

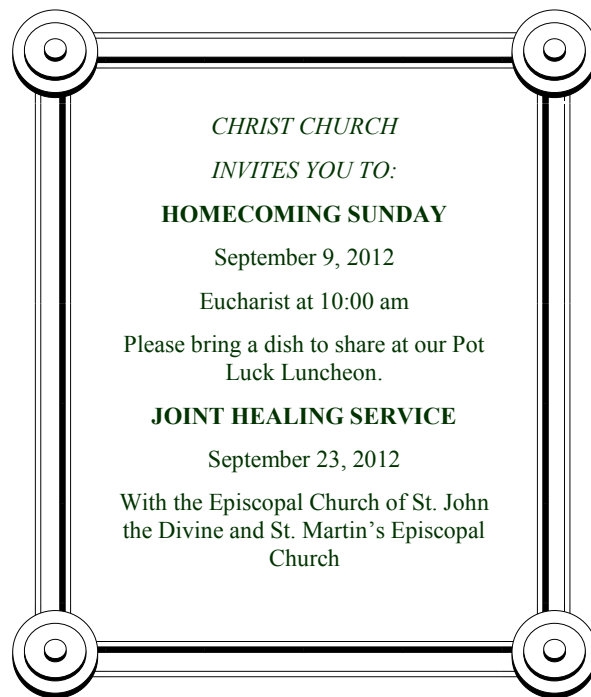
## CELEBRATIONS

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

September 3 Tieg Beazer  
 September 5 Violet Stiles  
 September 7 Trevor Clasp  
 September 8 Trevor Goulborne, Sr.  
 September 9 Lloyd Currier  
 September 10 Bob Smith  
 September 12 Sarah Savoye, Curtis Branch  
 September 14 Veronica Kelly  
 September 21 Kyle Eustace Williams  
 September 24 Ellen Bernstein  
 September 25 Fred Heine  
 September 26 Bernice Moran  
 September 27 Richard Czarnecki

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO...

September 9 Ellie & Joe Sallemi  
 September 14 David & Lynda Dickey  
 Cathy Hughes & Bob Smith  
 September 17 Angelo & Barbara Djimpoulos



*If you would like to receive this newsletter by email only—and not receive a paper copy—please contact our Parish Administrator, Gayle Stoute, (201) 342-2365.*

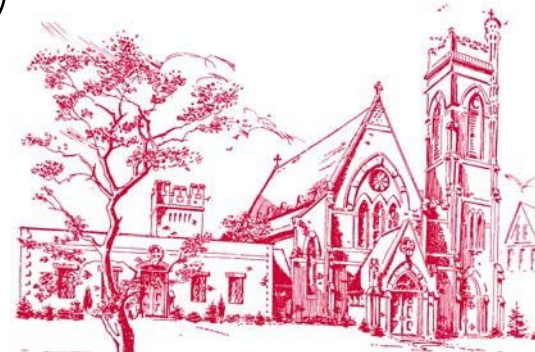
WE'RE ON THE WEB  
 CHRISTCHURCHACKENSACK.ORG



**Christ Church  
 (Episcopal)**  
 251 State Street  
 Hackensack, NJ 07601  
 Phone: 201-342-2365  
 Fax: 201-342-8938

**Wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome here.**

SEPTEMBER 2, 2012



## The Epistle CHRIST CHURCH

### CALENDAR

**SUNDAYS:**  
 10:00 am Holy Eucharist  
 11:15 am Coffee Hour

**FOURTH TUESDAY:**  
 6:30 pm Soup and Sometimes Silence

**SUNDAY Sept 9**  
 Homecoming Sunday with Pot Luck Luncheon

**SUNDAY Sept. 23**  
 Joint healing service with St. John the Devine and St. Martin's.

### STAFF

Gilda Louise  
*Musical Director  
 Organist*  
 Gayle Stoute  
*Parish Administrator*  
 Fred Heine  
*Sexton*

### THE VESTRY

Louis Knaub , *Warden*  
 Janet Peluso, *Warden*  
 Marjorie Jingo, *Treasurer*  
 Christina Czamecki, *Clerk*  
 Bruce Altschuler  
 Cathy Hughes  
 Margaret King  
 Bernice Moran  
 Dianne Nelson  
 Frank Rodriguez, Esq.

