puntillo and their family (Mike is our General Contractor from Jobco Realty and Development, who is overseeing the Christ Church Parish House renovation). At this service, David and Mary Lowry were presented by the Vestry, on behalf of the congregation, with an oil painting of the church done by parishioner Debbie Czlegedy. The choir reprised the "Lowry" music composed by McNeil Robinson in Father Lowry's honor, and Yeou-Cheng Ma performed a Bach violin sonata during Holy Communion.

Interim Rector Father Colwell had joined us in mid-August to ensure continuity as Father Lowry readied for retirement. With the coming of Fall, church activities increased with Sunday school commencing, youth program getting into high gear, and the parish conducting the AI process as a congregation. At that parish AI session, the same values and future were identified as were at the Vestry AI session: Christ Church is a warm and welcoming parish, with a value on its worship, its Sunday school and youth programs, its music program, and a desire to grow the congregation and its outreach in the future. Coincident with the AI session, a Search Committee chaired by Andy Phillips with members Ted Andel, Heather Bennett, Arlene Blocker and Jeff Lightcap were appointed, and a Writing Committee of Andrea Watson and Lesley Stackler formed to prepare the Rector Application brochure, based on the input from the AI session.

The Rector Application brochure was written in October and published in November, with copies sent to all parishioners and the top 125 clergy in the Diocese with hopes they would share this document with potential Rector candidates. The brochure was also posted online at the Christ Church web site and the Episcopal Diocese of LI web site. As of mid-December, 10 candidates had submitted resumes, and at this writing, 16 candidates are in the running. The intent is to interview candidates and select a Rector by May, so that he/she can move in with his/her family over the summer and be ready to take on responsibility for the church in the fall of 2014.

While the Search has been a constant focus, the Vestry continued to conduct its other duties – financial oversight for the parish, housekeeping with leaf raking, electrical and other maintenance work, stewardship, fellowship activities, and so on. The Vestry also has taken on more responsibility over the last year: with Father Lowry going over to the Community Reformed Church after the parish Eucharist to serve communion to the Sunday school, the Vestry took on

responsibility to do the announcements at the end of the service and to greet parishioners as they exited. And the Wardens took on responsibility from Father Lowry to write the reports in the monthly *Chart* to communicate to the parish and to lead the monthly Vestry meetings. The Vestry has also determined to undertake a Capital Campaign, to raise monies so as not to spend down the endowment raised with the sale of the Parish House to Jobco, to afford the new furnishings needed in the new Parish Hall upon completion of the renovation, and to prepare for a thriving future with a new priest focused on our mission as a parish and church.

In December, the Vestry Nominating Committee identified candidates to be new Vestry members and a Junior Warden to be elected at the Annual Meeting. The Vestry again plans to hold a retreat in March, once the new Vestry members are installed.

Respectfully submitted Pattie Gallatin, Senior Warden, and Ariana Tadler Paterson, Junior Warden

ALTAR GUILD

I would like to thank the members of the Altar Guild, namely, Carol Allen, Amy Angus (Secretary), Kathryn Bindert, Marina Conrad, Lucy Field, Louise Fribush, Burr Henahan (retired after years of service), Mary Lowry (retired), Holly Melichar, Valerie Siener, and Marge Trapp for their dedication and support.

We've had a smooth transition with Father Lowry retiring and Father Colwell coming on as Interim.

This year's Christmas decorations had many new helpers which was greatly appreciated. A special thank you to Debbie Czegledy, Jeannine Daly and daughter Una, Laura Pavlovich, John Trezza and Ward Wright.

Donations for flowers are still down. This Christmas was very disappointing. If this continues, decorations will have to be cut back. The Guild depends on these donations for the cost that is incurred in decorating the church.

We are in need of new members. Please call me or talk to Father Colwell if you are interested.

Respectfully submitted by Diana T. Tadler, Directress

2013 REPORT OF CHRIST CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAM

Our combined Sunday School [the Community Reformed Church (CRC) and Christ Church] has been working well for the children of both churches. Our classes are held in the Education Building of CRC until the Christ Church Parish House is completed, at which time we will move back into our building. We begin class each week at 9:50 and end with our chapel service, communion and prayer. As in past years, the children learn the same Gospel every Sunday as that being read in church. One of the teachers' goals is for parents and children to have an open dialogue about what they heard / learned in church and Sunday School each week.

