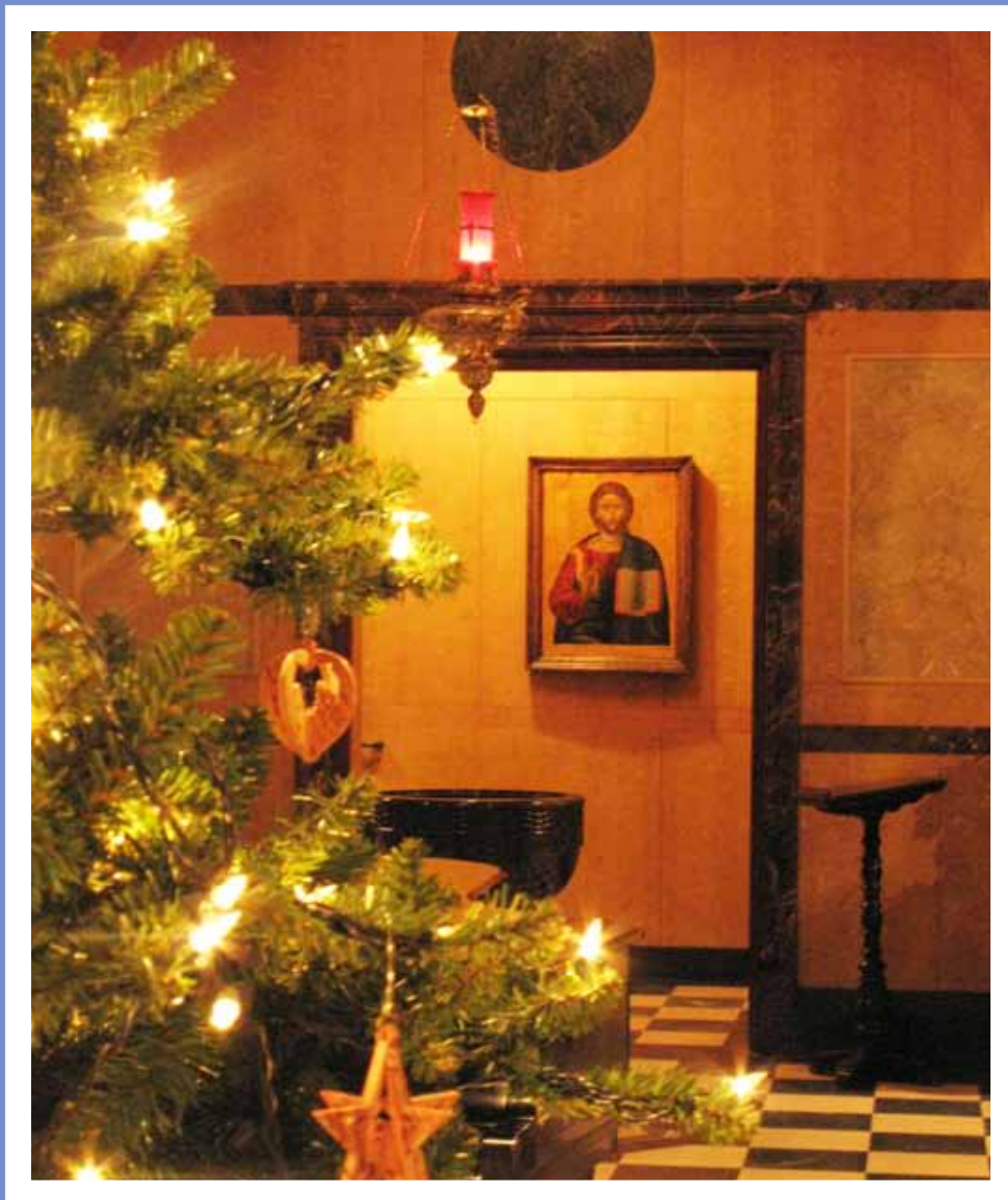


Mosaics

Life at Christ Church

2011-2012 - Issue 1



First Things...

Perhaps you have noticed that Christ Church communication instruments have been evolving. Responding to the dizzying changes in technology and resulting trends for staying informed and connected, over the past year we have revamped and updated our website and found our way onto Facebook and Twitter. You know about my weekly Faith Matters message and the occasional email blast announcing special Christ Church events and info. We are cleaning up the messaging you receive on Sundays and in general, we are experimenting with the best ways of staying connected and well-informed about all the goings-on here.

