
THE PENTECOST 2023 EDITION OF
THE BUTTERNUT EPISCOPALIAN

The newsletter of Christ Episcopal Church, Gilbertsville, New York



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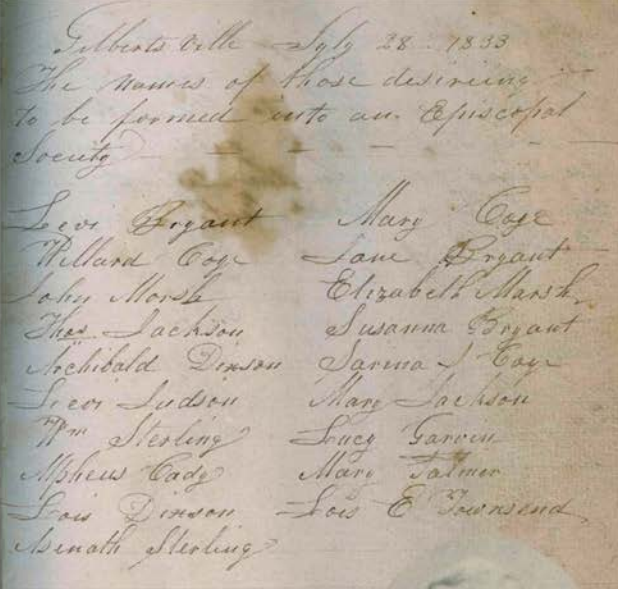
New Growth on Old Roots

Written by Father Bill Lytle

For much longer than Christ Church has stood keeping watch over it, this valley was part of the vast lands of the Oneida people, one of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois). Things changed in 1768 when the Six Nations signed a treaty with the British at Fort Stanwix drawing a line on the map. Lands east of the line were ceded to the British and opened for settlement, but the lands west of the line were supposedly inviolably Haudenosaunee territory. Starting from the west, the line took in the entire Ohio River, at Fort Pitt it turned northeast and followed the Allegheny River, until it jumped over to the Susquehanna near the colonial border. Not too far after that the line turned due north and headed toward Fort Stanwix by following the Unadilla River. This, of course, brought it within five miles from where Christ Church would be erected some sixty-six years later.

Just a line on a map yet it had repercussions that reached around the world and down through the centuries. Though it was not at all effective in achieving its original purpose, the line still runs brightly across many maps. New York used it long ago when it divided the state into counties, and not so long ago when it divided the state into reporting districts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Church used the line when it partitioned the Diocese of New York into two dioceses in 1838, and again when it formed the Diocese of Albany in 1868.

It is just a line, and yet it also feels like more than a line. While the Fort Stanwix line ceased to be much more than an administrative convenience long ago its legacy lives on still in the character which it stamped on this place in 1768. Perhaps, it is only me, but this far end of the Butternut Valley still retains, somehow, the flavor of a frontier. (Having grown up not far from another section of the Fort Stanwix line, perhaps this is why it also feels so much like home to me.) A frontier is always a place where past and future live in a very real but also often very fruitful tension. It is a place where growth and rootedness interact strongly and close to the surface. That dynamic shaped this community, (perhaps most obviously in the long fight to save the village from the Cope's Corners Damn project.) It has, of course also shaped this congregation from its earliest days right down until the present.



The founding document of Christ Church.



The Rev'd John Vaughn Hughes, Founding Rector of Christ Church

On July 28, 1833 eighteen citizens of Gilbertsville and its environs gathered in what is now the Free Library, but was then the village school, and subscribed to the idea of founding an Episcopal Church in this place. The area had been heavily settled by the English since almost immediately after the drawing of the line, and had been visited many times by the great Episcopal missionary Daniel Nash. It was only natural that Gilbertville, once it reached a certain size, would desire an Episcopal church of its own. That desire was answered by the young deacon whom the bishop had sent to assist the ailing Father Nash at St. Andrew's in New Berlin. John Vaughan Hughes spent the last four years of Nash's life ministering with and to him, and was instilled with his mentor's zeal for frontier missions. When the people called, he came over the hills to Gilbertsville to found Christ Church.

Within a year Hughes had led the people in the construction of simple frame church on a small strip of donated land between the road and the ridge line just outside of Gilbertsville. The total cost of construction (a whopping \$1,049.00) had been raised not just from the congregation but from other nearby Episcopalians and sympathetic parties. One of the largest pledges (\$50) came from General Jacob Morris. A veteran of the Revolution whose father signed the Declaration of Independence and uncle signed the Constitution, General Morris was of course also the founder and namesake of our neighboring town and the "lord" of Morris Manor. Most of the pledges, however, were quite small, a few dollars, a few loads of timber or stone, or simply the sweat of one's brow. There are two sketches of the original structure (used to note pew rents) in the first minute book of the Christ Church Vestry. It was a simple rectangle, extending from the current front door to the bottom of the chancel steps. Little is noted about the festivities on June 10, 1835 when the church was first consecrated except what is briefly noted in Bishop Onderdonk's report to the Diocesan Convention held that year in Utica.

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This simple structure would serve Christ Church for over fifty years. Perhaps the most significant change during that time was the addition of the great bell to the long silent bell tower. Priest Hughes had long desired the bell, and heard it sound its first chimes on Easter Day in 1872, shortly after being called out of retirement to serve his second term as rector of the parish. He died in office in 1877.

The dynamic of growth and rootedness can be seen at work in the first major renovation and expansion of Christ Church. The year after Priest Hughes died, another energetic young clergyman became rector of Christ Church. Ernest A. Hartmann had served his diaconate at Zion Church and married the great granddaughter of General Morris. During his tenure he worked tirelessly to grow the ministry of Christ Church. He founded our chapter of the Episcopal Church Women which then, as now, excelled in fundraising for the parish. In 1883, he undertook to transform Christ Church from a simple country chapel to a proper Victorian Church. He entrusted the leadership of this work to Miss Josephine Thompson, an artist from the city who summered in Gilbertsville. At that time the choir, chancel, and sacristy along with what we now use as the office, study and chapel were added to the building. The simple beauty of the Christ Church we are used to may leave us surprised as to how ornate the interior was at that time. Our late historian Douglas McKee, described it well:

“First of all, a Gothic recess, comparable to that in Zion Church, was made in the east wall to serve as a chancel. Its arched ceiling was painted a grey-toned blue, illuminated with gilt and dark blue designs. In the nave a band of gold with blue stenciling separated the ceiling from the walls, which were painted a dark red. On the ceiling was a yellow-toned paper with delicate gold curvatures. A broad mahogany molding ran around the walls about three feet above the floor, and beneath the molding the walls were painted olive with a stenciling of trefoils. The wall and ceiling of the narthex were also painted and stenciled. All of this, the Otsego Journal noted in January 1884, created a “perfect harmony of design and color.” For the exterior of the Church, Miss Thompson chose a Pompeian red with dark olive trim... this combination according to the Journal, gave the church a “rich, warm appearance.” Those whose memories go back to 1921 will recall the building as it was in Hartmann’s time—a perfect example of Victorian Gothic architecture, with Gothic windows, Gothic chancel, Gothic ornamentation on top of the belfry, and a curved balcony used as a robing room by the choir.”

