



# Christ Episcopal Church

PARISH PROFILE



# Prayer for our search

*Holy and Almighty God our Father, we earnestly pray for your strength and presence among us as we undertake our search for the next rector of Christ Church. Keep our eyes and hearts focused on you as we seek to honor your Name in this work. We desire your fatherly guidance through your Holy Spirit and complete obedience to your will. With grateful hearts, may we bear witness to your presence in our lives, in the precious name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen*

*- The Christ Church Vestry, 2024*

Christ Episcopal Church is located in Bradenton, on Florida's West Coast, with 496 total active baptized members. Our parish is in Manatee County, home to the Diocese of Southwest Florida – with its retreat and convention center – on the picturesque Manatee River.





## Our essence

We are a traditional Episcopal church, steeped in a century of local history and committed to worshiping through liturgy and hymn in a stunning setting that features stained glass windows created by the legendary Willet Studio and a one-of-a-kind Letourneau pipe organ.

We worship through multiple means and in different ways on Sundays. One service features our choir and classic hymns; another follows Rite One, prayed in quiet; a third reflects our church's evolution, with contemporary Christian worship accented by an acoustic praise band.

We gather on weekdays as well – during services, in Bible study and small groups, and

in a wide range of volunteer undertakings that comfort and minister to each other and the community around us.

We are more than our beautiful church building. We are the parishioners who serve, feed and clothe those in need, whether at our own food pantry and thrift store or through our immensely successful backpack giveaway that connects children and families with the help they need. Our parishioners pride themselves as well in serving outwardly in the community.

Whatever our service and style, wherever and however we serve, our hopes and desires are the same – to love the Lord our God, our fellow parishioners and neighbors.

# Our past

In 1885, settlers on Florida's West Coast – in a community then known as Braidentown – organized Sunday school activities and constructed a small building, St. Luke's Chapel.

In 1887-88, 31 families, having overcome the harsh terrain and yellow fever, funded and built the first Episcopal Church in Manatee County, naming it Christ Church.

By 1909, funds were raised for a new church, in what is now downtown Bradenton. Growth of the parish and community and led to a bold decision in the 1950s – to purchase land and build a church on property that was then outside the city of Bradenton.

The existing structure, prominently facing the Manatee Avenue West thoroughfare, opened for services on Christmas Eve 1957. Since that time, Christ Church has remained on the same site – its majestic architecture, bell tower and

red doors serving as landmarks for worshipers and passersby alike.

In 2004, church leaders and parishioners agreed to a multi-year project that included maintenance, a dramatic refurbishment of the sanctuary and installation of the grand organ. The result, we believe, is a space that glorifies God and brings worshipers close to his presence.

Overseeing and shepherding these modern changes was a series of long-serving and impactful rectors.

The Reverend Fred T. Kyle served Christ Church from 1952 until 1979, followed by the Reverend Cn. Dennis Kezar, serving from 1979 until 2004. After a long search the Reverend Joel Morsch served from 2006 until 2018 and the Reverend Dr. Robert O. Baker served from 2018 until 2022.



# Our present

Our numbers, which we share on subsequent pages, tell only part of our story.

Christ Church is a community where we genuinely love the Lord and our traditions, while honoring Christ's command to love one another as we seek to bring a hurting world into His Kingdom. We seek to live out our Baptismal

Covenant, proclaiming the Gospel, seeking and serving Christ in all persons, respecting the dignity of every human being and striving for justice and peace.

We are a people of commitment – to our church, as we know it now, and to a future of possibilities. We are certain in our faith yet recent history has reminded us about the uncertainties of life.

Like other churches, Christ Church experienced the effects of a worldwide pandemic. Then, as we emerged from Covid-19, we were shocked and grievously saddened by the sudden death



in 2022 of our Rector, the Rev. Dr. Robert O. Baker.

Robert was 60, in the prime of his life.

The loss was intense: Robert was beloved and, in a short time, helped our parish thrive again. He urged us to “sink deep roots” in Christ Church: Indeed, we re-established our bonds as congregants, gained new members and

refreshed our efforts to connect with our communities.