The children in the combined Sunday School have had wonderful joint activities including great outreach projects such as Operation Christmas Child, cards to soldiers overseas, the Valentine's for Veterans that the children make each year during our Annual Meeting and our Easter Basket outreach. Our Christmas Pageant (under the direction of Lesley Mazzotta) was a huge event that the children loved doing for the parishes. We had an exciting spring last year with the Easter "Egg" Hunt in the cemetery, planting flowers for our Mother's and a wonderful World Children's Sunday, Awards and Picnic with CRC. My sincere thanks to all the parent volunteers who make each of these events possible for the children. Their contribution to our Sunday School is invaluable.

Lesley Mazzotta, Director of Spiritual Formation for both churches, works closely with the teachers and puts together the lesson plans each week. Cathy Trezza, teaches the 3 year olds, 4 year olds and Kindergarten class; Arlene Blocker teaches the 1st and 2nd grades, Lisa Carr teaches 5th and 6th, Lesley Mazzotta and Oriana Cyprus team teach the 7th and 8th grades, assisted by Carter Paterson; and Steven Polis and I teach the 3rd and 4th grades. Jeannine Daly, our substitute teacher, is a blessing and an asset to the teaching team.

Lesley Mazzotta developed our joint Youth Group to include not only Christ Church, CRC and the Congregation Church but more churches in the greater community. The group does fun activities but also participates in many outreach projects. Last fall they had a youth BBQ / Messy Games Day, a day of service for those hurt by Hurricane Sandy, a retreat centered on gratefulness. She organized the Youth Group Christmas Tree Sell, their Christmas trip to NYC and a New Year's Dinner. She will run the Second Annual Youth Leadership Lab, this year on poverty; the Lenten Text Devotional plus a supper and service project; the Retreat Day for Women and Teenage Girls; a car wash fundraiser. During this coming summer, she will take the youth on a second mission trip (to Atlanta), teach Vacation Bible School and organize the Back to School Backpack Service Project.

Arlene Blocker will again coordinate our First Communion class which will be taught by Fr. Colwell. We will have a new confirmation class starting this winter and the 2014 class will be confirmed in the spring along with the 2013 class. Our 9th -12 graders serve in church as lectors, crucifers and other supporting roles to continue their involvement with the church.

My gratitude and thanks to our teachers who put so much time, thought and love into each of their roles in the Sunday School. They bring their best each and every Sunday to make their class a wonderful experience where the children can learn, question and discuss our faith and use what they learn in their daily lives.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Angus Bennett

FELLOWSHIP REPORT 2013

The Fellowship Committee held several events during 2013.

A cocktail party was held in early June to honor Father David & Mary Lowry at the home of the Pavlovich's. Many thanks to Laura & Bob for opening their lovely home for this event. I would also like to thank all those who contributed to making the event a huge success, including the young people who assisted from the Confirmation class.

Summer Home Communion were held at various parishioners' homes during July & August, attendance was approx. 20-25 people each week. The last Home Communion had over **45** people in attendance. Many thanks to all who hosted and volunteered their homes.

A few Women's Dinners were held in 2013, with 20-25 attending.

Sunday Coffee Hour's continue to be held each week throughout the year and are hosted by parishioners.

I would like to thank all our parishioners who continue to support our fellowship events.

We look forward to planning more events/activities once the Parish House renovation is completed.

Respectfully submitted by Liz Giacomia & Holly Melichar, Fellowship

+ CHRIST CHURCH +Annual Report of the Director of Music to the Parish2 February 2014

I am pleased to report that the music program as a whole continues to prosper during this interim period. This is entirely due to those choir members (and choir parents!) who are so committed to bringing a high level of quality music to the Sunday morning liturgy. All those involved have my thanks as well as the appreciation of the entire parish.

Brochures outlining the musical offerings for each of the sung liturgies in 2013-2014 are available in the back of the church. These brochures are also very handy booklets for referencing dates and times of various major services throughout the year!

The **Chancel Choir** is, as always, open to new members. ANY AND ALL adults in the parish with any musical ability are encouraged to join. This ensemble leads the majority of Sunday services and rehearses every Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. in the church. Together with the members of the Schola Cantorum, the Chancel Choir consists of several of our most dedicated parishioners, supplemented by four professional section leaders, who continue to inspire me with their tenacity and yearning to serve God and the church week after week amid all the hustle and bustle of life and family. The Choir is busy preparing a wide range of beautiful music to support and supplement the scripture for the Epiphany and Lenten seasons and for Holy Week.