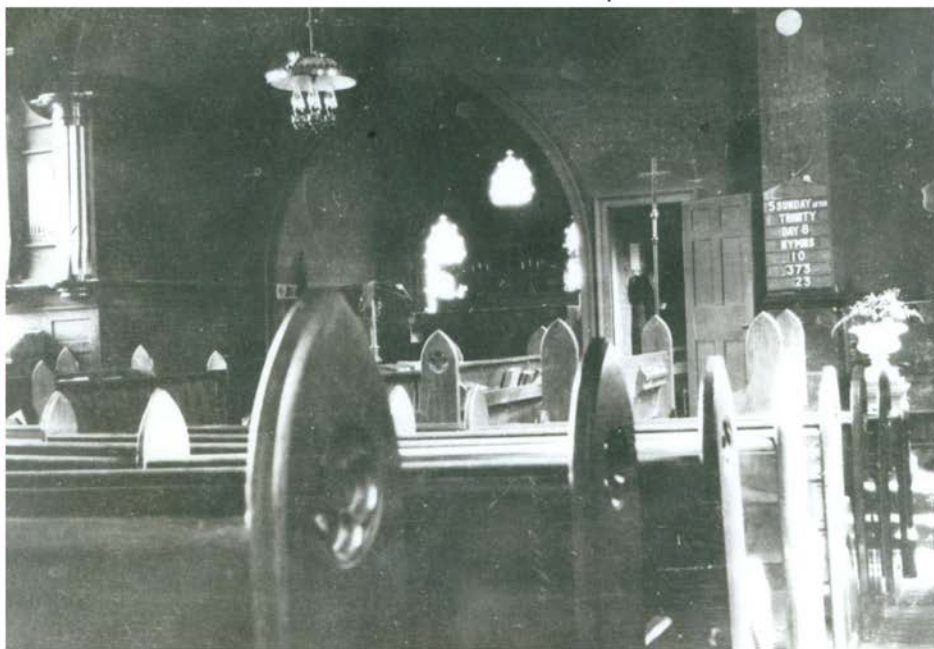


*The Rev'd
Ernest August Hartmann
Rector of Christ Church
1878-1884.*

While one photograph of the interior and a handful of the exterior of the church at this time survive, since none of our memories go back to 1921 anymore, we are left only to imagine the vibrant colors which once decked Christ Church inside and out. Father Hartmann left Christ Church shortly after the renovations were completed and would eventually serve churches out west, dying in California in 1908. Even then his memory was so dear to the people of Christ Church that they commissioned a new altar, along with celebrant's and bishop's chairs for the church in his memory. That furniture would serve in the main church for only 13 years. It was then used in the downstairs chapel until 1947. It lived over forty years in the church basement, then was loaned to Hyde Hall Museum and spent some thirty years there. In 2022, it was returned to Christ Church and put to use once again in the re-established chapel. There you can also see the two stain glass windows and the mighty brass lectern, some of the few survivors from Christ Church's "Gothic period."

In this photograph can be seen the small baptismal font which is now at the back of the church, the altar cross which now sits on the mantle in the parish hall, as well as the windows, lectern, altar and bishop's chair currently in use in the chapel.

Can you find them?



The interior of Christ Church, 1909 - 1921.

The exterior of Christ Church, 1884-1922, from the road and from the far side of the rectory.



23—Episcopal Church, Gilbertville, N. Y.

Despite their love for Father Hartmann, the people of Christ Church struggled to maintain the energy of his pastorate as well as the elaborate renovations of the building. Misfortune and financial troubles plagued the parish in the last decade of the nineteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth. The church was closed for several weeks in early 1905 due to the death of the rector and when a replacement finally arrived in March, he found a church building barely safe enough to use. He was able to secure a donation of \$200 which was primarily used to keep the belfry standing and the windows intact. Inspired, the Church Women held a festival that summer in what is now the Grange Hall and raised \$80 more allowing for the repair of several leaks in the roof. The energy was short lived however, and the parish found itself again without clergy by October. The next replacement, William Woodbridge, was seventy-one years old, and because his wife was too unwell to move, lived part time in the Major's Inn whenever the church building was usable. It was often not for months at a time during this period. The church's non-functional furnace, for instance, meant it had to close for the winter. Even when it was eventually repaired three years later, the vestry still had to apply for a diocesan grant to cover the yearly coal supply.



An advertisement for one of many creative fundraisers for building repairs organized by the Church Women.

*The Otsego Journal,
August 9, 1894*

Howell's farce, "The Albany Depot," will be given at the hall of the Stag's Head Inn on Saturday evening, to be followed by some beautiful living pictures. The entertainment will be begin at 8 o'clock. Admission 25 cents. Ice cream will be served at 9:30. Proceeds to be applied to paying for the recent alterations on the Episcopal church.

The Rev'd William Woodbridge in 1909,

Priest-in-Charge at Christ Church, 1906-1911.

Eventually, the diocesan mission board told our vestry they had been asking for too much money, and for the next several years life at Christ Church was a matter of basic survival. Funds were raised by the Church Women when the need for emergency repairs presented itself. This continued to happen so regularly that the ladies were called upon to show great creativity. Fundraisers from the period include not just ice cream socials, suppers, and dances. There were also demonstrations of various marvels of modern technology, including a gramophone and a player piano, for which the ladies charged 10¢ admission and a "Mystic Hallowe'en" party complete with an appearance by the Witch of Endor and a "Chamber of Mysteries" which brought in \$82 in 1908. By 1911 the frantic pace of travelling between Gilbertsville and his increasingly ill wife caught up with Father Woodbridge. That spring he collapsed during one of his many journeys and died shortly thereafter. Consistent services did not resume at Church Church for nearly eighteen months, and regular interruption continued thereafter because of either lack of clergy or the building's disrepair.

On July 2, 1914, the bell of Christ Church was rung to celebrate the return to the village of Mr. Fitch Gilbert with his new bride. In addition to being a member of the village's founding family, Fitch Gilbert was a Harvard educated lawyer, but he preferred to live as a gentleman farmer. Gilbert's new wife, Marie Stokes Gilbert, was an heiress of Insurance magnates and the widow of Albert Bostwick, son of John D. Rockefeller's partner in founding Standard Oil. Bostwick was himself a noted banker, horse breeder and yachtsman, however he was best known as an enthusiast of the automobile and held several early land speed records. Together the Bostwicks produced five children, most notably the painter and sculptor Dorothy Stokes Bostwick, who was also the first woman to hold a helicopter pilot's license and was married at Christ Church in 1922 to the grandson of the Superintendent of the U. S. Naval Academy. Marie's other children were all champion horse breeders, and her youngest was inducted into both the U.S. Polo and Horse Racing Halls of Fames. The Gilberts had never been Episcopalians, but Marie, who brought most of the wealth to the relationship, was and in succeeding years would become increasingly active in parish life. She was confirmed at Christ Church on June 8, 1919, and soon thereafter would begin a transformation of the parish which still benefits us today.