Our challenges gave us pause. But they did not diminish our collective spirits. We learned that our parish is, in a word, resilient.

We have moved onward and upward. We have continued to worship, with the support of the Rev. Cn. Dr. Richard Visconti, our priest-in-charge, and Deacon William Pardy and lay ministers.

At our core, we have remained a church family. Together, we have continued our ministries with vigor and passion.



## **Our future**

And now we seek a new rector, someone to join our family – to be our pastoral leader and Christian partner, to respect both our distant and immediate pasts and to forge our future. In February and March of 2023, Christ Church conducted a survey or Church Assessment Tool created by HolyCow! Consulting. The findings were analyzed by the consultant and gave us a clear picture of the feelings and opinions of our congregants. Results show that our parishioners would like to prioritize four areas:

- Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and stage of life.
- Develop the spiritual generosity of the people to financially support the ministry of the church.

A majority of respondents (55%) clearly agree that they are satisfied with the way things are at Christ Church and yet 39% are a bit unsure. Our interpreter suggested this could be since many are still grieving the loss of Fr. Robert and are looking forward to a new rector to help move us forward.

A high majority (70%) of participants expressed that participation in our church's worship as well as ministries and activities are very meaningful to them. The same percentage feels we offer excellent music and worship at our services, while 90% feels that we have a high degree of spiritual vitality.

This survey confirmed that Christ Church is, theologically speaking, quite conservative. Most participants agree that our church is a source of new meaning and purpose for our members.

### **Five topics were important to a majority of members**

1. They do not feel there is a disturbing amount of conflict in our congregation, however they do tend to be sensitive to this topic and feel that problems between groups are usually resolved through mutual effort.
2. They feel our church does a good job of supporting people in ministry by reminding them that they are making a difference.
3. In important decisions in our church, they tend to agree that adequate opportunity for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.
4. Parishioners strongly agree that worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.
5. They agree that our Vestry members are representatives of the membership.

Each church has patterns of life that contain strengths and growing edges. Our congregation's stability and our clarity of belief are our strengths, and our growing edges lie in our tendency to become tradition-bound.

As Christ Church looks to the future, three areas of improvement are likely to have the biggest impact on moving our congregation forward:



- Developing the spiritual generosity of our people to financially support the ministry of the church.
- Strengthening the pastoral responses of our church in serving those who serve people in times of need, whether emotional, mental, physical or other struggles.
- Strengthening the management

and support of persons in various ministries for doing the work that God has called them to do.

These findings are not the end of the conversation about who we are as a congregation, but the beginning as we continue to grow in our faith and love. An seven-member search committee has been formed as part of the process for selecting a new rector. The members will select candidates who display the potential to:

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church and so guide the minds of those who will choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP p. 818*



- Inspire us with compelling teaching and preaching.
- Teach in a way that brings out the truth in Scripture, while abiding in our traditions and faith.
- Work to care for souls and lead them through the joys and sorrows of their spiritual journeys.
- Manage and handle conflict in a direct and loving way.
- Ensure the further development of our Pastoral Care ministries for congregants in times of need.
- Serve as a steward of our church and campus by selecting and supervising a skilled, efficient staff.
- Lead our growth as a parish, reaching out to families and youth.
- Strengthen our processes for training and equipping parishioners for ministry.
- Communicate with people in a way that is positive and hopeful, keeping them informed and connected.
- Help us to grow in the love of, and service to God, while we seek new believers, especially families and retirees moving to our area.

*And Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

*Matthew 28:19-20*

# Christ Church demographics

Although our most recent membership count was 496, our average weekly attendance in 2023 tells a different story. Active attendance is greater in the winter, averaging 255, due to our many winter residents and slows in the summer months to an average of 150 per Sunday.