### A STRANGE HOMECOMING ARTICLE BY THE REV. MICHAEL GERHARDT

A little over a month ago, one of my fellow chaplains left a newspaper article on my desk with the note, "What are your thoughts?" It was an op-ed piece from the Times by Ross Douthat and it was titled "Can Liberal Christianity Be Saved?"

Of course the article began with an attack on our very own retired Bishop John Shelby Spong and continued through a list of our various Episcopal "sins"; our support of equal rights for women; full inclusion of gay, lesbian, and transgender people in the life of the church; our social justice agenda; and our emphasis on practice rather than dogma. And Douthat maintains that all of these things have resulted in our serious loss of membership over the past half century.

Interestingly, I didn't particularly fault his statistics; our churches have been losing membership for most of my life. But I did take umbrage at his not so subtle suggestion throughout his many books, articles and interviews, that the drop in membership is a sign of "divine disfavor."

In anger I began to look more closely at his statistics and realized that he had cherry picked many of them. Attacking the Episcopal Church for not attracting youth, he neglected to mention that Millennials are leaving fundamentalist churches in droves. Citing decreasing membership in Episcopal style churches, he failed to note that, when adjusted for immigration, the largest decreases in America have been experienced by a "traditional" denomination. Publishing figures for a nationwide Episcopal decrease in Sunday attendance, he forgot to mention that some other decidedly more dogmatic denominations are reporting bigger decreases.

And so, maybe we and Mr. Douthat are missing the problem by pointing the finger too quickly at what he terms "Liberal" Christianity. A recent Gallup poll shows that only 44% of Americans have a "great deal" of trust in organized religion; a decline of 22 percentage points since 1973. Globally, those who identify themselves as religious have dropped by 9% since 2005. Membership and attendance throughout the world (except for Africa) has decreased even more precipitously than in the United States without falling into Douthat's Liberal vs. Conservative scenario. Diana Butler Bass, a Ph.D. in religious studies from Duke University and the author of numerous books specializing in American religion and culture, thinks we may be asking the wrong question. The real question is not Douthat's "Can liberal Christianity be saved?" The real question is: Can Christianity be saved?

What makes all these statistics even more interesting, (while also adding a note of optimism) is that decreases in religious membership do not seem to correlate with belief in God or a quest for spiritual meaning. Belief in God has not changed much over the past 50 years and the search and desire for spiritual meaning may even be trending upward in the United States. In short, maybe all this is not about faith or belief or spirituality but rather about our failing confidence in organized church and the inability of organized religion to respond to the deep needs of our souls. And our challenge as faithful churches is to find new ways to respond.

By this time I guess you are all wondering what this essay has to do with our Homecoming Celebration on September 9. In over a century of life here at 251 State Street, Christ Church has been up on the mountain top and down in the valley. We have known our successes and failures. We have experienced the religious post war boom of the 50's and 60's as well as its bust at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And maybe that is how it should be. Maybe all of this disgruntlement with organized religion offers us a new freedom from the tyranny of doing the same old thing. Maybe being Episcopalian means we can move into a new vision of the compassionate Christian community.

In 2012 we are in the right place and right time, poised to be and create church in a strange new world. In the spirit of Homecoming, welcome back!

## PARISH NEWS

**SPIRITUAL GROWTH**  
"Soup and Sometimes Silence"  
to be held on Tuesday, September 25th at 6:30 PM.

Soup and Sometimes Silence is a spiritual growth group that will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, here at the church for a simple supper.

After supper, the group will learn about and experience a variety of traditional and contemporary forms of prayers or contemplation.



**FOOD COLLECTION  
FOR THE CENTER FOR  
FOOD ACTION**

Please bring a gift for your neighbors. Food basket in the narthex of the church each Sunday. The need is great!

**FLOWER  
ARRANGEMENTS**  
Remember or honor a loved one by donating flowers to adorn the Altar. The requested donation is \$35.

**CHURCH DIRECTORY**  
The Parish Directory of Christ Church is compiled from the information from current members of the parish. A member is defined as a person who attends worship here regularly and who contributes time, talent and resources to the mission and ministry of the parish. Please notify the church of any change of information.

## IN OUR COMMUNITY



LOVE FREE OR DIE is about a man whose two defining passions the world cannot reconcile: his love for God and for his partner Mark. Bishop Gene Robinson will not give up on either.