As a result of this evolution we are shifting the name, content and focus of our once-upon-a-time monthly newsletter. *Mosaics* will be assembled as a seasonal periodical in a magazine-like format featuring articles written by both members and staff about people, events, programs and ministry at Christ Church; less calendar, more thoughtful content. Primary dissemination will be digital, but you may request a hard copy to be sent to you by informing the church office. Hard copies will also be available at the church.

We want to remain sensitive to generational differences in matters of communication while creatively adapting to the technological and cultural changes that are evolving at an astonishing pace. In these matters we are likely a tad slower on the up-take than certain educational and business environments (not to mention kids), but then, we have a responsibility to a large, multi-generational family with at least a 2,000 year-old archive of information, memory and value.

Our physical presence on Park Avenue and 60th Street captures this reality—ancient iconography still providing sanctuary, meaning, challenge and hope in the 21st century. There is serendipity in the recognition that the classical art of mosaics nicely reflects the remarkable diversity among those who have been lured by the charisma of our family's namesake in the year 2011—a clever contemporary icon of our actual identity: Mosaics of Christ Church.

Here is a simple yet large aspiration: that the beauty of the mosaics covering our walls be reflected in the lives of those who gather in our sanctuary offering prayer and praise. May our loving God make it so.





Celebrate the Christmas Season With Us

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are ones of expectancy, hope and joy. With great spiritual optimism, Advent begins a time of preparation, a period of self-examination in which the believer sweeps his or her inner house clean in anticipation of receiving the long-awaited Messiah. Unexpectedly finding the babe lying in a crude animal trough, the celebration of his nativity begins in quiet wonder at such a holy mystery. The twelve days of Christmas set off a time of bliss and good cheer as Christians, reminded of their salvation, begin another year pondering this new thing that has come to pass.

Advent Sharing at the Methodist Home Saturday, December 3rd, 1:00 p.m.

The Christ Church family visits the Methodist Home for singing, crafts, and fellowship.

All are welcome! Contact Kathryn Carroll at Kathryn@christchurchnyc.org for more information.

Sunday Worship, December 4th, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Join us as we light the second candle in our Advent Wreath, a symbol of love.

Sunday Worship, December 11th, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

We light the third candle of Advent, symbolizing joy, and the Children's Choir present the musical, *The Tale of the Three Trees* at the 11:00 a.m. service.

The Blessing of the Animals Sunday, December 11th, 2:00 p.m.

Christ Church and the ASPCA host this service of blessing for all God's creatures.

Choir Concert, Friday, December 16th, 8:00 p.m.

Join the Christ Church family at our annual Choir Concert, followed by a reception in the Chapel.

Pageant Rehearsal, Saturday, December 17th

Contact Kathryn Carroll for more information about how you can participate in this year's pageant!

Sunday Worship, December 18th, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

The fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the last candle in the Advent Wreath, symbolizing peace. Following worship, we will gather in Phillips Hall for our Christmas Pageant.

Family Christmas Eve Service, Saturday December 24, 4:00 p.m.

Our family-oriented service will feature a Christmas story, singing, and communion.

Christmas Eve Festival Service, December 24th, 6:30 p.m.

In one of the loveliest services at Christ Church, the choir will sing, we will hear the good tidings for all people, and partake in communion together.

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th, 10:00 a.m.

We will combine our usual 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services on Christmas Day into one service at 10:00 a.m.

Watchnight, Saturday, December 31st, 6:30 p.m.

We celebrate the coming of the new year with this covenant renewal service.

Sunday Worship, Sunday, January 1st, 10:00 a.m.

Our 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services will be combined into one at 10:00 a.m. Join us as we enter a new year!



Finding a Spiritual Home

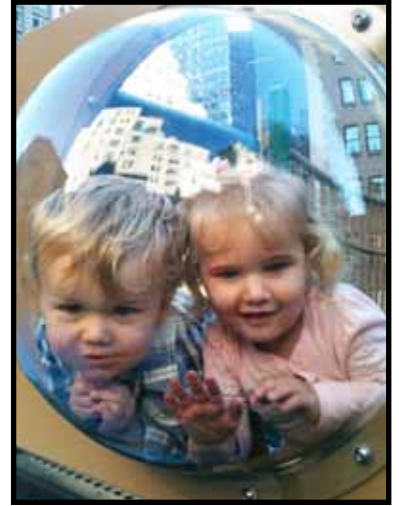
I came to Christ Church in the late fall of 2008, newly pregnant with our son, Riley. The timing could not have been more perfect. The Christmas story, a family looking for a home to bring their precious gift into the world, echoed loudly in my heart. And me, now a “we”, needed a spiritual home too.