## Church membership facts

**82%**

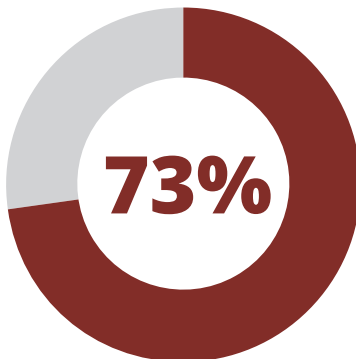
of those completing our survey are age 65 or older

**45%**

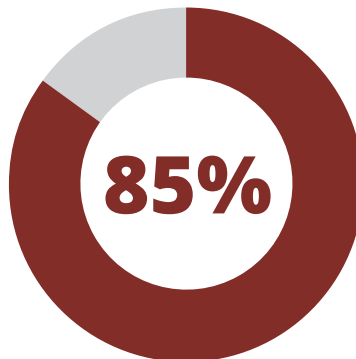
have been attending Christ Church for 20 years or more

**80%**

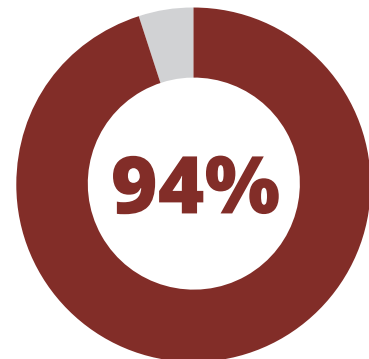
live less than 10 miles from our campus



attend services 2 or more times per month



attend more often than they did 3 years ago



engage in personal daily devotions

**82%**

value church involvement beyond worship services

**89%**

participate in the church's ministries

We are **95%** Caucasian, **5%** are of other ethnic backgrounds

*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, rivers of living water will flow from within them. John 7:37b- 38*

# Worship

## Sunday Services

### **7:30 a.m. Holy Communion Rite I**

This service of Holy Eucharist retains the beauty and dignity of the older liturgical style and language. It is ideal for those who enjoy early morning quiet and prayerful worship without music.

### **9:00 a.m. Holy Communion Rite II**

An energetic and engaging worship experience with Contemporary music led by Bill Holt and an acoustic worship band. With the liturgy and song lyrics projected on two walls, this service is a wonderful place for families of all ages to worship together.

### **11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Rite II**

This is a more traditional service using hymnody, sung liturgy selections and special music led by Organist and Choirmaster Jim Walton and the Christ Church Choir. Special music services are offered throughout the liturgical calendar enhancing the beauty of our worship at this service.

## Weekday Services

### **Monday Noon Holy Communion Rite I**

### **Wednesday 6:00p.m. Holy Communion Rite II**

Followed by Bible Study in Meeting Room 1

These two services are held in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd

### **Thursday, 10 a.m. Holy Communion Rite I**

A service held at Westminster Point Pleasant retirement community. We are blessed with parishioners who offer their time and share their talents so we may worship together as an Episcopal Church.



## Our Ministries in worship

Members of the altar guild, acolytes, chalice bearers, readers, vergers and ushers – all serve traditional, vital functions in our services. They are supplemented in our contemporary services by the PowerPoint and Streaming teams. We are blessed and grateful to have each of these teams serving each week.

### **Streaming Service**

Christ Church is now live streaming the 11:00 service on YouTube. Anyone can go to our website and click the YouTube link or go to YouTube and search Christ Episcopal Church Bradenton. When members are vacationing or staying home during an illness, they can feel connected to our church family.

### **Power Point Ministry**

Our 9am service uses contemporary and

traditional music from a wide array of sources. With 2 projectors mounted high near the front of the church we are able to project lyrics to songs, our liturgy from BCP and prayer lists. Illustrations and announcements are easily accessible to members and visitors alike helping to create the informal vibe at this service. Five volunteers help provide this valuable function.

Music is, and has long been, vital at Christ Church. We are privileged to enjoy some of the finest music in the Diocese. We have a traditional chorale and professional organists, a Praise Band and a bell choir that offer high-quality music during two of our Sunday services.



### ▲ Praise Team

Bill Holt, our Associate Organist and Pianist plays, sings and conducts our 9:00 a.m. contemporary service, along with several other singers and musicians who alternate Sundays for leading service music. The music is lively and energetic or worshipful as needed in the service with atmosphere that is welcoming and joyful.