## Reveal Productions

Director Macky Alston      Producer Sandra Itkoff  
Editor Christopher White      Composer Paul Brill  
Director of Photography Tom Hurwitz

Made with support from the Ford Foundation, ITVS & the Sundance Documentary Fund.

For more information, visit [www.lovefreeordiemovie.com](http://www.lovefreeordiemovie.com).

Contributions are welcomed and will go toward further promotion of this film.

**JOIN A FREE SCREENING OF  
THIS AWARD-WINNING  
BIOGRAPHY OF  
BISHOP GENE ROBINSON**

**SUN. OCT. 14 @ 4 PM  
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
118 CHADWICK RD, TEANECK, N.J.**

"Macky Alston's illuminating documentary examines the life and influence of Gene Robinson, Bishop of the Episcopal Church in New Hampshire, who became an unwitting poster boy for openly gay clergy, helping to advance the rights of the LGBT faithful."

- DAVID ROONEY      HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"Compelling storytelling, even for those familiar with the outlines of Robinson's story... Alston gives plenty of time to other voices; both those allied with Robinson and those who oppose the changes he is asking the church to make."

- PETER MONTGOMERY      RELIGION DISPATCHES

"When we encounter true 'Doers of the Word' transformation happens because their willingness to live their faith gives us the courage to do the same... We see in this film how Gene confronts fear and in the process makes history—the film will inspire you to do the same."

- SHARON GROVES, HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

**- 4:00 PM LIGHT SUPPER  
- 4:30 PM FILM BEGINS  
- 6:00 PM DISCUSSION  
- 6:30 PM EUCHARIST**

## Sponsors:

Christ Episcopal Church  
Hackensack, N.J.

Church of the Good Shepherd  
Fort Lee, N.J.

Integrity NYC-Metro

The OASIS - Diocese of Newark

St. Mark's Church  
Teaneck, N.J.

Trinity Church  
Cliffside Park, N.J.

## MINISTRY ASSIGNMENTS

SUNDAY, September 2

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Michael Gerhardt  
Organist and Choir Director: Gilda Louise  
Altar Guild: Dianne Nelson  
Crucifer: Dianne Nelson  
Chalice Bearers: Dianne Nelson, Bob Smith  
Lectors (Lesson, Epistle, Prayers): Ellen Bernstein, Karen Sabur  
Ushers: Cathy Smith, **Volunteer Needed**  
Vestry Counter: Marjorie Jingo, Dianne Nelson

SUNDAY, September 16

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Michael Gerhardt  
Organist and Choir Director: Gilda Louise  
Altar Guild: Jeff Thalmann  
Crucifer: Katie Dickey  
Chalice Bearers: Marjorie Jingo, Dianne Nelson  
Lectors (Lesson, Epistle, Prayers): Katie Dickey, Marjorie Jingo, Ellen Bernstein  
Ushers: Michael Moran, Janet Peluso  
Vestry-Counter: Bruce Altschuler, Christina Czarnecki

SUNDAY, September 30

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Michael Gerhardt  
Organist and Choir Director: Gilda Louise  
Altar Guild: Marjorie Jingo  
Crucifer: Trevor Savoye  
Chalice Bearers: Cathy Hughes, Bob Smith  
Lectors (Lesson, Epistle, Prayers): Bob Smith, Karen Sabur, Cathy Hughes  
Ushers: Michael Moran, **Volunteer Needed**  
Vestry-Counter: Cathy Hughes, Frank Rodriguez

SUNDAY, September 9

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Michael Gerhardt  
Organist and Choir Director: Gilda Louise  
Altar Guild: Margaret King  
Crucifer: Trevor Savoye  
Chalice Bearers: Margaret King, Louis Knaub  
Lectors (Lesson, Epistle, Prayers): David Dickey, Katie Dickey, Christinia Czarnecki  
Ushers: Michael Moran, Janet Peluso  
Vestry Counter: Louis Knaub, Janet Peluso

SUNDAY, September 23

Healing Service

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Michael Gerhardt  
Organist and Choir Director: Gilda Louise  
Altar Guild: TBA  
Crucifer: TBA  
Chalice Bearers: TBA  
Lectors (Lesson, Epistle, Prayers): TBA  
Ushers: TBA  
Vestry-Counter: TBA

In order for our services to run smoothly, please remember to find a replacement if you cannot serve as scheduled.

Also, notify the Parish Office of any changes so that the ministry schedule can be amended.

Thank you to all who volunteer to serve as a Lay Minister.