Fitch Gilbert, Jr.
1882-1959



Marie Stokes Bostwick Gilbert
1877-1962

That transformation was, however, not simple, or straightforward. We can see perhaps our best example of that frontier tension between growth and rootedness as the parish struggled to decide what to do with a church building that had so long been their spiritual home but had also become shamefully and dangerously dilapidated. It was clear though, that something had to be done and that the stop-gap measures of the last decades would no longer be sufficient. At the end of 1919, the building committee reported that the windows of the church would likely not survive another winter, and that the plaster ceiling was in danger of crumbling onto the congregation. Replacing the windows and the ceiling would cost \$1,500 and the Church Women were only able to raise \$300 by that summer. An increasingly desperate vestry designated the offering on Sunday, August 15 to the emergency repairs and sent out letters asking the wider community for donations. One might guess that the response to the letters and the collection that Sunday was less than inspiring since just ten days later Mrs. Gilbert approached the vestry and offered to fund the construction of a new stone church. The vestry immediately accepted her proposal, but then backtracked and insisted on polling the congregation which took over a year. (In the meantime, Mrs. Gilbert's patronage allowed the parish to support its rector, Leon Smith, without aid from the diocese for the first time in anyone's memory.) In September 1921, the vestry again, this time presumably with the congregation's approval approved a plan to raze the church and move the rectory to make way for Mrs. Gilbert's new stone church which would occupy the space of both. However, by November they were again polling the congregation to ask if they would rather see the old church renovated. Once again months intervened, only to see the vestry approve the original plan for a third time and send a party to New York City to meet with an architect. Their only insistence was that the new building seat one hundred and that Priest Hughes' bell be retained. However, by the spring of 1922, it was Mrs. Gilbert who had now changed her mind and was only offering to fund a renovation of the old building. It is not clear whether this was because of the parish's less than enthusiastic response to her first offer, or if the architect's report proved too expensive. In any case, renovation work began quickly thereafter and the last service in the "old church" was celebrated on April 23, 1922. For much of the next year and more the congregation would worship in the newly defunct Gilbertsville Methodist Church while Christ Church was entirely gutted and renovated from the ground up.

To commemorate the founding of the parish that summer, a new cornerstone, which incorporated the old one, was laid on August 7. Sealed inside were the contents of the original 1834 stone—a Prayer Book and Bible—along with a current Prayer Book, copies of the *Otsego Journal*, the day's bulletin and membership lists of all the parish organizations.

Work continued over the next several months. All of the church's 1883 ornamentations were stripped away and a return to a much simpler design, perhaps more fitting a "frontier" church was adopted. This is the Christ Church we all know and love, little having changed since it was re-consecrated on June 12, 1923. Representatives of the dioceses of Albany, New York and Central New York were present, along with a congregation of over 150. The festivities lasting two days were beautifully conducted and movingly described in the *Otsego Journal*:



*The Rt. Rev'd G. Ashton Oldham,
Third Bishop of Albany*

Christians believe in the Resurrection; they believe that the soul can never die but rather puts on immortality. With that thought in mind we are Certain too that souls passed on to the Great Beyond are still interested in us here, in a real sense are watching us, and continually imploring God's tender care and protection over us. Gilbertsville people can then almost 'perceive the voices of the past giving praise for any great work that marks progress in God's Kingdom; the communicants of Christ Church can almost feel the presence of the pioneer churchmen who organized this parish, all as it were giving glory and praise and thanksgiving to God in one united song. For a building restored to the beauty of holiness has been set apart for God's use, and only for his use. Promptly at 10:30 o'clock last Tuesday morning the procession, headed by the Rt. Rev. G. Ashton Oldham, Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Albany, vested in his Episcopal vestments, moved up the central aisle of Christ Church to the chancel and sanctuary, the Bishop and clergy reciting the twenty-fourth Psalm. Then, having received the instrument of donation the Bishop proceeded to the Consecration prayers, the sentence of Consecration being read by the Rector of the parish, Thus the Bishop Coadjutor's first visit to Christ Church parish was connected with building for God, and both Bishop and parishioners are glad it is so. Matins was then said by the Rector and the Rev. E. E. Hutchinson, Rector of Zion Church, Morris. Probably that hymn will never contain deeper meaning for those in attendance than it did at this time: "O Father, deign these walls to bless; Fill with Thy love their emptiness; And let their door a gateway be To lead us from ourselves to Thee...."

A splendid church structure has been builded here-it must in turn, through the ministrations offered in it, build men and women and children into the mighty Kingdom of God. The gates of hell have never prevailed against God's Church; they never will.... Gratefulness, when found, is lovely to behold. It is being voiced very largely in our village by people generally for another beautiful structure to point at with pride, and by the parishioners of Christ Church for a church restored for worship to the beauty of holiness.



Christ Church interior, Christmas 1923

For that day we will find our own lovely gratefulness when we celebrate its upcoming centennial, but also for so much more. We will also find our gratefulness for this beautiful valley and village and all who have dwelt on this frontier worshiping God in ways known and unknown long before and ever since our first foundations were laid. Likewise, we will find our gratefulness for those who, by grace, gathered and first raised this house's humble walls, and for those who struggled mightily through long lean times to keep them standing, along with those who restored for worship in the beauty of holiness. And of course, we will find our gratefulness for all those who since that day a century ago have continued to do all that work which allowed the doors of this place to be a gateway to God.

Yet, even more than all of those, we will find our gratefulness that all that work is still being done here. For Christ Church, Gilbertsville, stands not just along a geographical frontier but at a spiritual one as well. We have always been a place of a unique fruitfulness produced by a people committed to growing into the future God has prepared for this place. Of course, growth is always challenging, futures are always uncertain, and sometimes the present seems very uncertain as well. Our history teaches us that. Yet, as "frontier" people our history also teaches us that the future's challenges and uncertainties are met neither by pulling out the roots of our past nor by clinging stubbornly and unimaginatively to them. Rather they are met by seeking their nourishment but also by reimagining what can be grown from them. Perhaps that is the lesson of having a "second consecration" celebration at all. One Hundred years ago, despite so much pointing them toward abandoning the roots of their past the people of Christ Church found their needed future, the very future we now enjoy, by growing on those roots in a new way.

Our church home is a monument to that way of thinking, perhaps a way of thinking best nurtured in a frontier place like this, and certainly a way of thinking which will serve us well as we grow into the future which our descendants in the faith will one day enjoy. Our celebrations will highlight that dynamic in a powerful way as we confirm four youths and one adult, the future of not just Christ Church, but the Kingdom of God. We will have before our eyes the living evidence that, by his grace, the work of building people into the mighty Kingdom of God has not ceased within these walls. May our fervent prayer be that that work shall continue here until such work is no longer needed.

This long beginning to this edition of the Butternut Episcopalian has been devoted to our past, to our roots, and specifically that of the church building we will celebrate. We need to be reminded of those things, of the legacy we have in our house of God and in our spiritual ancestors who inhabited it before us. Let us now, however, look forward to the future. Our roots secure, let us now grow from them in new ways! I pray that you will appreciate what our confirmands have written and created and all the work that has brought them to this moment. The work is theirs; it is their families' and teachers' and sponsors', it is ours as God's people here, but of course it is fundamentally and finally God's work. And, of course, that work is not over. So likewise, I pray you will appreciate the present and the future ministries that are described here as well, especially the major undertaking which is the Community of Hope.