### Christ Church Chorale

The Chorale is made up of many dedicated members and musicians, led by Choirmaster and organist, James Walton. Often when special music is on the program, we are privileged to hear members of the Sarasota Orchestra accompany the organ and choir. Come and hear it for yourself to be blessed by heavenly sounds.

### Ministries of Pastoral Care Stephen Ministry. Caring in crisis.

Our recently relaunched Stephen Ministry is training and growing new ministers for this valuable ministry to members or others seeking peer to peer counseling. Stephen Ministry offers a proven and effective way to organize, equip and supervise a team of congregation members to provide high quality, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to those experiencing life difficulties. As of 2024, eleven parishioners have been commissioned to become Stephen Ministers. This continued growth allows our church to minister to our brothers and sisters in need.

## **Walking the Mourner's Path. Overcoming loss.**

Walking the Mourner's Path is a Christ-centered, spiritually directed program for small groups of people needing help overcoming the loss of a loved one. Facilitators are not licensed psychological counselors but are clergy and lay ministers specifically trained to minister to the bereaved. Walking the Mourner's Path is an 8-week class meeting weekly for one and a half hours. Discussions are guided with the use of a workbook and a program with a beginning and an end, which research has shown effective for healing. Those who seek healing from their grief are met where they are in their grieving process and Christ is invited into the healing.

## **Widow's Group. Persevering together.**

This group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, for support and prayer. All are welcome to attend.

## **Eucharistic Visitors. Taking sacraments to those in need.**

We are blessed to have a team of people who regularly visit over 15 members living in local nursing homes, assisted living facilities or in their own residences. These ministers deliver news and comfort, while assuring our members that they continue to be in our thoughts and prayers. These visits bless those who are visited by offering them a time of respite, enjoyment, and connection with Christ Church community.

## **Order of St. Luke. Healing and support.**

Although our official chapter of the Order of St. Luke shut down during Covid, we hope to revive this ministry. Parishioners who have been involved in the past are working toward reinitiating this important ministry. In the past this Order has regularly prayed for and made regular connecting phone calls to parishioners and friends of parishioners in need of prayer.

## **Pastoral Care Team**

The Pastoral Care Team meets every other Wednesday with our Parish Administrator to review the continued healing prayer list. At that time the team reviews the pastoral needs of all those on our prayer lists. Normally, those in need of healing prayer remain on the intercessory prayer list for about a month unless more time is required.

This prayer list is displayed in each Sunday bulletin and in all Chi Rho newsletters sent out electronically or in print. At all services during the Prayers of the People, we lift up in prayer all those in need of God's healing grace and mercy. All are invited to include them in individual daily prayers because each one is an important part of our parish family.



## **Our Children and Youth Ministries**

### **▲ Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Teaching about Jesus early; 3-6 years.**

We introduced this Montessori based concept of learning for our young ones called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in 2021. We just completed our 3rd year using the "Atrium" and all of its child-sized equipment. The Atrium is a place of prayer, work and study for these little ones to seek and find Jesus in a way they can absorb and understand. Parishioners who are interested in becoming a certified CGS instructor must attend 90 hours of training. We are always open to those interested in becoming trained CGS instructors to augment our ability to offer this lovely experience for our youngest members.

### **Christian Formation. Developing young Christians; 2nd grade - high school.**

Sunday School classes are offered for 2<sup>nd</sup> through High School each Sunday during the school year. Teachers are recruited each summer for the fall and spring terms. During the summer, scholarships are offered for Camp at Dayspring and generous parishioners donate so that all children may attend these life changing weeks.

## **Youth and Family Ministry**

With the hiring of Deacon Bill Parady as our Youth Director, our Youth program has enjoyed a great year. Christ Church continues to demonstrate a real desire for growth with youth and family outreach and activity. Wednesday evening programs directed toward high school-aged young people have had good success.



Our contemporary cultural climate has left teens searching for something greater than themselves. We want to help teens experience God's love and purpose for their life journey that will always move toward the life of Christ and His people.

This year, our youth hosted our Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner as a fundraiser for their program.