After years of carefully building a city “family” – friends to act in place of relatives scattered across the country – I was surprised at how strongly I felt the need for a church family to help nurture a new soul (and a few old ones!) Over the past three years, we have watched our son grow up here. From feeling his kicks during the amazing arrangements by the choir, his beautiful baptism, and our relaxed weekly visits with the other moms and babies at playgroup, we have made this a home.

This city is a phenomenal place to come together with people of vastly different backgrounds, experiences, hopes, and dreams. Here we get that too, it is just that at church a common thread of faith and love unites us. It is that thread of faith that has bound us to new friends – the best kind of friends – the ones who see us as we are, and as we try to be. The kind of people you want your son to look up to, to listen to – to trust.

We are blessed to have found a new family, and a home...here.

Heather Maloy



Christmas Gift Drive for our Concourse House Neighbors



Help make Christmas a little cozier for the children and their mothers of Concourse House. Concourse House is a residential homeless facility in the Bronx for women and their children. Please sign up following the service to purchase a pair of pajamas and a small holiday gift for one of the children or a mother. Wrapping supplies and gift tags are provided at the sign-up table. Please return gifts to the church by December 18th. Contact Lynn O'Neil at lynnoneil@me.com with questions.

Christ Church Lay Leader Honored at Methodist Gala



The Methodist Home for Nursing and Rehabilitation celebrated its 160th Anniversary Gala on Thursday, October 20, 2011 at The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. Among the honorees of the evening was Christ Church Lay Leader, Dr. Dan Domingo, who was presented with the Home's Volunteer Service Award. Dan has been instrumental in the founding and expanding of Christ Church's relationship with the Methodist Home and our monthly programmatic activities with and for its residents.

In presenting the award, Methodist Home Board member and Christ Church member, Melissa Bauman said, "Dan and I have worked closely together to establish a relationship between the members of Christ Church and residents of the Home. Throughout this time I have witnessed firsthand his dedication, his gentleness, his deep intuition and conscientiousness, and his desire to make a difference in this world and in the lives of our residents."

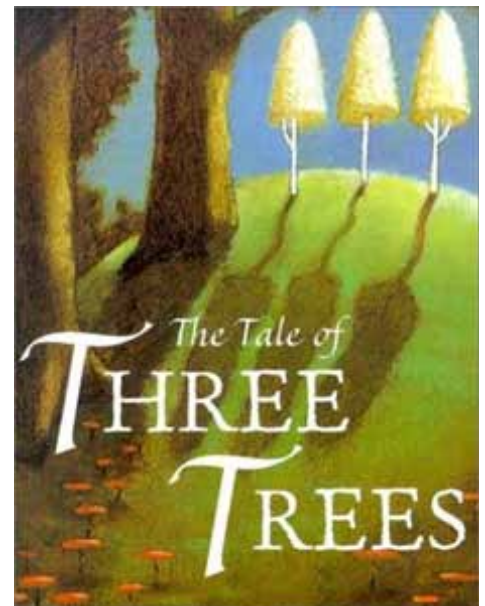
Tucked away in the Fieldston community of Riverdale, the Methodist Home is a 120-bed, skilled nursing facility combining a historic residence with some of the most modern and comprehensive short-term rehabilitation and long-term care offerings available anywhere to meet the evolving needs of today's aging population.

We congratulate our Lay Leader for this distinction and welcome new volunteers into the ministry at the Methodist Home. If you are interested in learning more about how to get involved, please contact Melissa Bauman at mbauman@townschool.org or Dan Domingo at danddvm@gmail.com.