May we find our loveliest gratefulness for God's grace in Christ by which our splendid building has been consecrated, twice, to his glory, by which our wonderful confirmands are being built into his Kingdom, and by which we all together, rooted in our past and encouraged by our present grow beyond this frontier into our glorious future.



Our Confirmands

Our four youth confirmation candidates were admitted as confirmands in Advent 2021.

Since then, they have met weekly to study the scriptures and their heritage as members of the Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion.



They have actively participated in the life of the church through helping to lead worship as acolytes, vergers, and musicians, by hosting coffee hour once a month, by assisting with ECW fundraisers, by working on altar guild and other parish projects, and in a host of other ways. They have each memorized and recited for Fr. Bill the Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, and another prayer of their choosing from the Book of Common Prayer. They have learned to plan and lead Morning Prayer and have each officiated at a chapel service. They have served our wider community in many ways, but most notable by their Earth Day Cemetery Clean-up in the Old Burial Ground across the road from Christ Church. Many, many community members have reached out to thank them for transforming this long-neglected cemetery. The same day they also hosted a spaghetti dinner! Finally, they have each completed a project, either an essay or artwork with explanation examining the baptismal covenant in the Book of Common Prayer which they will take on as their own in Confirmation. You can learn more about their work below and really see what thoughtful, mature disciples these young people have become!

We could not be prouder of them and the hard work they have done to bring them to this moment or more grateful to all the parents, grandparents, teachers, church family member who have been a part of that journey. Of course, it is by God's grace alone that they have been brought thus far and we trust that God has great things in store for each of these young people. How exciting it will be to see them take this next step of Confirmation, but even more so to see how their futures as followers of Jesus will take shape from there!

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and
fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the
prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever
you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good
News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving
your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all
people, and respect the dignity of every human
being?

People I will, with God's help.

Found on page 304 of the Book of Common Prayer the Baptismal Covenant is the foundational statement of what we as Episcopalians believe it means to be a follower of Jesus. These promises were made on our confirmands' behalf at their baptism, and now they prepare to take them on as their own.

As a key part of their preparation each of our confirmands was required to memorize and recite the answers to the first three questions (the Apostles' Creed) and to complete a project reflecting on the meaning of the next five questions.

Living Through The Baptismal Covenant

by Matthew Hall



Matthew Tyler Hall

Baptized February 19, 2006
by the Rt. Rev'd Daniel Herzog
at Christ Church, Gilbertsville.

Confirmation Sponsors:

The Rev'd Dr. William Lytle, Susan Beach,
Terry Colf & Rachel Atkins

The Baptismal Covenant is among the most important aspects of a non-secular life. For many individuals it represents a tie; a bond of faith and courage, and a representation of one's commitment to the Apostles' Creed and the interpreted life the church and God ask us to live. I have no memory of my baptism, as it was not a decision I made for myself. I will however, remember my confirmation, and am proud to say that I choose the path of Christianity for myself. For these reasons, and for the sake of fulfilling what is required as part of the path of confirmation, It is necessary to reflect and orienteer my life, in the past, present, and future, in terms of the Baptismal Covenant.

Apart from an essential belief in God, Jesus Christ the Son of God, and God as the Holy Spirit, the Baptismal Covenant asks individuals if they plan on living with five other tenets. The first of the five asks if one “[Will] continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”. When reading this question with this analytical scope, it occurred to me that until now, I never understood what these words really meant. In the past, to a younger self, living by those accords didn’t mean much at all. So what have they come to mean to me now? Well, for starters, I’ve come to interpret the apostles’ teaching not directly as how they taught, but indirectly through what they were taught and how they were shown, by Jesus, to live. To be a disciple, a follower of Jesus as the apostles were, is a common Christian goal. In the past I’ve done this through the examples my parents have set out for me. They’ve shown me to love God and the people around me, to pray, to avoid sin, and to just be a kind individual. These are all things taught to the disciples. I’ve interpreted the words “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me,” (Matthew 15:8) to mean that I need to love God with my heart, not with empty words such as those that might mindlessly be spoken during a Sunday service. I have to admit that when I was younger, with little comprehension of the vastness and scale of God’s word and my place in it, I said these words aimlessly, because everyone around me did and it was simply part of the service. As I’ve grown older, received a first communion (what I consider to be living out the “breaking bread” portion of the fourth question), and become more educated about God’s word, I no longer love God simply through my lips and speech, but through my heart and mind and will. I pray for my sake, as asked in Matthew 6:5, I do my best to love God and others with His help, and I know that it is up to me, and no one else (except through God’s help), to be the Christian individual I am called to be. Keeping this in mind, I will hopefully succeed in living this way in both the near and far future.

The fifth tenet asked by the Baptismal Covenant is to “persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever [falling] into sin, repent and return to the Lord”. I like to think I have done a decent job at this. My parents instilled in me a relatively true moral compass, and I have done my best to follow it mindfully. That being said, I have given in to sin many times in my short 17 years on this planet. I have lied, cheated, acted greedily and in self interest, and hurt others. No one except God, in various forms, can say they have not done these things. I have tried resisting, but have failed countless times, as it is the human condition to do so. What is important is that I notice a failure for what it is, either as a greedy thought or as a sinful action, and repent. I try to go beyond simply admitting vocally in a confession of sin at a service, like a weekly renewal, but instead noticing in the moment or soon afterwards and praying and asking for forgiveness accordingly. I also try to ask of this not only from God, but from those who I may have sinned against. I am proud to say I have had to do less of this as I’ve become more mindful, but it does still happen and I do still give in to temptation and have to act accordingly. I also think it’s important to state that I do understand the difference between justifying my sins with repentance and asking for forgiveness. That also satisfies the resisting temptation and sin portion of the fifth point of the Baptismal Covenant.

The sixth asks to “proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ”. I’ve found this one especially interesting, as I have definitely underperformed in this category. The “by example” aspect is easy enough, I’ve tried to live as a good person and do so with God’s help, and been relatively successful. “By word” is perhaps a bit more challenging, if it means something apart from “by example”. I think that the best definition of “the Good News” for me has been the Christian belief in heaven and in life after death. Physically, or by example, I have demonstrated, as much as a 17-year-old can, the Good News and my Christian values. That being said, many individuals have had a falling out with the Church at an increasing rate over the last 30-40 years. On top of the already and unfortunately

questionable reputation of the Church, people just don't want to go. In such a society, It would be difficult to seemingly stand alone, firm in faith and outwardly Christian. And it is difficult, but I think surpassing such a small trial is exactly what the "by word" portion of the sentence asks of us, and satisfies the question. I have not always held up both ends, and often still fail to do both. Moving forward, as long as I remind myself of the significance it holds for me to be successful through the Baptismal Covenant and confirmation vows, I feel I will have an easier time living, by word and example, the Good News of God.

The final two questions go hand in hand, and one cannot exist without the other. They ask us to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving [our] neighbor as ourselves" and then "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being". Again, my achieving this in the past has come down to the way my parents have raised me. I try to be kind, respectful, and do so through God when it is difficult to. I think if everyone were to live by such accords, the "justice and peace" aspect would come naturally on a much larger scale, which I believe is a larger aspect of what God calls us to do. In conjunction with everything else the Baptismal Covenant secures within us, these final two callings come somewhat on their own and when everything is working together, successfully, we are living as God intended, and fulfilling our end of the bond. I recognize my shortcomings in doing so in the past, am working to correct any now, and know that, with God's help, can be more successful moving forward.