The **Schola Cantorum**, in its fourth year, continues to be a success. We have *three* choral scholars in the program this year. This program—for teenagers in grades 9 through 12—is fully

integrated into the Chancel Choir, with special opportunities to learn and participate in liturgy. In exchange for a high level of commitment to the church's music program, each choral scholar is offered a scholarship from the church upon graduation from high school (****for information on how to give to the scholarship fund, see below****). In the summer of 2013, I decided to have the choral scholars cantor the 10 a.m. Sunday services, which not only inspired greater confidence in the congregational singing, but was an invaluable opportunity for these young people to grow as leaders in liturgy.

I regret to report that the **Chapel Choir** has unfortunately been put on hiatus this year. This is due to a significant drop in attendance in the Fall which impeded the group's ability to prepare music for the Family Eucharist each fourth Sunday. An alternative plan to "regroup" in December so that the children could sing on Christmas Eve also proved fruitless. There are many gifted children in our parish that would love to be a part of this group, but, with so many other commitments pulling our children and their parents this way and that, it has been difficult to rally together this year. It is my hope that the Chapel Choir will be back and better than ever in the Fall of 2014!

I would like to thank all those whose **donations** made the special music at Christmas possible. Music is always an indispensable component of liturgy, but I think the music we sing and hear at Christmas speaks to us in a singular way. Without your support, it would not be possible. I would also like to thank the **Siener** family for their generous endowment in May 2013 of a commissioned work by McNeil Robinson—the *Missa Christi Ecclesia* (or "Christ Church Mass")—composed in honor of David Lowry and his years of service to Christ Church Manhasset. The piece was premiered by the Christ Church Choir at the 10 a.m. Eucharist on Corpus Christi Sunday, June 2, 2013, and will be sung again on Easter Sunday this year.

There continues to be an inescapable need for a **major renovation** of the organ. The failing mechanics of the organ console, the worn, outdated circuitry which communicates between the console and the pipes, the blown expression engines, the need to update the blower system and the need for reparative tonal work on many of the stops are just a handful of the most impending issues. At present, the maintenance technicians who routinely service the instrument are able to do "patchwork" jobs only, which provide temporary stability. The problems have been evident for at least ten years, as two of my predecessors have addressed the need for a major renovation project. Once the construction project and renovation of the church campus have completed, it would be a wise investment to focus on options with regard to the future of the organ.

Finally, I would like to make an appeal to the parish to give to the church's **Schola Cantorum Fund**. This fund makes it possible for Christ Church to grant a scholarship to teenagers who have given their time and skill to enrich the music program as choral scholars during their four years in high school. We have all been very blessed each week to follow the growth of these young people as musicians and leaders, and even more blessed to experience their incredible talents firsthand! They are the future of our parish and of the Church as a whole, and these scholarships are but a small token of our appreciation for their past service and our support for their future endeavors. If you are interested in supporting this program, you may place your donation in the offering plate or send to the Church Office (please indicate "Schola Cantorum Fund" on the check).

Sacred music is **not entertainment**, but rather a means of opening the heart to communicate with God and with each other. Music is a vessel that we use to send our prayers to the heavens each Sunday and it is the lifeblood that binds together each facet of the act of worship. Whether you are singing from the choir stalls or the pews, or even if you are simply listening, we are all praying together. For me, and for the men, women and young people of the Christ Church choirs, it is an honor and a privilege to lead you in song and prayer every week.

Respectfully yours, *Andrew H. Yeargin*, M.Mus., Organist & Choirmaster

Public Relations Committee

In 2013, the Public Relations Committee continued its focus on garnering more publicity and community awareness for Christ Church, its various worship services, its church choirs and music programs, its church school and children's activities, as well as fellowship within the Christ Church community. The intent is to distinguish Christ Church as a spiritual home for the entire family, in comparison to other churches in the area.

