

Christ Church Chronicle

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“GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD. HIS MERCIES ENDURE FOREVER.”

Fr. Bruce McNab

Dr. Alexander Whyte was a Scottish Presbyterian minister who died in 1921 at the age of 85. Old Dr. Whyte always seemed to be able to find something for which he could be grateful. One dark and wet Sunday, after weeks of cold, gloomy, and rainy weather that had made the crops rot in the field and the flocks suffer, one member of his congregation said to a companion, *“Certainly our preacher won’t think of anything for which to thank the Lord on a day such as this.”* The friend nodded. Much to their surprise, however, Dr. Whyte ascended the high pulpit and started out by praying, *“We thank Thee, O God, that it is not always like this.”*

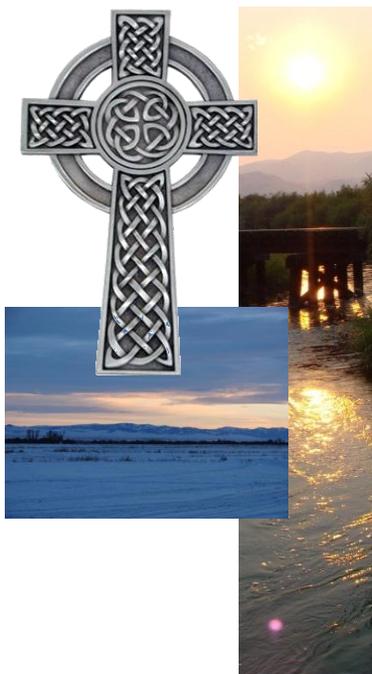
Thanksgiving Day comes at the end of this month, but thankfulness is an attitude to cultivate year-round. Writing to some of his earliest converts, Paul said, *“in all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”* [1 Thess. 5:18] The Apostle doesn’t ask his new believers to give thanks FOR all circumstances, but IN all circumstances. Don’t miss the crucial distinction that’s there. No one prays, “I thank you, O Lord, that I lost my job.” Or “Dear God, I am so grateful I was diagnosed with cancer.”

I don’t encourage anybody to put on an other-worldly smile in the face of tragedy and say, “Well, I just praise God and give thanks for all things.” Sorrow is sorrow. Tragedy is tragedy. Evil is evil. Christians don’t give thanks to God for the bad things that happen. Jesus himself said we should “weep with those who weep.” He didn’t advise us to ignore reality.

Of course, sometimes in the midst of wretched circumstances there’s a ray of hope that shines through the darkness and encourages us to be thankful—like when a person’s car is demolished in an accident, but no one is hurt. Certainly we could be thankful for that. That qualifies as a recognizable blessing. And there’s something mighty attractive about people whose faith helps them discover a blessing in the midst of tragedy. It means that their focus is more on what God is doing than on what went wrong.

But sometimes there is no obvious redeeming element in the situation we face. What then? Paul says to “thank God in all circumstances.” So, even when we aren’t able to name anything in our immediate situation for which we’re grateful, it is still possible to give thanks to God. We can thank Him that Christ defeated the power of fear and death, that He was triumphant over hatred and vengefulness. We can thank Him that no matter what the circumstances of our life might be right now—even if our situation is sad or frightening—He is always with us. The Lord will never leave us to face our perils and sorrows alone. (That’s a *huge* blessing!) We can thank God for giving us opportunities to put our faith into practice. Faith is evident when we can thank God for being with us and thank Him for being our Father and our God, *even* when the circumstances of life are bewildering. Achieving an attitude of thankfulness in all circumstances is challenging! No doubt about it. On Thanksgiving Day, our hope is to be overwhelmed by blessings both great and small and able to name some of them as we say grace at the Thanksgiving table.

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“GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD” (continued from page 1)

Fr. Bruce McNab

We don't even want to imagine how it might feel to try to give thanks in the midst of a personal tragedy, pain or sorrow. But there are people we all know who are going to face that challenge this year. Life is unpredictable, and sad things happen even in the lives of good and holy people. That's why we cling to the promise that *“in all things God is at work for good for those who love Him.”* [Rom. 8:28] We may not be able to see what He is doing, but we confess our faith that God is mysteriously at work even in our darkest moments. Faith is the first proof of love, and we trust God ultimately to bring us out of the ominous shadows that darken our path, into the sunshine of joy.

