

Christ Church Easton Parish Manual

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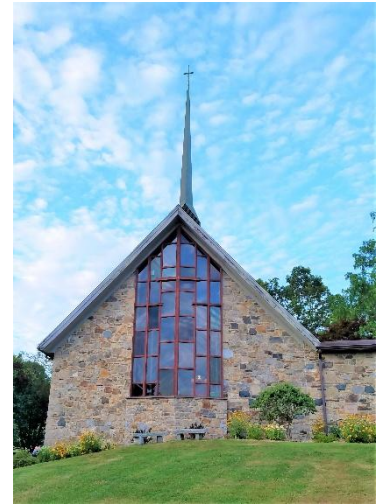
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I. Welcome & Mission

1. Welcome from the Priest-in-Charge (Mission, Vision, and Core Values)

Welcome to Christ Easton! We are delighted that you are here.

In our community, all are welcome at God's table. We believe that the love and grace of God belong to everyone. We are a small and welcoming congregation with a big heart for our Easton community and beyond. Our mission is to reach out, especially to those in need, and to live out Christ's message of compassion and inclusion.

The following manual is designed to help you become familiar with our practices and traditions. However, please know that we always prefer personal conversation. If you have questions about our church or the Episcopal beliefs and traditions, we would love to talk with you in person. — The Rev. Katy Herron-Piazza

2. History of Christ Church Easton (*Source: the Archives of ECCT*)

Christ Church, initially called "The Episcopal Society of North Fairfield," was organized between 1762-1763 as a mission of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" or SPG. (The SPG was the Church of England's official missionary organization during the 1700s, and among other responsibilities, the organization helped establish churches and schools in the original thirteen colonies in North America. Christ Church's first building was erected in November of 1762 and known as "North Fairfield Episcopal Church at Gilbert-town" or "Gilbert-town Church". Described as a rude, wooden frame structure, it was never completely finished, nor painted or plastered. The building had large galleries on three sides and two tiers of windows, one below and one above the galleries.

The church's first rector, Reverend Philo Shelton, served from 1784-1812. A graduate of Yale College (class of 1775), Rev. Shelton, the first Episcopal minister ordained in the United States, was ordained by Bishop Samuel Seabury (the first American Episcopal bishop).

After incorporation of the Town of Weston in 1787, the western part of the parish separated to become "The Episcopal Society of Weston."

The original Gilberttown building was destroyed by a fire in 1850. In 1851, after the incorporation of the Town of Easton in 1845, the church changed its name to "Christ Episcopal Church, Easton," by act of the general assembly.

After a period of financial hardship, a replacement church building was eventually constructed in 1873 and consecrated in December 1874. This building was located near Staples Academy on Westport Road, near Easton Center. Built in the neo-Gothic style, this wooden frame building had a tower and one bell.

Although the parish has always been rather small, the Christ Church congregation in Easton eventually outgrew the small Westport Road building. This building was eventually de-sanctified and became a private residence. Christ Church's current building at 59 Church Road was dedicated in 1959.

Note: a series of articles pertaining to the history racism in Christ Church, written by a former Priest-in-Charge, is available on our website.

3. Episcopal Identity

The Episcopal Church is a Protestant Church organized following the American Revolution in a break from the Church of England. It adheres to the ancient creeds and theology of the Christian tradition. The Episcopal Church considers itself catholic, meaning “universal,” and offering the traditional sacraments, but also Protestant in the focus on scripture and the inclusion of lay people in the governance of the church. Christ Church is a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut (ECCT) which is headquartered at The Commons, 290 Pratt Street, Box 52, Meriden CT 06450. Tel: 203-639-3501. The Diocese holds an annual convention every fall to which we send 2 delegates. These delegates (plus one alternate) are elected at our annual meeting. At the convention, they vote on resolutions proposed by laity and clergy.

The Bishop Diocesan and the Suffragan Bishops hold Zoom meetings with the Wardens and Clergy on Wednesday mornings at 8:30. The first and third Wednesdays are for Clergy and Wardens, the second Wednesday for all Wardens, and the fourth Wednesday for Wardens without settled Clergy. The Diocese is a part of The Episcopal Church (TEC), which is comprised of 109 dioceses in 17 nations and territories. TEC is led by the Presiding Bishop, who is elected for a 9-year term by both clergy and lay delegates at the general convention. TEC, while an independent body, is a part of the Anglican Communion, which is comprised of 42 member churches and includes about 90 million faithful.

Our parish is governed by the parish bylaws, which are included in the appendix.

II. Parish Life & Worship

1. Worship Services Overview

Our services begin at 9:30 am during the year and move to 9 am during the summer under the tent, weather permitting.

Holy Eucharist

Holy Eucharist is usually celebrated at least twice a month, following Rite II from the *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*, *Enriching Our Worship*, *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* or other sources approved by the Suffragan Bishop. Eucharists employ a subdeacon and acolytes as available.

Hymns and sung service music (Gloria, Fraction Anthem, etc.) are taken from the *1982 Hymnal*, *Wonder Love and Praise*, *Lift Every Voice and Sing* or other approved sources. The music is prepared by the Music Minister in consultation with the Rector.