### **AWANA. Offering fun and faith for youths.**

AWANA is an international Christian program which seeks to reach kids with the Gospel and engage them in lifelong discipleship. Participants in the mid-week meetings learn basic truths about God, Jesus and salvation through fun, handbooks, picture teaching cards and more.

## **Our Outreach Ministries**

### **Lord's Pantry. Feeding the hungry.**

During 2023, The Lord's Pantry served approximately 11,160 of our neighbors in Manatee County. Qualifying families come from across the County on Thursdays between 2 and 4 p.m. to receive free food that we are able to provide through partnership with Feeding Tampa Bay and the Manatee Food Bank. These recipients include seniors, families with children and individuals and families that are homeless. We can supply shelf stable food items, fresh produce, baked goods and frozen meat. Saint Stephen's Episcopal School continues to support us with monthly delivery of food donations. Approximately 46 volunteers load and deliver food, bag canned and dry goods and stock our refrigerators each



week prior to our Thursday hand out day. Our committed volunteers make it possible for us to care for needs in our community. We expect our numbers to grow in 2024.

### ◀ **Thrift Store. Repurposing for a purpose.**

In 2023, our Thrift Shop brought in excess of \$85,000 for our Outreach programs. The shop is open from 10 am to 2 pm Monday through Saturday and accepts new and used donations in good condition from church members as well as the larger community. Volunteers sort, price and display the donations each day. The exposure for the shop has been greatly enhanced by our large sign along Manatee Avenue in front of the church. The many volunteers, twenty-one at last count, love the fun and camaraderie of working together for a worthy cause. This year those funds have been donated toward several projects with more to come. Our Daily Bread, a community outreach serving hot meals each day for those in need, received \$12,000. Our Backpack community outreach project received \$1,500.

### **Organ concert series. Sharing gifts with our neighbors.**

Our organist plans an organ concert series each Lent and Advent during the week that is open to the public as way to bless our community. A dedicated team of ladies serve a wonderful lunch for these Thursday recitals.

### **Our spiritual development ministries**

#### ▼ **St. Anne's Guild. Gathering and serving beyond our walls.**

Saint Anne's is a chapter of the Episcopal Church Women. At Christ Church, St. Anne's has been in continuous service since the 1920's. Its mission is for members to grow in Christian fellowship and to support the church in mission and ministry in the world. Saint Anne's supports a wide range of activities. In October 2023, the organization held a fundraiser for the church and raised \$1,155. In December 2023, we had our seventh annual coat and warm clothing



drive to benefit Turning Point/Our Daily Bread which offers many services to families in need in Manatee County. Saint Anne's has been serving Christ for many years.

### **Daughters of the King. Engaging sisterhood in service.**

The Order of Daughters of the King is a national order of women who desire a closer walk with the Lord. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, their vision is to know Jesus Christ, to make Him known to others and to become reflections of God's love in the world. They pledge themselves to prayer, service and evangelism and are dedicated to the spread of Christ's kingdom and the strengthening of the spiritual life of our parish.

The members intercede in prayer for those on our prayer list and involve themselves in service projects through concrete deliverables around the church. These activities range in scope and include managing the care of acolyte robes, hosting coffee hours or contributing to holiday celebrations. They also enjoy fellowship outings such as attending a Christian concert or holiday events.

### **Men's Ministry. Developing in brotherhood.**

This group of men has been meeting on Thursday mornings at 7 a.m. for many years and always welcome new members who want to study God's Word together. This time accommodates those who head to work or those who stay for the Building and Grounds work crew, before the day gets too hot here in Florida. This prayer and study group has studied different topics from upcoming Sunday

scripture readings to Oswald Chambers' book "My Utmost for His Highest" to "The Truth Project" DVD series. Their goals are to know God's Word and to study basic principles as they relate to modern life and culture.

### **Bible Studies. Growing closer to Jesus through His Word.**

Bible studies are offered by several leaders and at different times to accommodate our members who are working or are retired. Ken and Kathy Young lead a wonderful study on Sunday mornings between the 9:00 and 11:00 services so all may attend. After the gospel of Luke was completely read and discussed we have advanced to the study of Acts. Two passages from Psalm 115 best describe the feelings of those participating in these classes "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path" (v. 105) and "Your testimonies (teachings) are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart" (v. 111).

