

THE MESSENGER

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, EAST NORWALK, CONNECTICUT

NOVEMBER A.D. 2019—VOLUME 1, No. 3



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FROM FATHER IAN:

Being Missional – and what it means for us!

What the heck does “Missional” mean? Bishop Douglas (The Bishop of Connecticut) has used the word “missional” in communications, talks and sermons for many years.

The Latin word *Missio* means “I send” from it we get the word “mission” what we are sent to do. The *Missio Dei* “The Mission of God” is what God is doing and sends us to do with Him. The mission of God, broadly and simply put is to Restore all Creation. To what? To that perfect (complete) state of unity with God that is described in the first verses of the Book of Genesis – before the “Fall” – Adam. Eve. Apple. Serpent. Goodbye Eden. Sin, murder, flood, death, exile....you get the picture.

As Christians we believe that all can be restored through the saving power of God incarnate, Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again so that all might live and live eternally.

Attractional – v – Missional approach to being the Church

Attractional – BAD. Our job locally is to discern our role in God’s mission. The Vestry and a few others, this summer, worked with Alan Roxburgh’s book “**Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World**”. In the first part of this very good book, he notes that all churches have declined in membership by massive numbers since about 1960. The Episcopal Church is one third to one half the size it once was here in America. The other thing he notes is that during that time the response of church leaders has been, if I can borrow some secular terms, simply to re-package the same old product and re-brand it and give it newer cooler slogans and jingles and logos and hope this will attract more people.

During this same time period we experienced a period of decline at Christ Church that was in excess of the national average. The “Attractional

Church” acts in what I would call the “Field of Dreams” approach – “If I build it they will come.” In other words, “If I have a great event or organist or website or sign.....more people will come and want to help us pay the light bill and fix the boiler.” It hasn’t happened in 20 years – 40 years really – and it won’t happen next year! That’s the bad news.

Missional – GOOD. The good news is that we know what doesn’t work , so we start by changing our approach, which gives us time and energy to do new things.

The missional approach is not to “keep it together” and “struggle to do what we have always done” The missional approach is to unload our baggage (reference last Sunday’s sermon about the camel needing to be unloaded to pass through the narrow gate into the City of Jerusalem just as we do to enter the Kingdom of God) as a congregation to give us the space and time and energy to try new things allowing us to discern, adjust and try again.

Within the missional approach, we begin to identify where God is already at work in the community and join him there. Rather than inviting people to do things with us here, we join them where they are. In essence, rather than leading a horse to water, we join the horse where he is on his journey and begin to build relationship. Then, after relationships have been established, we do things together either here OR there.

An example of this approach at work is found in the “She Mattered” event we hosted last month. Joyce Generoso was looking for where God was at work in the Community. She read an article in the Norwalk Hour about a program dealing with bullying and suicide among young teens. She contacted the woman running the program and began a conversation. We met with her and with local mental health professionals to discern the need for the message to be spread. Next, we invited her onto campus along with folks from the community and local

churches and 20 people attended a seminar where God was at work within our community.

Later this month and next month you will hear more about a major new missional initiative that the Mission Team is currently exploring for feasibility, and will be presenting to the Vestry. It will be a major extension of our campus into the community, and we will be seeking funding in 2020 through both grants and donations. It is in response to where YOU have said you have seen God at work in the neighborhood and where you have felt God's love flowing through you while here at Christ Church and taking the best of what has revitalized a church in the neighborhood and bringing it here.

Father Ian B. Montgomery
Priest-in-Charge

WHO'S WHO IN THE PEW:

Nancy Pratt, a lifetime parishioner and member of our Christ Church Family, was born and raised in Norwalk. She recalls how her mother (raised in the Anglican Tradition in Nova Scotia) and her Father, a Methodist, found Christ Church while visiting here when Father Perry



Miller was rector. Nancy defined those days growing up in Christ Church by the dances, the sleep overs and the activities that were held for the very large Youth presence at Church. Nancy attended Norwalk schools and left for college in Massachusetts after graduating from Norwalk High School. She resided there for 9 years before returning to Norwalk to settle here and marry her husband Bill whom she met when he purchased her grandmother's house in Norwalk.

Nancy leads the Mentor Program for the Human Services Council here in Norwalk. She has

become an invaluable link to the parish in finding volunteer opportunities in our local community. Several Parishioners have become Mentors with Nancy's group, and continue the important work as Mentors for children who might otherwise be at risk in our Norwalk Public School system. Nancy truly loves her job and is quick to say it is her life, and it keeps her quite busy.

In her spare time she enjoys traveling down to Jupiter Fl where she has a home that was formerly her parent's. Her parents were long-time friends with Evelynne and Wally Bates who were also parishioners of Christ Church and Nancy sees them regularly when she vacations in Jupiter where they make their permanent home.

