

2025 March 13

Dear Ones,

I took a photo of the eggs on Sunday, and posted it on Facebook with the comment, “We might get a lot of visitors if we advertised that we have free eggs.”

But what is it that really brings people to church?

A couple of my colleagues have commented they have had a lot of visitors lately. They happen to be the churches flying Pride flags, which gives the message to people who are feeling particularly vulnerable, “You are safe here.” It’s something we need to consider. I’ve also been thinking about ordering a bunch of magnets you can put on your car (there are also stickers). These are all fairly passive ways of making ourselves seen.

But the most common reason people come to a new church for the first time? It’s not a reputation for amazing music or fine preaching...it’s because someone invites them. Someone like you (not the pastor or priest). A friend going through a hard time, a new neighbor who mentions they are having a hard time finding a community.

The topic came up on Bible study on Wednesday, and someone mentioned knowing a person who was “pretty damaged by the evangelicals.” I pointed out we have a pretty good track record of offering a healing space to people who have been hurt by other branches of the church. (And even some who have been injured by The Episcopal Church in years past.) It warms my heart every time I hear one of those people who are healed (or healing) say, “Christ Church is just so different...it’s such a special place.”

We need to share this—especially right now! I have spoken repeatedly about the dangers of Christian Nationalism arising in our country. We need to remind people that the roots of the church are in empathy, mercy, generosity...that our mission is to share the love of God in Jesus Christ in ways that build one another up and create community that can withstand the hard times.

So I’ve decided to challenge you all to invite someone to join you in church on Easter Sunday. If you aren’t ready then, try Pentecost. Don’t give up if the first few people you invite say no thank you, or only come once. Your ‘success’ will not be measured by how many people show up and stay. It’s about taking the risk and sharing the Good News.

And hey, if you need to entice them with free eggs, so be it.

In the meantime....*keep the faith*,
Nancy+

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS

Genesis 15:1-12,17-18 * Psalm 27 * Philippians 3:17-4:1 * Luke 13:31-35

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Thelma Cunningham (3/19)

CREATION CARE TIPS

Patty is taking a well-deserved week off while she is traveling. She’ll be back next week

– Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

Hurt not the earth—neither the sea—nor the trees. Revelation 7:3

CALENDAR

SUN: 9:30 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Ten minutes of silent prayer and confession in the chapel
10:15 AM Eucharist/In-person and online
3:00 PM Bethel House Church
WED: 9:00 AM Eucharist/Bible Study
THU: 9:00 AM Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
7:15 AM Zoom Compline
FRI: 12 Noon Lenten Lunch at 1st Congregational, So Paris

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Lenten Lunch Every Friday at noon during Lent. 1st Congregational hosts us; different churches prepare the soup. One of our local pastors offers a short reflection. (We have date—speak to Patty Watts if you would like to help)

Silent Prayer and Confession During Lent, join Sandy in the chapel at 10 AM for ten minutes of silent prayer, concluding with the absolution.

Giving Thanks during Lent Christ Church friends, though Lent is intended to be a penitential season, there is no time or season in life when it is not appropriate to keep ourselves aware of all that can make us grateful. Including intentional giving into a United Thank Offering box as part of your Lenten discipline is an easy and helpful way to keep us mindful of the people, places and experiences for which can and should thank the Lord. It is always his grace that produces these blessings. So, if you haven't already done so, pick up a UTO box on the table outside Nancy's office and start a daily practice of *giving thanks unto the Lord!*

Sunday March 23 Refugee Sunday The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Maine designated March 9th as the day to observe Refugee Sunday, but we already had a lot going on today, so we are observing it on March 23. In the meantime, you can check out episcopalmigrationministries.org for more info.

MINISTRIES LIST

	<u>This week:</u>	<u>Next week:</u>
Lector 1:	Bruce Watts	Jason Long
Psalmist:	Tom Knight	Peter Hammond
Lector 2:	Nancy Mering	Allison Long
Acolyte:	Doug Wall	Kyalo Mulandi
Euch. Minister:	Tom Knight	Peter Hammond
Chapel Shepherd:	Sandy W & Jason Long	Sandy W & Jen Lehr
Usher:	David Mering	Allison Long
Altar Guild:	Jan & Doug Wall	Caroline Leonard
Coffee Hour:	Caroline Leonard	Nancy M & Jenna M
Counter:	David Mering	David Mering
Closer:	Tom Knight	David Mering