Wednesday morning Women's Study has been using video driven studies with workbooks for those who like to dig deeper into God's Word and then have opportunity to discuss and fellowship with other women in a safe and fun environment. This group has encouraged an ecumenical attendance so that women attending different churches feel free to exchange ideas with each other. Last year we studied Daniel, The Armor of God in Ephesians 6, and 1 & 2 Thessalonians. This year we have studied ways to cultivate our faith through expanding our knowledge and practice of the Spiritual Disciplines and "What Love Is," the study of 1, 2 & 3 John.

On Wednesday evenings, 2 studies are offered immediately following the 6:00 p.m. Eucharist. A women's group meets using a video driven study and has recently completed a study of "Elijah, Faith and Fire" with a workbook and lectures by Priscilla Shirer and a study titled "Discerning the Voice of God" by the same author.

Father Visconti teaches a group during the same Wednesday evening time and offers the study of books that are not often topics of discussion. After studying The Minor Prophets last fall, Fr. Visconti offered a series on Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

## **Our collegial ministries**

### **Coffee Hour Hosts. Maintaining the tradition.**

Each ministry group takes turns to prepare and serve coffee, snacks and other breakfast treats each Sunday from September through May. This builds additional fellowship into each ministry, while serving the parish .

### **Thursday Volunteers. Beautifying our church and surroundings.**

Our amazing Thursday morning work crew has replaced all of our church and Education Wing lights with LED's which has saved a tremendous amount on our power bills. They cleaned out old Sunday School rooms so that PACE Center for Girls could use them while their school building is being rebuilt. They trim trees and replace broken kneeler hinges. They have refurbished all of our beautiful old exterior doors, repaired door latches, and replaced ceiling tiles to name a few tasks. This team continues to work hard keeping our beautiful campus in working order.

### **▼ Grill Team. Serving up food when parishioners sit down to eat.**

Our Annual Parish Picnic occurs in the fall and is a great opportunity for folks from all services to gather for a meal. Our wonderful grill team volunteers keep the tables filled with hamburgers and hotdogs to go along with the great pot-luck sides and desserts for all to



enjoy. The Grill Team also flips pancakes for our Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner for our Youth Program fundraiser. This year they also hosted a pancake lunch for students and our local State College of Florida, where the church still maintains an Episcopal chaplaincy.

### **Office Angels. Greeting callers and visitors with care.**

Our wonderful Office Angels are a group of women with many talents who wear their halos humbly. Their duties include functioning as greeters, phone operators, mailing envelope stuffers, bulletin board artists, proofreaders, organizers, and historians.

### **▼ A Taste of Heaven. Monthly fellowship outings.**

Last year, Darrell and Linda Goldman have initiated a monthly fun and fellowship outing

for anyone who wishes to sign up and make a reservation. They arrange for different area restaurants to accommodate 20 to 25 parishioners to share a lunch outing to gather with old friends or make a new friend.

### **Unique Relationships: Saint Stephen's, Pace and Backpack Drive.**

Saint Stephen's Episcopal School and Christ Episcopal Church have an enduring, close relationship.

The private, independent school's genesis in 1970 is linked to the church, and its 35-acre campus is immediately adjacent to Christ Episcopal. Today, Saint Stephen's offers K-12 instruction for nearly 700 students, with an emphasis on college preparatory education.

Christ Church is Saint Stephen's setting for regular services where scripture and inspiring



messages are shared, prayer and thanksgiving are offered, student musicians perform, and quiet silence is observed. Chapel is an integral part of school life at every grade level. Saint Stephen's identifies as "Christian-centered," yet "all families and children are welcomed without question. This diversity is a strength."



The Diocese of Southwest Florida and Christ Church have representatives on the Saint Stephen's board of directors.  
[www.saintstephens.org](http://www.saintstephens.org)

**Pace** is a community-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit that helps girls who are struggling, and who have experienced some form of trauma, to get their grades back on track, learn in a safe and supportive environment, get along better with friends and family and plan for a productive future.