To this end, press releases and calendar listings were distributed to the print media on a monthly basis, detailing such news as: the Martin Luther King Gospel Brunch in January, featuring the Christ Church choir and Jade Blocker soloist and Sandra Claus from the CRC as accompanist; the Retreat Day for Women and Girls in April; the Spiritual Arts Camp in June; Christ Church, the Community Reformed Church, and the Congregational Church hosting Vacation Bible School in August; the Retirement of Father Lowry at the end of August, with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist service to mark his retirement and many local clergy and dignitaries in attendance, and several photos of the event; the appointment of Interim Rector Charlie Colwell in September; the Ice Cream Sunday and the Commencement of Sunday School in September; Blessing of the Animals in October; Halloween in the Cemetery for the Church Youth in October; all of which stories were featured in the *Manhasset Press*.

A new communications process was put in place this year to ensure timely and accurate transmittal of information via the eblasts to parishioners, service leaflets and web updates. Weekly the staff and various church volunteers reviewed a "staging document" detailing the upcoming events, and edited the information for accuracy and updates as required. This greatly enhanced the communications process, and helped the webmaster get "ahead" of the news with updates on the web, instead of posting them "after the fact" as had been the case in 2012.

The web site is continually being updated, with the most recent events and photos posted. All the news stories cited above were posted, as well as other activities. New and old photos are used to compliment the news stories. Two new pages were created for the web site, a photo gallery and a sermon page with audio downloads. Dan Wright created these pages. These pages are temporarily not available due to web hosting issues, but will be back online once the urgency of the Rector search is past. The Rector search effort has become the priority of the webmaster, with the Rector Application brochure posted online and linked from the home page.

Christ Church is now on Facebook! Dan Wright made us a Facebook page which Laura updates frequently with light news of general interest to the Parish. Laura also tracks the number of times Christ Church gets "hits" on Facebook, and it is gratifying that the number increases month over month.

Both ongoing press coverage and web updates will be important tools to help in Christ Church's future growth.

Respectfully submitted by Pattie Gallatin, Laura Pavlovich and Dan Wright

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULT MINISTRIES

In 2013, we offered rich and meaningful programming for our Children, Youth and Adult ministries. This provided congregants of all ages a fun, loving and open Christian community for personal growth, spiritual enrichment and the opportunity to grow closer to God.

For children, we continued our joint Sunday School with Community Reformed Church, led by Heather Bennett, and offered a weekly, Gospel-based lesson, taught through storytelling, arts, crafts and group discussion. We also planned many special events, including a Sunday School pajama party; our annual Easter Egg Hunt; a Spring Planting Sunday; Children's Day Service; "Kick off" Sundae Sunday; a Halloween party in the Graveyard; an Ecumenical Thanksgiving worship service and a traditional Christmas pageant, featuring 32 amazing children and youth!

Our youth group grew leaps and bounds with ongoing activities that built connection and friendships with other youth at local community churches. These included a New Year's *Dream it! Do it!* Dinner; a Leadership Lab with trip to the United Nations; an August mission trip to Pittsburgh; *Project CARE: A Ropes Course Adventure Day* and a Christmas trip to New York City to see the famous Fifth Avenue windows and Rockefeller tree.

For adults, we held a New Year's Retreat Day; a Lenten supper series with St. Stephens; and a women/teenage girl's retreat day in May. We also launched a joint women's ministry with 8 other local churches in the fall. The group's mission is to *celebrate and inspire women's lives through rich and meaningful spiritual, social and service opportunities*. Our October dinner was a huge hit!

All of our children, youth and adults participated in a number of service and outreach opportunities in 2013:

- The Sunday School children created Valentine for Vets; led an Easter basket outreach project and made multiple shoe boxes for Operation Christmas child.
- The youth group held a Lenten service night for "Socks for Love;" traveled to Pittsburgh in August for a week long mission trip; and hosted a Christmas Tree/Wreath Sale and spring car wash fundraiser.
- Our adult congregants graciously donated to our first annual Spiritual Arts Camp, which welcomed 25 underprivileged children; Operation Christmas Child; our Christmas giving in the schools and "Adopt a Homebound" holiday program.

For 2014, we plan to offer much of the same programming that proved so successful last year. In addition, we will present the following to continue expanding the community of children, youth and adults in our congregation:

- A Women's Ministry book club, hosted weekly for two months.
- Sunday School interfaith trips to a Mosque and Synagogue as well as an overseas Pen Pal program.
- Spiritual growth programs for the community: evening conversations on important youth issues, including drugs and alcohol, self-esteem, peer pressure, bullying, violence in schools.
- Newly developed Christian curriculum for 0-3 year olds.

Respectfully submitted, Lesley Mazzotta, Director of Spiritual Formation