Children's Choirs present: The Tale of the Three Trees

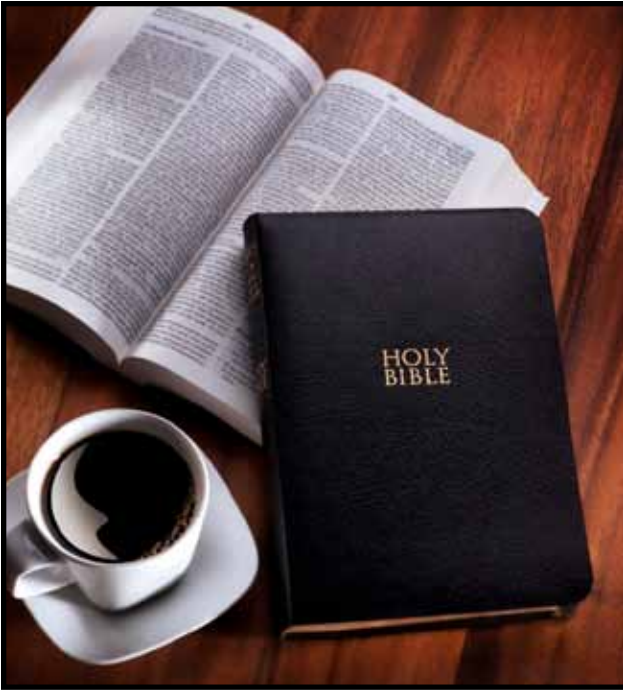
December 11th at the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up. The first little tree looked up at the stars and said: "I want to hold treasure. I want to be covered with gold and filled with precious stones. I'll be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world!" The second little tree looked out at the small stream trickling by on its way to the ocean. "I want to be traveling mighty waters and carrying powerful kings. I'll be the strongest ship in the world!" The third little tree looked down into the valley below where busy men and women worked in a busy town. "I don't want to leave the mountain top at all. I want to grow so tall that when people stop to look at me they'll raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world."



Do the dreams of the trees come true? Find out on Sunday, December 11th at the 11:00 a.m. worship service as the children's choirs portray the story in a fun and dramatic musical production. Neal Young plays the Narrator and members of the children's choir act, speak, sing and play the parts of the trees and other familiar characters. The production will be the culmination of nearly three months of preparation by the children's choirs. We hope you can join us!

My Year in a Connection Group



When I first came to Christ Church in the fall of 2007, I was told in all of my introductions to the church that there were these things called Covenant Groups (now called Connection Groups). At the time, I was more or less getting involved with everything I could to see what I liked, and I put my name on a list. A few years passed without my giving much thought to covenant groups. I knew people in groups. Once I even went on a retreat to see what the whole thing was about. I liked the throwback to John Wesley's small study groups. But I was not altogether sure how to go about getting into one, or if I wanted to be in one at all.

I am by nature not overly "sharing." I do very well in academic settings where I can read, contemplate, and talk about thinking. But for most of my life I have not been good at talking about feelings and emotional reactions to things. I was a little concerned that if I were in a small group, I would have to have such conversations. As a result, I did not pursue joining one very determinedly.

Then last winter I got an email from a young woman at church that I had never met. She was thinking about starting a group and Cathy had referred her to me, given that I was at a similar phase in life as this woman. I was a little apprehensive about accepting the invitation (I did not know anyone in the proposed group, and as I said, I am not such a comfortably intimate person). But I thought about it for a while and decided it was time to stretch my natural character a bit. I decided it would be good for me to have a small, loving place to unfold in.

I could not be happier that I accepted the invitation. We have a great group of 5 young women—all in different types of professions but actively trying to reconcile work life and Christian life. When we want to be academic and philosophical, we can be academic and philosophical together. When we just want a place to come for support and clarity, we can give that to each other. Even when some schedules get crazy, smaller sets of us meet and we send emails around to one another. The most important thing is that we are all in this together, living in this crazy city, trying to make it as young women, trying to make it as professionals, trying to make it as Christians. Since we are a Connection Group, we have a degree of organized stability that informal groups of friends do not have. I think this fact has made my own life experience much easier and more comfortable. Because the group is deliberate, there is a very high level of trust, even though none of us knew each other before we joined together.

It has been a wonderful year in my little group. It is just another way Christ Church has made my life in New York so much more fulfilling and enjoyable. The classes have expanded my mind. The music programs have expanded my social circle and my joy. The outreach programs have filled me up when everything else has drained me. But my Connection Group has done all of these things at once.

~Rebecca Grudzina

The Youth Help To Rebuild New Orleans

In July, the Christ Church youth group went on a weeklong service trip to New Orleans in order to help with the ongoing Hurricane Katrina recovery. Through all the joys and frustrations of being around the same people 24 hours a day and the ups and downs of working on hot summer days, the ten youth managed to scrape, caulk, prime, and paint the base coat on the outside of a homeowner's house. Listening to people's stories and working hard to help someone else made an impression on the group and helped them to explore how to love God and neighbor.