Bradenton-based Pace – one of 25 chapters in Florida – provides academic classes, counseling and social services to middle- and high-school

girls. Its programs work in alignment with public school district standards.

Pace has needed safe spaces for its program as it pursues new facilities, so on weekdays Christ Church has rented its Sunday school classrooms at reduced rates and offered moral support. The relationship has been mutually beneficial.  
[www.pacecenter.org](http://www.pacecenter.org)

### **Other groups**

Similarly, we offer our spaces to groups whose members seek to aid and support each other – Alanon and Alcoholics Anonymous, for example – in secular causes that nonetheless call upon a higher power.

**▲ The Back-to-School Backpack Drive** offers one of our best examples – along with the Food Pantry and Thrift Store – of inward and outward efforts that leverage the greater community's assets.

A terrific example of serving our community occurs during our annual, summertime backpack event. Parishioners and other supporters donate items that young people



*Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. Mark 9:37*

need for school. We collect enough donations to serve some 500 children – a substantial task. Our church members and staff also invite representatives of social-service agencies in the community to attend the giveaway – providing opportunities for parents, children and families to access assistance and obtain guidance with dignity.





## Our community

Christ Episcopal Church is in Bradenton, Florida, a city whose boundaries are defined in part by prominent local waters: the Manatee and Braden Rivers, Palma Sola Bay and Anna Maria Sound. The shores of the Gulf of Mexico and Anna Maria Island are only several miles away.

Our beautiful beaches and warm temperatures make us a community that is a world renowned vacation and retirement destination for many people. Our area is also famous for our winter visitors also fondly known as “snowbirds”. Those are the folks who leave

their northern homes in the winter and reside in our area for up to 6 months of each year. We love our “snowbirds” as they add to the vibrancy and vitality of our church.

Bradenton is a city of 57,000 (2022 Census report) and its redeveloping downtown serves as the seat of Manatee County government. The city’s population has grown moderately in recent years, at about 2 percent annually, compared with a 7 percent growth rate in the sprawling unincorporate county. All told, Manatee County has grown to 430,000 residents, according to the Census.

The Manatee River is a mile wide within a few blocks of Christ Church: It narrows substantially upstream to the east, where the Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida is headquartered. The diocese's tree-lined property on the river's north side is home to the DaySpring Episcopal Conference Center. [www.dayspringfla.org](http://www.dayspringfla.org)

The waterfronts of Bradenton and Anna Maria Island – as well as large new developments in eastern Manatee – have generated substantial increases in wealth and housing values. Meanwhile, many areas surrounding Christ Church have become the sources of affordable housing.

This dichotomy has created opportunities: On the one hand, many prospective church members could make significant financial contributions; on the other, growing middle- and low-income families seeking “affordable” housing are in need of church homes sensitive to their spiritual and social needs. The changing demographics of Manatee County provide areas of potential new ministry focus. The relative ease of access to Christ Church and its unique beauty have enabled the parish to attract regular members from throughout Manatee County.

Our community is rooted in its people, of course, but many other assets abound. There are notable natural resources – from coastal beaches and fishing grounds to inland prairies – as well as cultural and entertainment attractions.

Bradenton and nearby cities host spring training and minor-league baseball. Golf courses abound. Bradenton has a fine local theater, which is complemented by professional theaters in nearby Sarasota. The regional orchestra is among the best of its size in the nation and the Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota has a world-class collection in addition to its Circus Museum.

The Bradenton-Sarasota area is home to an impressive number of independent restaurants, ranging from cantinas to burger joints to fine dining establishments.

The Manatee public school district has a B grade, according to Florida's ranking system. The county is home to State College of Florida, a well-regarded community college, the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, and Manatee Technical College. New College of Florida is in nearby Sarasota.





## Our Diocese

The Diocese of Southwest Florida is, according to the diocesan website, “a constituent member of the worldwide Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church in the United States.”

“Our 79 parishes and missions total some 28,000 members with 260 baptisms celebrated each year sharing in an exciting pilgrimage of ministry. On any given Sunday, about 11,000 people worship in Episcopal churches in Southwest Florida.”