Study & Service

(and just a little bit of fun!)





Following The Baptismal Covenant

by Joseph Hall



Joseph Allan Hall

Baptized December 30, 2007
by the Rev'd Joseph Acanfora
at Christ Church, Gilbertsville.

Confirmation Sponsors:

The Rev'd Dr. William Lytle, Susan Beach,
Terry Colf & Rebecca Herrman



Throughout my life I have always been able to turn to God. He is like your friend, and you know that you can turn to him when you have messed up or need his help. Following what God wants hasn't always been the easiest. The questions in the Baptismal Covenant are asked to your parents when you get baptized. These questions are answered for you, and in my case they were answered for me when I was very young. Growing up with Christ has shown me how to follow those questions on my own, and grow my relationship with my Lord.

Question 4 says “Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?” The apostles taught me that Jesus was a great person, but more importantly they taught millions of people about Jesus and how great he is. When I was younger, we went to church and had Sunday School every week. We learned about God and we had communion. Working and learning about God while I was younger really helped grow my early relationship with God. In the past few years I have definitely struggled with my relationship with God. At some points I was even wondering if God was real. But going to church and now having confirmation class I have really understood how God works, and praying really helped with knowing that. Praying to God is my favorite thing to do. I know he is listening to me whenever I need to talk to him. Even if I pray for something super small, I know he in the end will help me. Now knowing that I have God in my life, I know he will be there in my future. I will continue to go to church, take communion, and pray as much as I can.

Question 5 says “Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?” Sinning is what a lot of Christians worry about. You just have to remember that Jesus died so our sins can be forgiven. I don’t go around purposely sinning. I know that at some point, too much is too much. But when I do accidentally sin I turn to the Lord. Fixing problems before they get too bad seems to be God’s favorite thing. If you sin and just pray to the lord and ask for forgiveness, he will help you. When I was younger I could've been mean to someone at school or my sibling or really any sin there is. I would go to the end of my bed and tell God I was sorry. I instantly felt better about whatever I was sorry for. Recently I tend to sin a lot. Not in person but more inside my head. I have thoughts that are not the best, and even though It's not really affecting anyone else, it's affecting myself, God, and my relationship with God. So I still pray, all the time. I almost always turn to God when I sin and I know it helps. Praying for your sins is the best thing you can do to be forgiven.

Question 6 says “Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?” Talking to people about God and church is very easy. It's actually very easy because there's so much you could talk about. When I was younger I told my friends about church. I remember some coming for the Easter egg hunt that we always did. Recently I've gotten my girlfriend to come to our church. She has her own church but I still spread the different ideas of the churches. I like people knowing that I go to church, I hope it convinces people to go for themselves. In my future I will be taking on leadership roles at my church and helping spread the Good news of God. Everyone should know that God is amazing.

I think Question 7 and 8 go together. Question 7 is “Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?” and question 8 is “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?” Loving your neighbor as yourself is very similar to respecting the dignity of every human being, and striving for Justice is very similar to seeking to serve Christ because I find Justice in christ. The golden rule. I was taught that in my youngest years of school. I don't think they were teaching it religiously but the Golden rule is really just another way of saying love your neighbor as yourself. Treat others the way you want to be treated. I always respect others. If I win something or if I get a better grade I'm never acting without dignity. I will always shake hands after a soccer game or tennis match, I never put people down when I do better. Respect and treating others how you want to be treated are very important to God.

My entire life has been filled with Jesus and God, going to church, Sunday school, taking part in church plays, Easter egg hunts, and Christmas night church parties. I can't imagine a life without God and I can't imagine a life without following the baptismal covenant. I'm so glad that my parents got me baptized so that now I can choose to go through my journey of confirmation and grow my relationship with God.

EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP AT THE OLD BURIAL GROUND - APRIL 22, 2023

BEFORE



AFTER





An Interview with Sammy.
by Sammy Beach and friends.



Samuel Andrew Beach
Baptized March 22, 2008
by the Rev'd Robert Witt
at Zion Church, Morris

Confirmation Sponsors:
The Rev'd Dr. William Lytle, Susan Beach,
Terry Colf & Carol Angelone

**Sammy's
project is a
video which
can be viewed
on Christ
Church's
Facebook
Page.**



Lord, Open our lips...



I Will with God's Help.

by C. E. Cameron Lytle



Cecilie Eliška Cameron Lytle

Baptized January 11, 2009

by the Rev'd John Fierro at

St. Paul's Church, Monongahela, Pennsylvania

Confirmation Sponsors:

The Rev'd Dr. William Lytle, Susan Beach,

Terry Colf & Sallye Sadlocha



In order to make my project, "I Will, With God's Help," I first designed the background on the computer and used a Cricut to cut it out as a stencil. I then used it to spray paint the pattern onto the glass. Afterward, I sketched out what symbols and words I wanted to use, and then painted them with glass paint. I then painted "Mod Podge" onto the parts of the images that were supposed to be shiny. The five symbols I used to portray the questions of the baptismal covenant are each an item we use in worship that I related to the primary verb of each question.





To represent how we as Christians should continue in the apostles' teaching and the breaking of the bread, I used the chalice and host, something that we use to continue to do those things weekly.

To help us remember to persevere in the face of evil, I used the Pascal candle because it commonly represents the Light of Christ shining in the darkness, just like we should be in a broken and dark world.



The gospel book helps to show how you should proclaim the word of God, by representing that time during the service, when Father Bill stands up and says with a loud voice the stories of Jesus, and helps to remind us that we should do that too.



The way we should seek and serve others, especially those are in need, is represented by the container of oil, which is used to bless those who aren't able to join us in church or those who aren't able to understand what we do there such as the elderly, the dying, or infants.

To represent how we should strive for justice, and respect all people I used the baptismal font, a symbol of identity and community for Christians, that also helps reminds us that all deserve the same respect because we are seen as the same under God.



A Confirmation Name.

I have gone by the name Cameron for some time, and I have decided to take up the tradition of the confirmation name and make it part of my name before God and the church. In thinking about this, I liked how Cameron reminded me of Saint Peter, one of my favorite saints. I like Saint Peter because he is both a human that makes mistakes and a person close to Jesus. He helps me to remember that though I slip up, God's love knows no bounds. Jesus also changed Peter's name from Simon when he started following him. Except in the language Jesus spoke Peter is Cephas. (They both mean "Rock.") Because they both start with C, and have similar syllables (Came-ron, Ce-phas), each time I'm called Cameron it reminds me to be like Cephas, following Jesus and trusting that he will still love me and use me to build his church, even though I mess up. I hope that my church family will support me in this journey.

MEMORIES OF YOUTH



**CONFIRMATION AT
CHRIST CHURCH,
MAY 20, 1964**

**CONFIRMANDS:
RON KETCHUM, SALLYE STEBBINS
(SADLOCHA), LINDA MICHELLE
BRANNICK, AND LIZ STEBBINS
WITH THE RT. REV'D CHARLES PERSELL,
BISHOP SUFFRAGAN OF ALBANY,
AND THE REV'D BENJAMIN NEVITT,
RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH**



**EPISCOPAL YOUNG PEOPLE AT SLIVER BAY,
JUNE 22, 1961**

**CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE
GILBERTSVILLE CONTINGENT?**

We will also welcome one adult confirmand, Kyle De Wolf. Kyle is an incredibly thoughtful, devout, and well-read Christian. It is a joy to have him, and his family, as part of our Christ Church family. Kyle is eager and more than ready to be welcomed through confirmation into full membership within the Episcopal Church. As part of that process Kyle submitted a complete spiritual autobiography as well as this condensed version relating the story of his journey to us. Enjoy!