Thank you, Father. Thank you. You have overwhelmed us with your love. You have given us more than we could ever have been bold enough to ask for. Your hand is always open. Your grace goes before and follows after us. Your Providence shelters us, and we enjoy more blessings than we can count. Whatever the circumstances of our life, no matter if we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you are always with us. You always comfort us. Accept the offering of our grateful hearts we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Senior Warden's Report

Frank Ford

As fall ends and the approach of winter begins to make itself known, there is always a flurry of Vestry planning activity. Advent will soon be upon us. Shortly after the new church year begins, the new calendar year and our annual congregational meeting follow within weeks. We need to assess our progress and plan for the future. In this case, our church has been very active in 2014. There is a feeling of pride, satisfaction and thankfulness in what we have accomplished together during these last months. Now it is time to start looking at 2015. This means making a comprehensive assessment of our current situation; estimating the financial and other resources that will be available to us during the coming months; and deciding just what we can and should do in terms of church activity during the coming year.

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Christ Church Legacy

Janice Hansen



This prayer desk, or prie dieu (from the French, pray to God, pronounced “Pray Dew”) sits near our pulpit. As the plaque on it states, it was given by Betty Kelly in honor of her three sons who died of Muscular Dystrophy.

Betty's life was not easy. Her obituary states that she had a “hard fight with heart disease.” She also had other struggles of the heart — no doubt caring for these boys challenged her intensely. We had a graveside service for her last month, at the Twin Bridges cemetery. We honored her, in her struggles, disappointment, and joys.

Christ Church is fortunate to have the prayer desk she donated. Take a moment and pray there — pray for mothers who care for children who are ill, and, on this upcoming All Saints' Day, pray for the response of the soul of Betty Kelly.

Coming Events in November

November 2: All Saints Day, first Sunday for our new Children's Chapel and a farewell party for Judy and Jerry Aaker

November 5: RSVP deadline for Fr. Harry's party (see below).

November 14: Fr. Harry Neely's Jubilee — 50 years as a Priest. St James Episcopal Church, Dillon

Senior Warden's Report (continued from page 2)

Frank Ford

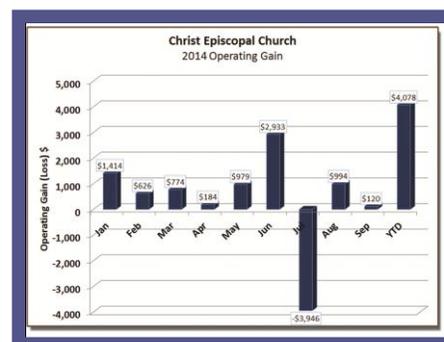
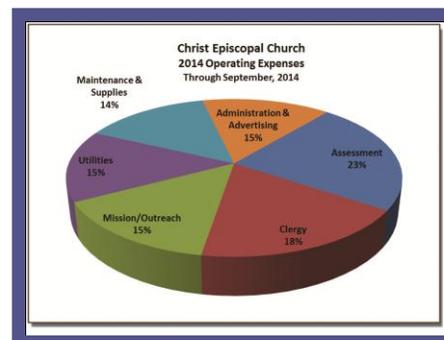
To help us in that endeavor, you should soon receive a letter asking for your assessment of what Christ Church parish should concentrate on doing in the name of the Lord in future months and what we should hope to accomplish with those activities. That letter will also ask you to give us some indication of what part you and your family are willing to play in striving to achieve those desired goals. Your Vestry asks that you give careful and prayerful consideration to these matters and return the requested information as soon as you are able so that we can make timely, useful and realistic plans reflecting your desires and proposals.