The diocese is adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico on Florida’s west coast. It extends from Brooksville at the north to Marco Island at the south and ranges eastward and inland to Plant City, Arcadia and LaBelle. Among the cities in

the diocese: Bradenton, Clearwater, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Fort Myers and Naples.

The Diocese of Southwest Florida is led by the Rt. Rev. Douglas F. Scharf. He was seated as the sixth bishop of the diocese on January 8, 2023, at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in St. Petersburg.

For more information on Bishop Scharf, the diocese and its picturesque headquarters at DaySpring in Manatee County: [www.episcopalswfl.org](http://www.episcopalswfl.org)



For more information about our parish and its ministries, and to sample Sunday service bulletins: [www.cecb.church/index.html](http://www.cecb.church/index.html)

# Our Parish Finances

## Our 2023 financials

**2023 Pledges: 131**

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>
Contributions	\$ 727,721
Thrift Shop Sales	89,274
Outreach Ministry Income	125,635
Investment Income	67,914
Rent/Misc Income	243,026
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<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,253,570</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
General Operations	\$ 414,845
Clergy & Staff Administration	398,569
Diocesan Assessment	101,957
Outreach Ministry	54,870
Thrift Shop	24,616
Programs & Music	53,114
Other Expenses	8,394
<hr/>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,056,365</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 197,205</b>

## Our 2024 operating budget

**2024 Pledges: 126 YTD**

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2024 Budget</b>
Contributions	\$ 750,000
Thrift Shop Sales	90,000
Outreach Ministry Income	42,277
Investment Income	18,500
Rent/Misc Income	172,414
<hr/>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,073,191</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
General Operations	\$ 388,900
Clergy & Staff Administration	499,550
Diocesan Assessment	87,641
Outreach Ministry	25,000
Thrift Shop	25,000
Programs & Music	37,100
Other Expenses	10,000
<hr/>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,073,191</b>

## **Christ Church**

4030 Manatee Avenue W.  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
www.cecb.church  
941-747-3709

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### **The Wardens, Vestry, and Officers of the Parish**

George Brosseau	Susan Matthews
Anne Douglass (Chancellor)	John Meeks
Bill Forkgen (Junior Warden)	Jim Nigrelli
Patricia Handy	Bert Rawald
Carlton Marshall	Patrick Whelan (Senior Warden)

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### **Clergy**

The Reverend Canon Dr. Richard Visconti, Priest-in-Charge Deacon  
The Reverend Deacon William Pardy

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### **Music Department**

James Walton- D.M.A., Organist/Choirmaster  
William Holt – Associate Organist/Choir Director

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### **Staff**

Kim Kalaman – Parish Administrator  
Lee Hooie – Parish Registrar  
Johanna Reilly - Christian Ed. Director  
William Pardy – Youth and Family Pastor  
Pam Landers – Communications Relations  
Cheri Taxdal – Bookkeeper  
Andrew Sewell - Sexton  
Fernando Rojas - Janitorial services

## Search Committee

Lois-Lynne Bellemare

Andrew Forrester

Debbie Holt

Jeff Kalaman - Co-Chair

Susan Knowles

Aaron Welch

Michael Zimmermann - Chair

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## Social Media:

**Website:** [www.https://cecb.church](http://www.https://cecb.church)

**FB:** Christ Church Bradenton

**Instagram:** @cecbradenton

**YouTube channel:** <https://youtube.com/@christepiscopalchurchbrade1265>

## How to Apply: Contact -

The Rev. Canon Richard Norman, Phone: 941-556-0315 **Email:** [rnorman@episcopalswfl.org](mailto:rnorman@episcopalswfl.org)

## Application Process

If you discern that God may be calling you to an exciting and life-giving ministry at Christ Episcopal Church, please submit the following materials to the Rev'd Canon Richard H. Norman, Canon to the Ordinary, The Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida ([rnorman@episcopalswfl.org](mailto:rnorman@episcopalswfl.org)):

- Resume/CV
- A copy of your updated OTM profile
- A letter of interest that highlights how you feel you meet the needs of Christ Episcopal Church

**Application**

**Deadline:**

**May 3, 2024**