My Episcopal Conversion Story

by Kyle De Wolf

As a young man growing up in Binghamton, I struggled to find a spiritual home that was the perfect fit. I tried several different churches, but none of them felt quite right. The Baptist church I first attended was too hot – both in temperature and in the intensity of their literal views. The ministers would get angry and yell over the slightest disagreement, and the church was too political and apocalyptic for my taste.

I found myself drawn to the beauty of the liturgy and the strict rules and discipline of the Catholic Church. It provided a sense of structure that was lacking in the chaos of my home life and kept me out of trouble as a young lad on the streets. However, as I grew more liberal in my twenties, I began to dissent from some of the Catholic Church's doctrines.

I spent some time attending a Unitarian fellowship, but eventually grew tired of their chaotic intellectual discussions. I longed for the rich spiritual nourishment of the sacraments. That's when I discovered Christ Episcopal Church.

It was at Christ Episcopal Church that I began to learn more about and respect the various traditions within the church. I was struck by the humble wisdom of seeking compromise and consensus rather than strict doctrinal purity. It felt like a good balance – not perfect, but just right.

My wife had been a member of the parish for many years, and I decided to take the step of seeking confirmation in the Episcopal Church to strengthen my faith and resolve to practice the Catholic faith within this tradition. While confirmation is not necessary in the Episcopal Church, I wanted to receive the additional help of the Holy Spirit as I seek to follow this spiritual path and allow myself to be challenged by it.

I am excited to raise my daughter within this tradition alongside my wife. The Episcopal Church has been complicit in many historic injustices like other denominations, but I believe it is moving in the right direction. The community at Christ Episcopal Church has been welcoming and supportive, and I feel that I have finally found my spiritual home.

I am grateful for the journey that has led me here, and I look forward to continuing to grow in my faith within this community. I hope that my story can inspire others who are searching for their spiritual home to keep looking – it is out there, and when you find it, it is worth the wait.

The Community of Hope comes to Christ Church

As members of the Christ Church family, we have been chosen to be a part of The Community of Hope ministry, completing 14 weeks of training. We are not only to serve Christ Church members but also the community around us.

Through studying of the Benedictine spirituality, we have learned that is a needed spirituality for the 21st century. It deals with the issues that we face today such as stewardship, relationships, authority, community, balance, work, simplicity, prayer, and both spiritual and psychological development. Benedictine spirituality offers more a way of life and an attitude of mind, than it does a set of religious prescriptions.



The purpose of this training is to prepare each of us for the servant ministry of bearing the gift of God's presence. Training to become a lay pastoral caregiver in the Community of Hope is more than simply acquiring additional caregiving skills. It is a journey into that sacred place of birthing the holy and being awakened to the presence of Christ within.

During these weeks, we have had to look inward at ourselves, learning to balance our daily activities, stability, hospitality, and prayer which enables us to bring Christ's love to those to whom we minister. We are learning to practice balance in our daily activities of work, prayer, worship, and leisure. In this way, we also learn the lessons of humility and discipline. Moving forward we are able to serve others with these lessons learned. Deep silence is for listening to God with "the ears of our heart" and compassionate listening is God's gift of 'presence' and awe.

We believe that many of our elderly and infirmed are "imprisoned" in places, often not of their own choosing and need to be listened to, respected and loved, bringing Christ to them, allowing Christ's light to shine forth from each of us.

The Vision Statement of the Community of Hope is "TO BE A LISTENING PRESENCE" and the Mission Statement is "CREATING COMMUNITIES STEEPED IN BENEDICTINE SPIRITUALITY TO SERVE OTHERS THROUGH COMPASSIONATE LISTENING."

We pray God will continue to teach and guide us in this wonderful work He has chosen for us to do.

Susan Beach and Carol Angelone



CHRIST CHURCH - GILBERTSVILLE



The Episcopal Church Welcomes You!

Christ Church, Gilbertsville is now an official Training Center of the Community of Hope International, and the only one in central New York!

The Community of Hope International equips lay people to serve in all forms of pastoral care. Pastoral care is when a person is being “present” in a listening, compassionate, non-controlling manner to an individual or group for the purpose of consciously or unconsciously representing God to them and seeking to respond to their spiritual needs.

Grounded in the ancient teachings of Benedictine spirituality, The Community of Hope provides the pastoral care giver sets the caregiver on their own firm spiritual foundation from which to minister to others. Through an initial 14-week training course followed by ongoing, spiritual formation and practical lessons on care giving, members learn to match theological insights and spiritual practices with their experiences of ministering to others and giving spiritual guidance.

Our next training course begins September 7, 2023.

All participants must complete an application process including interview and pastoral recommendation and pay the \$50 materials fee by the second session. Scholarships are available. Training session will be conducted Thursdays, September 7-December 14 (except Thanksgiving) in a hybrid in-person / virtual (Zoom) format. To be commissioned candidates cannot miss more than two sessions.

Contact us at gilbertsville.cohi@gmail.com to learn more.

*Training Center Administrator: The Rev'd Dr. William Lytle
Facilitators: Lay Chaplains Susan Beach & Carol Angelone*

“It’s about the skills and the practices of spiritual life that prepares each one of us to be open to the other...to believe and trust that the hospitality of the Christian faith is to look for the Christ in the other person, and as we approach them to serve them and in humility provide ministry to them. Our prayer is that the stranger will receive us and look for the Christ in us.”

— Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg | Community of Hope International Founder

Lent & Easter 2023 at Christ Church

We prepared for Lent with a wonderful Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and the running of the First Annual Acolyte's Pancake Race!





A highlight of Lent was our Friday Fellowship events with the Stations of the Cross and Lenten Supper (except on St. Patrick's Day!) shared with our neighboring parishes: St. Paul's, Sidney, St. Paul's, Franklin and Zion, Morris. Each Friday saw an average of 30 people gather!



The addition of the crotalus to our acolytes' toolbox thanks to the craftsmanship of Roy Bartoo.



Palm Sunday, and Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday.



The Great Vigil





Easter Day



Church is a Sing-Along

written by Chris Sadlocha



I think one of the reasons I like attending church is because there's opportunities for a group sing along. I love live concerts. Many times I will investigate the group's setlist to become familiar with the songs they will be playing. I think surprises are overrated. I'll put on an album or music of the group I'll be seeing days before the concert. I'll have their music on in the car on the way to it. Then, at the concert, I quietly sing along to the songs. Many times, the audience knows the words and can't help but sing along; think Boz Scaggs and Lido Shuffle:

*Lido Whoah oh oh oh
He's for the money, he's for the show
Lido's waitin' for the go, Lido*

Or Neil Diamond and Sweet Caroline:

*Sweet Caroline
Good times never seemed so good
I've been inclined
To believe they never would
Oh, no, no*

It's played during the 7th inning stretch at Boston's baseball Fenway Park.