During the last month, we have done a considerable amount of planning and physical preparation for our new Children's Chapel program. By the time you receive this, the first such meeting will have been held in our Parish Hall and we have high hopes for the future. This effort is not just aimed at our own children of episcopal families. It came about when we came to realize that many of our contemporary American youth seem to be growing up relatively unaware of the foundational events, stories and traditions of our Judeo-Christian heritage, along with their meanings and spiritual significance. Our Children's Chapel is meant to be a rather ecumenical Christian response to that lack of awareness and we urge you to invite all of your friends with children to take part, regardless of their denominational background.

Janis Hansen has entered into another formal agreement extending her current service as Deacon in the Christ Church congregation until July. As we all know, she is currently a Postulant, hopefully soon to be a Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood. If all proceeds on an optimistic and much hoped for schedule, she would be ordained early in the summer of 2015. At the time, she would be eligible to enter into an agreement with Christ Church to become Priest-in-Charge of our church. The Vestry and Janis have begun discussions as to the particulars of such an arrangement. We are all quite hopeful and pleased with progress so far. We ask your prayers for the successful completion of all this process so that we can enter a new phase, full of promise and hope, in the life of our church.

Our Financial Picture

Debra McNeill



Get More Blessings from the Internet

Debra McNeill

One of the blessings of the internet is the little lift we get when an unexpected email from a friend pops up in our inbox, just reaching out to say hello. Another blessing is seeing photos on Facebook of dear friends or a special event, conjuring up old memories and warm feelings.

You can enjoy a few more of these blessings by subscribing to the Christ Church blog at www.rvec.org or giving a "Like" to the Christ Episcopal Church Facebook page. We promise not to fill your inbox with donation requests or minutiae. You'll get the latest news on events, copies of inspiring sermons (that you may have missed), and best of all – Episcopalian humor!

To sign up for the blog, just enter your email address in the box above the "Subscribe" button found on the right column of the home page. For Facebook, search for "Christ Episcopal Church" and click "Like". If you have any difficulties, please call Debra McNeill (684-5355) or Ashley Pairitz (596-7387) for advice.



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INVITE people into our midst
INCLUDE people in the life of the church
INFORM people about past events that shape our present,
and current events that shape our future
PROCLAIM the gospel in thought, word and deed
REJOICE in a new life found in Christ Jesus.

Mission Statement

To be formed as the body of Christ, seeking to love and serve one another and those in need.

Vision Statement

To be Christ's continued presence in the Ruby Valley by welcoming those who seek Christ, offering varied forms of services, reflecting our diversity while maintaining our Episcopal identity.

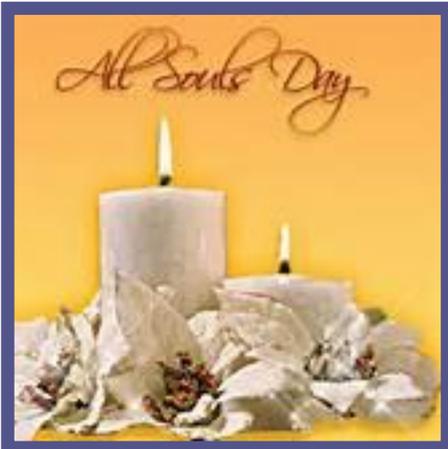
Service Leaders for November and December

Upcoming Service Leaders for November / December

- 2 Nov: Rev Bruce McNab
- 9 Nov: Morning Prayer {Deacon Janis Hansen}
- 16 Nov: Rev Jean McLean
- 23 Nov: Morning Prayer {Deacon Janis Hansen}
- 30 Nov: Rev Jean McLean (Advent I, Begin Year B)
- 7 Dec: Rev Jean McLean (Advent II)
- 14 Dec: Rev Jean McLean (Advent III, Bishop Visitation)

Upcoming Lectors for November / December

- 2 Nov: Don Snyder
- 9 Nov: Dave Hansen
- 16 Nov: Bill Callaway
- 23 Nov: George Rich
- 30 Nov: Dave Hansen
- 7 Dec: Alice Forwood
- 14 Dec: Sandra Baril



[All Souls Day](#)
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