When I asked Nancy what keeps her at Christ Church, she didn't hesitate to give me the answer: "it's my family". She enjoys the close relationships she has made in her time here and being a part of all the activities hosted over the years at Christ Church. During her many years here, Nancy has been a nursery school teacher, the women's group President, part of the Altar Guild, and a long time Vestry member. We appreciate and applaud you Nancy, thank you for everything you do!

MISSION TEAM:

The Mission Team hosted the "She Mattered" event on October 23, 2019 to discuss and explore the areas of bullying and suicide. Deborah Berman shared her experiences and knowledge with the group on what can be done to help those who are struggling with these issues. It was a timely informative event with interactive learning for teens, parents and educators alike. There was strong input from the teens, and questions on addressing those issues for parents. I believe this event was a good way to bring us into the community, and that it will lead us to-

ward hosting other important albeit difficult topics going forward.

The Mission committee is currently working on the Wellness Fair scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2020.

We are in the preliminary stages of figuring out how many vendors we can accommodate. Paul got clearance from Wells Fargo Bank to use their lot for parking and he discussed them being a sponsor for our event.

The next step is to contact the vendors and invite them. We have a whole list to choose from when Paul and I visited the Heath & Wellness Fair at Harbor Point Marina in Stamford a couple of months ago.

Once we have an idea of how many are committed we will report back how much we plan to make at the fair.

Additional we are exploring the possibility of hosting an "Education for Ministry" group here for our parishioners, and parishioners from our sister churches in Fairfield County. There will be more on this over the next couple of months as we define our intentions.

PROGRAM TEAM:

The program team is actively working on the following parish events:

Veteran's Day Service and Pot Luck Coffee hour Nov 9th. November is Stewardship Month - Liz Conti, George Helwig and Bunny Zamm will speak on Sundays during November regarding Stewardship. Stewardship Sunday Parish Brunch Nov 24th. Living Nativity on Dec 1st, Bishop Visitation on Dec 8th, Christmas Fair Dec 14th.

The Women's group is preparing for and coordinating the Stewardship Sunday Brunch along with holding a Thanksgiving Basket Raffle, tickets are on sale as of 11/3 with the drawing at the

Parish Brunch 11/24. The Women's Group will also host the luncheon on 12/8 for the Bishop's visit.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT CYCLE OF PRAYER:

Nov. 3 - Holy Spirit, West Haven; St. Paul's, Westbrook; Emmanuel, Weston All deacons and the Deacons' Council.

Nov. 10 - Christ & Holy Trinity, Westport; Trinity, Wethersfield; St. Paul's, Willimantic, St. Matthew's, Wilton

All women's ministries and the Girl's Friendly Society

Nov. 17 - St. Paul's, Windham; Grace Church, Windsor; St. James', Winsted; All Saints', Wolcott

Ministries with older adults; the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and the Daughters of the King

Nov. 24 - St. Paul's, Woodbury; St. John the Evangelist, Yalesville; Grace Church, Yantic

The health and well-being of persons employed by The Episcopal Church; the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies of The Episcopal Church.



WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday	8am – Said Eucharist
	10am – Sung Eucharist
Monday	7:30pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
	8:30pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
Tuesday	7:30pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
	8:45pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
Wednesday	6:30pm – Yoga with Joyce (<i>except 27th</i>) – Parish Hall
Thursday	8:30pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
Friday	8:30pm – Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall
Saturday	12Noon– Recovery Unlimited Group – Parish Hall

NOVEMBER CALENDAR ITEMS

(in addition to weekly events listed above)

Wednesday, November 27th	10am	Autumn Lake Service
Wednesday November 6 th	1-7pm	Laundry Love – Giant Laundry

USHERS & READERS (& PRAYERS) AT 10AM:

November 3- Peter
November 10-Anita
November 17-Barb
November 24-Lou

CHURCH LEADERSHIP & VESTRY MEMBERS

The Reverend Ian Montgomery, *Priest-in-Charge*, 917-470-9623
Lisa Helwig, *Church School*, 203.354.0724
Bunny Zamm: *Church Administrator, Program Team Co-chair*, 203.853.3004
Liz Conti, *Warden, Program Team Chair*, 203.515.7778
George Helwig, *Warden, Property & Finance Team Co-chair*, 203.354.0724,
Debbie Ross - *Treasurer* 203.219.9054
Bridget Pritchard, *Clerk* 203-856-7589
Kim Harris, (2020) 203.919.2478
Paul Mordoff, (2020) 203.919.6765
Jamie Kircher, *Mission Team Co-chair* (2021) 203.247.2561
Tina Soleng, (2021) .246.0478
Joyce Generoso *Program Team Chair* (2022) 203.984.3050
Alan Singewald *Property & Finance Team Co-chair*, (2022) 203.984.3457