In those concert sing-alongs, we are of one mind, we're together, we're on the same page. We have a common cause- to have a good time by singing together.

That's a lot like church. We look at the same page and sing along for a common cause: communal worship.

Oh, and remember the 7th inning stretch at Yankee Stadium:

*Start spreading the news
You're leaving today (tell him friend)
I want to be a part of it, New York, New York*

Sometimes church is one big sing along!

Episcopal Church Women Update:

While looking back through the past months I couldn't believe all that has happened since the beginning of the year. I also find it hard to believe that the year is almost half over already.

Our group with the help of all the dedicated men and youth helped us to put on a Chicken & Biscuit dinner, pancake supper, Lenten supper, and Easter breakfast.

We also helped to support our youth as they put on their first spaghetti dinner. All the events were well received by our congregation and members of the community.

Upcoming events:

Church picnic following the confirmation of some of our youth, and Christ Church's anniversary celebration with Bishop Smith.

Preparations are starting for Applefest 2023 (10-7-23), Sallye Sadlocha is setting up crafting dates, Barb Colf will be contacting committee chairpersons. We would also like to ask our talented and crafty men to contribute their crafts to the event, and Marti Edmonds has offered to make another quilt for us to raffle.

Our Summer and Fall I am sure will turn out to be very busy.

Our current finances:

Checking: \$4482.78 Savings: \$6231.76

I would like to thank everyone for all their help and contributions, which allowed us to do so many events to honor our Lord Jesus.

Kathy Caffery
ECW President



Update from the Treasurers' Office

2023 has started off with no unexpected expenses thus far this year. Donations have been generous, but as noted in the weekly bulletins we are below our target figures. Our fund-raising efforts have reduced our budget shortfall amount, bringing us a little closer to our budget figure.

At this point in time our electric and fuel oil expenses are below what we have budgeted. Hopefully the trend will continue.

Below is a breakdown of our Revenues and Expenses 1-1-23 thru 4-28-23:

2023	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
INCOME		
Pledge & Plate	\$23,014.20	\$20,310.00
Fitch Gilbert	\$4,500.00	\$3,000.00
ADIT	\$1,119.71	\$1,443.00
Parish House	\$35.00	\$400.00
Fund Raising	\$1,400.78	
Other gifts & Donations	\$200.00	
BVYG	\$500.00	\$333.32
	\$30,769.69	\$25,486.32
EXPENSES		
Diocesan Assessment	\$1,260.00	\$1,260.00
Building & Grounds	\$10,197.83	\$12,096.60
Clergy	\$10,910.08	\$9,774.96
Outreach	\$317.40	\$0.00
Program	\$7,421.87	\$7,276.56
	\$30,107.18	\$30,408.12

Blessings to everyone for their continued support.

Thank you,
Kathy Caffery, Treasurer



Initial Nominees for Tenth Bishop of Albany

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

The Profile and Search Committee for the Tenth Bishop of Albany has reported to the Secretary of Convention with an initial list of candidates to be placed in nomination for the Tenth Bishop of Albany.

The initial list of nominees comprises:

- **The Reverend Geoffrey Ward**
Rector of Saint Christopher's Episcopal Church,
River Hills, Wisconsin (Diocese of Milwaukee)
- **The Reverend Jeremiah Williamson**
Rector of Grace and Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church,
Colorado Springs, Colorado (Diocese of Colorado)
- **The Very Reverend Neal Longe,**
Rector of Saint Ann's Episcopal Church,
Amsterdam, New York (Diocese of Albany)
- **The Reverend Scott Garno,**
Rector of Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church,
Delmar, New York (Diocese of Albany)

A 30-day Independent Nomination Period, in which further nominees may be brought forward, opens on Monday, May 8, 2023. Independent nominees must meet the same requirements as the nominees identified by the Profile & Search Committee. Nomination forms, procedures, and requirements will be available at <https://albanyepiscopaldioceses.org/nominations/>, starting on Thursday, May 4, 2023. The link will become active on that date. The Independent Nomination Period closes on Wednesday, June 7, 2023.

Basic information on the current nominees can be viewed at <https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/bishop-candidates/>. More extensive information will be posted after the Independent Nominees have been identified and have met the nomination requirements.

Before the Electing Convention, the Diocese will schedule a number of opportunities at which members of the Electing Convention and other members of the diocese can meet and get to know all of the nominees. News and information regarding opportunities to get to know the candidates will be posted on the Episcopal Transition page of the diocesan web site (<https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/episcopaltransition/>).

**The electing convention has been called for Saturday, September 9, 2023 at the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany.
The lay delegates of Christ Church are
Terry Colf, Sallye Sadlocha & Susan Beach.**

INITIAL CANDIDATES FOR BISHOP

With photos and biographies taken from their current parish websites.



The Reverend Geoffrey Ward

Rector of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church,
River Hills, Wisconsin (Diocese of Milwaukee)

Fr. Geoffrey Ward began his ministry at St. Christopher's in February of 2017. Prior to St. Christopher's, he led St. Francis in Eagle River, WI, and a needs-based ministry- Caritas of Eagle River. Prior to that he was priest associate at Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford, CT.

Fr. Ward previously held executive positions in the financial services industry, including management of the Pension Resource Center, a MetLife company responsible for more than 17,000 qualified retirement plans. As a subject matter expert on ERISA regulatory matters, he collaborated with MetLife's government affairs group and was an active participant on committees and discussion panels for a number of industry trade organizations, holding professional designations CFP, CLU, ChFC, and AIF.

A graduate of Nicolet High School, Fr. Geoffrey holds a bachelor's degree from Viterbo University, Master of Fine Arts from Trinity University, and Master of Theological Studies from Seabury Western. His interests include fishing, boating, swimming, cross-country skiing and cheering on the Brewers, Packers, and Bucks. He and wife Valerie have six children, four grandchildren, and two Yorkies, Banjo and Susanna.



The Reverend Jeremiah Williamson

Rector of Grace & St. Stephen's Episcopal Church,
Colorado Springs, Colorado (Diocese of Colorado)

Fr. Jeremiah was called to serve as rector of Grace and St. Stephen's in 2016. His path to the Episcopal Church reflects the journey that more and more people who come through our doors have experienced. Raised in the Pentecostal tradition, Jeremiah's leadership abilities were affirmed and nurtured there where he led music; taught Sunday School and led youth events. He discovered the Anglican tradition

while attending a Free Methodist church in college and went on to receive his M. Div. from Drew Theological School. After finishing his M. Div., he completed a diploma in Anglican Studies at the General Theological Seminary in New York City and has a Contemporary Music degree from Greenville College. Jeremiah has served at Episcopal Churches since 2003, including St. Paul's (Chatham, NJ), Grace (Madison, NJ), St. John's (Youngstown, OH) and most recently was rector at St. Andrew's in Toledo, Ohio. Fr. Jeremiah is a two-time Deputy to General Convention. He is the author of *Praying the Scriptures: Litanies for Sunday Worship* (Church Publishing, 2014) and a contributor to the book *Tell the Truth, Shame the Devil: Stories about the Challenges of Young Pastor* (James Ellis III, ed., Smyth & Helwys, 2015). He and his wife Jennifer, an ordained United Methodist pastor, have two sons Oscar and Isaiah. The family enjoys exploring the beauty of Colorado Springs' open spaces, great films and music and Cleveland sports.



