

January 22, 2026

Dear Ones,

Preaching is a peculiar enterprise. I never know how a sermon is going to “land.” Sometimes the ones I am most enthusiastic about garner no feedback whatsoever. Other times, people will refer to things I don’t even remember preaching, and I have to go back and see what it was I said. (There have been times when someone argues with me about something they ‘heard’ in my sermon that I didn’t actually say—but that doesn’t happen often here at Christ Church!)

I didn’t know, when I started preaching on Sunday, that I was going to end up talking about having the courage to confront Christian Nationalism. I probably would have chalked that sermon up to one of my duds, if it hadn’t been for something that happened that afternoon. One of you shared the video on your Facebook page.

I need to preface this next bit of info by saying that in a typical week, our ‘viewership’ for Sunday worship is usually between 15 and 20. There are more people who might watch a few seconds to a few minutes but I don’t include them in the count I record. This past Sunday, that number skyrocketed. The total number of hits is 275 (as of the time I’m typing this) with at least 139 real engagements. All because someone shared our Sunday worship service on social media.

This is why we continue to go to the bother of livestreaming every Sunday. Not just to reach those known to us who, for whatever reason, can’t be in person on Sunday. But to share with the wider world a way of following Christ, rooted in the love of God and encouraged by the power of the Holy Spirit. It’s not just a pastoral care tool. It’s also a way of doing evangelism.

I will confess, it can be a little scary to know that my words—our words—are out there for anyone to see. There is always the worry that someone will be offended and decide to take action to shut me up. Likewise, who knows who might have needed to hear the call to courage in that moment? That is part of the mystery of preaching. Even in the very worst bombs, someone will hear the very thing they need to hear in order to strengthen them for the journey.

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

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS

Isaiah 9:1-4 * Psalm: 27:1, 5-13 * 1st Corinthians 1:10-18 * Matthew 4:12-23

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Michael & Bonnie Trundy 1/30

CREATION CARE TIPS

What not to eat! – With apologies to Clinton Kelly and Stacy London

You may have enjoyed watching “What not to Wear,” a TV show that ran ten to twenty years ago. But instead of advice on clothing fashion, I’ll offer some help with living safely, with an emphasis on cookware.

In 2023, the Maine Board of Environmental Protection banned per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS in carpets and fabric treatments. The ban has been expanded, and as of January first of this year, many more types of products have been added to the ban. One of the most talked about items is cookware.

My mother was enthralled with her new Teflon-coated non-stick skillet when she bought it in the mid-sixties. It was easier to clean than any other pot or pan she had ever used. What she and the rest of the cooking world didn't know was that the coating wasn't permanent, and molecule by molecule it was added to the food that was being cooked. Now, if that coating had been aluminum, cast iron, or stainless steel, there might not have been a problem. But Teflon is a trade name for a forever chemical called PFAS. And PFAS exposure is linked to low birth weight, compromised immune systems, and cancers.

At least one watchdog group is monitoring the sales of cookware in retail stores throughout Maine, checking that all cookware being sold is in compliance. Defend Our Health has found that almost all stores in Maine are compliant. They did find, however, that on-line purchases are not as likely to be in compliance. So the bottom line is, as always, "Let the Buyer BEWARE." Or, as a men's clothing store advertised in the New York metro area in the 70s and 80, "An educated consumer is our best customer."

What other consumer products cannot be sold in Maine if they contain PFAS? Children's toys, reusable water bottles, cosmetics, upholstered furniture, feminine products, and cleaning products.

Let's be thankful that our state Board of Environmental Protection is in the forefront of PFAS removal, working to keep us safe.

– Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

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

Sources: Maine Public's Maine Calling: "Maine Expands PFAS ban in 2026" aired 12-28-26.

WGME television: "Watchdog searching for stores selling now banned products with PFAS in Maine" aired 1-7-26

CALENDAR

SUN: 10:15 AM Eucharist
Following worship: Meeting with parents

TUES: 5:15 PM Zoom Vestry meeting

WED: 9:00 AM Eucharist/Bible Study
6:30 PM Zoom Bible study w/ Jim C: Gospel of Mark

THU: 9:00 AM Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
7:15 PM Zoom Compline

NEXT WEEK: Annual Meeting on Sunday following worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday School on hiatus We put Sunday School on hiatus through this season of Epiphany to give us time to consider how to best design a program for our kids. **MEETING WITH PARENTS FOLLOWING SUNDAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE.**

Annual Meeting, February 1 We will meet following the service to review 2025; look ahead to 2026; elect a warden, vestry members, and convention delegates; and accept the 2026 budget.

The bishop is coming! The Rt. Rev. Thomas J. Brown will be with us at worship and fellowship on Sunday, March 15. I will meet with those who are interested in being confirmed or received after worship on February 8.

Church Closers One of the important duties every week is to make sure we leave church with lights off, doors locked, fans turned off, etc. We call these folks the “closers” and our list has grown rather short. It does *not* require being the last person to leave, and there is a checklist to follow. Please let us know if you can help with this task, so we can give our faithful few a break! Thanks.

Ash Wednesday, February 18 If you have palms left from previous years, please bring them in by February 15 so we can burn them.

Study Mark with Jim Christoph Wednesdays, 6:30 PM, on Zoom.

For ongoing and up-to-date information about diocesan activities and news, as well as news from other congregations, sign up for **the DioLog**. <https://episcopalmaine.org/newsletter/>

MINISTRIES LIST

	<u>This week:</u>	<u>Next week:</u>
Lector 1:	Jason Long	Nancy Mering
Psalmist:	Bella Long	Thelma C
Lector 2:	Allison Long	Michelle C
Acolyte:	Peter Hammond	Doug Wall
Euch. Minister:	Peter Bickford	Michelle C
Shepherd:	<i>on hiatus</i>	<i>on hiatus</i>
Usher:	Rosemary Laban	Peter Hammond
Altar Guild:	Jan Wall	Jan Wall
Coffee Hour:	Kathy L & Fran M	Nancy Mering
Counter:	Jeff Stuhr	Marg Means
Closer:	Jen Lehr	David Mering