We would like to share some of the youth's experiences in their own words.



On working on the house:

I was working vigorously, often skipping breaks and only drinking water when I was excruciatingly thirsty. Why? Because the home owner, Dipo, and the construction worker, Pastor Nick, did not want the best, they wanted what we could do. Because of this, I worked even harder to make his house beautiful. Dipo and Pastor Nick learned all of our names in four days, they knew what we were good at and even what we liked to do back home, and they often talked to us about it as well. On our final day there, I did not want to go, just so I could sit in front of Dipo's house to show him what it looks like after all our work.

~Theo Rice

My favorite part of trip was when the owner came home while we were cleaning up. He looked at the house and smiled. After I saw his smile, I smiled as well and I knew that I had done a very good job. That was the proudest moment of my life.

~Harris Russell

On the trip I learned some new skills while working on houses. Seeing the owner Dipo's smile at our work always helped us feel like we were accomplishing something great. The best part was working. It got us all trying to help each other to do the best job that teens can. The last day was the best. We started the base coat of paint and finished the whole house with it. I also learned about stories of the people who stayed in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina. The man helping us, Pastor Nick, told us his story. It was a great trip and I hope to come again.

~Nick Warner



On having fun:

Playing football and basketball with the other church youth groups was fun, and I hope all three church groups can come back at the same time to the Annunciation.

~Josh Dacres

Dipo, the homeowner, even invited us over to dinner! Dinner was really good. We played New Orleans music and did a conga line.

~Grace Kurka

Many people in New York are used to ignoring everything and just getting to where they need to go. The hospitality and welcoming here in New Orleans is not hidden. Here, people recognize faces and know names. I will truly miss “N’awlins.”

~Bob O’Neil

On lessons learned:

Most of all, I liked the moral satisfaction of the work. Dipo, the homeowner, gives so much to his community and we were giving to him by painting his house. Every night when we came back after our evening fiascoes, I found myself feeling good and full, morally satisfied. I felt like I had accomplished something that actually means a lot for someone who deserves it. It is a feeling of completion and accomplishment on a larger scale than just the feeling I get after a paper for school is completed. It is a feeling I want to experience a lot more.

~Kat Retting

The destruction Hurricane Katrina caused was not fun to look at, but seeing it was a learning experience. For one thing, we had to work our butts off. It was probably more work than what I have to do over a time span of two months. But as the director of Annunciation said, “there is always someone who has it worse than you.” We are learning how lucky we are.

~Liam Carroll

This trip to New Orleans really opened my eyes to really a whole new perspective. Before this trip I would be rude to people who were only trying to help. But after this trip I realized that it is nice to, well, be nice because you never know what someone has been through. Another thing I learned on this trip was that there are many people who want to share their story. They could pretty much provide us with wisdom that we could not get from someone else.

~Emily D’Angelica

What I learned on this trip is that God is in every moment of life. He is in the happy ones but also in the sad ones.

~Ian Goldstein



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS FLOWERS & MUSIC

During Advent and Christmas, it is our tradition at Christ Church to decorate our worship space with poinsettias and evergreens and to have special festival music programs.

If you would like to make a monetary contribution to this seasonal celebration, please complete this form and return it with your check no later than December 19th to the church office:
520 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065.

Dedications will be listed in the worship bulletin beginning December 24th and throughout the Christmas season.

GIVEN BY: _____

IN THANKSGIVING FOR: _____

OR IN MEMORY OF: _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

(Please PRINT all information to insure accuracy.)

20 CONCERT

A Christ Church Christmas Spectacular

Music for 8-part Brass Choir featuring the Christ Church Choir, Parish Choir, and Handbell Choir with additional music for organ played by Ryan Jackson including extracts from Tchaikovsky's famous Nutcracker ballet.

Steve Pilkington, Director of Music
Ryan Jackson, Director of the Parish Choir and Organist
Cory Davis, Director of Handbells

Join all these exceptional musicians for a concert filled with joyful, inspiring and festive music in the candlelit beauty of Christ Church's magnificent sanctuary. An elegant reception follows the concert in the chapel.

Friday December 16th at 8:00 p.m.. Tickets are available for \$15.00 at the door or in advance from the church office.



Christ Church ★ 520 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065 ★ 212-838-3036 ★ www.christchurchnyc.org