The Very Reverend Neal Longe
Rector of St. Ann's Episcopal Church,
Amsterdam, New York (Diocese of Albany)

The Very Reverend Neal P. Longe was called to full-time ministry at St. Ann's on January 1, 2012. Prior to being called to serve at St. Ann's, Father Neal was the associate priest at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Colonie, NY.

Fr. Neal was born and raised in Johnstown, NY not far from St. Ann's, and sponsored for ordination by St. John's, Johnstown. He and Lisa, his wife were married in 2004 and they have two teenage children Maia and Noah.

Fr. Neal holds a Master of Arts Degree in Theology from St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, MD and a Diploma in Anglican Studies from Trinity School for Ministry in Ambidge, PA. He also holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education and Psychology from the Crane School of Music College at Potsdam, as well as an Associates degree in Nursing from Fulton-Montgomery Community College at Johnstown, NY. Fr. Neal is a Registered Nurse and has worked in the Emergency Department, the Intensive Care Unit, and Occupational Health. Fr. Neal serves the parish in many ways, sharing the love of Jesus and connecting people to Christ, transforming people, families, and communities. Fr. Neal is passionate about preaching, leading bible studies, and teaching. Pastoral care is an integral part of all the ministries he is involved in.

In November 2013, Fr. Neal was appointed by the Bishop to serve as the Dean of the Western Mohawk Deanery. He also serves the Diocese in a variety of other leadership roles. Fr. Neal is also blessed to serve as Priest-in-charge for St. Peter's by the Lake Summer Chapel in Old Forge.

With a heart for First Responders, Fr. Neal serves as a Deputy Fire Coordinator - Chaplain with the Montgomery County Fire Service and Office of Emergency Management, as well as Chaplain to the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Amsterdam Fire Department, Amsterdam Police Department, and the Capital District Fraternal Order of Police. Fr. Neal holds a third degree black belt (III Dan) in Taekwon-Do. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family and their two dogs, connecting with friends, and furthering his education by reading and listening to podcasts.



The Reverend Scott Gamo
Rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church,
Delmar, New York (Diocese of Albany)

Fr. Scott Gamo, was born and raised (with a 10 year hiatus in N.C.) in the small Upstate NY city of Ogdensburg. He was baptized, confirmed, and raised up for ordination from St. John's Episcopal Church in Ogdensburg. Fr. Gamo graduated from Ogdensburg Free Academy and went on to complete a B. A. at SUNY Potsdam. Following graduation from Potsdam (and a year working in the Capital District), Fr. Gamo attended and graduated with an M.Div. from Trinity School for Ministry, in Ambidge, PA.

Fr. Gamo came to St. Stephen's in May 2017 after 11 fruitful years of ministry at St. Matthew's, Unadilla, and St. Paul's, Franklin. During those years he helped lead St. Matthew's through two devastating floods, revitalized old ministries and started new ones, and worked for 3 years as the Spiritual Care Coordinator for Hospice and Palliative Care of Chenango County.

Fr. Scott has a passion for Jesus and for preaching and teaching the Word of God. He is a long-time advocate of healing ministry, and has been involved in Diocesan Youth Ministry since before he was even ordained. Fr. Scott has been married to his beautiful wife Sarah for almost 14 years and they are the parents of 4 children: Josiah (with the Lord), Sam, Maia, and Toby.

BEAVER CROSS MINISTRIES

REGISTER FOR CAMP TODAY!

- Scholarships Are Available
- Contact Us To Arrange A Presentation For Your Parish



Date	Session	Grades	Rate	Sibling Rate
7/5-7/7	Beaver Bound	K-2nd	\$180	\$160
7/9-7/14	Discoverers	3rd-5th	\$490	\$420
7/16-7/21	Adventurers I	6th-8th	\$490	\$420
7/21-7/23	Adventurers Weekend	6th-8th	\$100	-
7/23-7/28	Adventurers II	6th-8th	\$490	\$420
7/30-8/4	Pioneers I	9th-12th	\$490	\$420
8/4-8/6	Pioneers Weekend	9th-12th	\$100	-
8/6-8/11	Pioneers II	9th-12th	\$490	\$420

Dates	Grades	Regular Rate	Sibling Rate
7/5-7/7	K-8	\$140	\$130
7/10-8/18	K-8	\$230 a week	\$220 a week

All Christ Church Campers receive a Full Scholarship through the Christ Church ECW and the Susquehanna Deanery.

Coming this Fall to Christ Church



Fall Adult Study:
The Family of a Faithful God:
A study of St. Paul's Letter to the Romans
 by the Rev'd Dr. William Lytle
Wednesdays at 7pm
beginning September 13

This October,
CHRIST CHURCH, GILBERTSVILLE
 is pleased to host
THE FALL CONVOCATION OF
THE SUSQUEHANNA DEANERY
 OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALBANY.
MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

In Other News.....

The second consecration of Christ Church was not the biggest news story of the day in our small village on June 12, 1923.

Rather, it was the serious fire which interrupted the ceremonies.

The Osego Journal

THURSDAY.....JUNE 14, 1928

LOCAL BREVITIES

Mrs. William Stebbins is visiting friends in Scranton and Binghamton.

Principal Charles M. Lillie, Otego, passed the week end at his home here.

Mrs. Flora Sweet has been here the past week, returning to New Berlin Wednesday.

James Myers, Jr., who now works in

EMPIRE HOUSE BADLY DAMAGED

Fine Work by the Firemen Saves the Building, Our Water System Proves Its Worth.

Fire which broke out in the attic and roof of the Empire House at about 11 o'clock Tuesday forenoon threatened for a time to destroy the hotel and gave a scare to owners of adjoining properties. Quick and efficient work by the local fire department boys, for which they deserve much credit, stopped the blaze before the arrival of fire apparatus from several nearby towns.

Damage by fire was confined to the

CHRIST CHURCH CONSECRATED

Archdeacony of the Susquehanna has Interesting Two-Day Program.

Christians believe in the Resurrection; they believe that the soul can never die but rather puts on immortality. With that thought in mind we are certain too that souls passed on to the Great Beyond are still interested in us here, in a real sense are watching us, and continually imploring God's tender care and protection over us. Gilbertsville people can then almost perceive the voices of the past giving praise for

The article goes on to note:

"When the alarm came with the ringing of the fire bell, the consecration of the Episcopal church, after its refinishing and partial rebuilding, was in progress and many left the services to assist in rescue work of the hotel furnishings."

Disaster was averted by the quick response in large part made possible by so many being gathered just up the road at Christ Church. Morris, Mount Upton, South New Berlin and Sidney Fire Departments all responded, but the Gilbertsville department with the help of the crowd had extinguished the fire before any of them arrived.

Fire damage was contained to the roof and while the water damage was significant most of the hotel furniture was saved.



CHRIST CHURCH - GILBERTSVILLE

The Episcopal Church Welcomes You!

Post Office Box 345
Gilbertsville, New York 13776



THE BUTTERNUT EPISCOPALIAN

Pentecost Edition 2023