Morning Prayer

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On Sundays without Eucharist services, Morning Prayer is led by one of the lay leaders who has been through the training and received a license from ECCT. We follow Rite II from the BCP and the lectionary prescribed for the day, usually staying on Track I, unless there is an important reason for deviating to Track II. The lay leader will also preach if they have been through preacher training and have been licensed by the diocese. The Parish Administrator will prepare the booklet unless the lay leader chooses to do so, in which case the booklet should be emailed to the administrator for printing by the Monday before the service.

Special services are celebrated for Christmas Eve, the Feast of St. Francis (Blessing of the Animals), and other occasions.

Service Bulletins

Service bulletins are prepared by the Parish Administrator in two versions: full and abbreviated.

The **full bulletin** includes the music and is emailed in advance as well as printed out for the Celebrant, Music Minister and Subdeacon. The administrator posts this full version on the website as a Word document and sends out via our email service in PDF format.

An **abbreviated version** of the bulletin is prepared for the congregation with the lectionary for the day, page numbers for the Book of Common Prayer and 1982 Hymnal, and announcements for the week.

For summer services, the full bulletin is printed for all attendees, in lieu of using hymnals and prayer books outdoors.

Hymns that are not included in the 1982 hymnal are printed as handouts and placed as an insert in the bulletin. Service music is printed on handouts using cardstock and placed in the pew racks for the appropriate season.

The **parish prayer list** is generated by the administrator, having received requests from parishioners. Names remain on the list for 4 weeks unless otherwise requested.

The **announcements** are also generated by the administrator, in consultation with the Rector/Senior Warden.

Worship Schedule

The Parish Administrator coordinates the worship schedule and assigns lectors, subdeacons, preachers, acolytes (when available), and lay leaders. This schedule is reviewed by the Rector, Priest-in-Charge or Senior Warden. In the case of scheduling conflicts, it is the responsibility of the individual to find a replacement and to notify the church office so that the proper name may be printed in the bulletin.

Liturgical Seasons

The Episcopal Church follows the Liturgical seasons of Advent (Purple), Christmas and Epiphany (White), Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday (Purple), Pentecost (Red), Ordinary Time (Green). During Lent the Christus Rex and all crosses are veiled in Purple; Palm Sunday veiled in Red. During Lent and especially on Good Friday, the practice has been to observe the Stations of the Cross.

Liturgical Assistants

Liturgical Assistants consist of Lectors, Subdeacons, and Acolytes.

Lectors are sent the lectionary readings ahead of time and should spend time practicing by reading aloud to ensure the correct pronunciations and proper inflection to best convey the meaning of the scriptures.

Subdeacons are assistants at the altar. They process in front of the priest, sit to the right of the priest, read the Prayers of the People, accept the offertory, assist with the preparation and cleanup of communion, and act as Chalice Bearer.

Acolytes at Christ Church include adults and young people (Grade 3 and older). Acolytes may serve in the following capacities:

Bookbearer – Beginner Acolytes bear the Gospel Book in Procession and hold the Gospel Book during the reading.

Crucifer – Acolytes who are physically capable of carrying the Processional Cross may serve in this capacity. Smaller Acolytes may bear the wooden Church School Cross.

Server – Acolytes who have been confirmed or are preparing for confirmation may serve the Priest at the Altar.

Torchbearers – Acolytes who are physically capable of carrying the Processional Torches may serve in this capacity.

Thurifer – An Acolyte who is qualified as a Server may function in this capacity provided a thurible is available for incense.

At the 9:30 am Eucharist, there might be a Crucifer, Torchbearers, Server, and Bookbearer.

Manuals have been prepared for the roles of Crucifer, Torchbearers, Bookbearer, and Server. In-person training will be conducted by the Rector or volunteer in charge of acolytes.

2. Music & Choir Ministries

The Music Minister chooses the appropriate hymns for each service in consultation with the Rector/ Lay leader using the *Episcopal Musician's Handbook* as a guide. The Music Minister plays the keyboard accompaniment, rehearses the choir, hires or assigns soloists, works with instrumentalists, arranges music as needed, and researches new anthems. The Minister organizes the files of sheet music. The choir vests for Eucharist services in the church except in the summer. Anyone wishing to join the choir should speak to our Minister of Music.

Occasionally, when the music minister is unavailable, old time Gospel Music may be used with the accompaniment of guitar, fiddle, and banjo, utilizing the Bridgeport Rescue Mission Gospel Hymn Book.

3. Children & Youth Programs

We consider ourselves a child-friendly place where children's voices are enjoyed and not frowned upon. There is a section in the back of the church with rocking chairs, children's books, and a coloring

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table with crayons. Once a month, the parish offers a family service where we have a children's sermon and do crafts in the rear of the church.

When we have parent volunteers who have completed Safe Church training, we have a more formal Sunday School program for young people.

As outlined above in "Liturgical Assistants," children in grades 3 and above may serve as acolytes.

4. Adult Formation & Bible Study

We have a Church Book Group that meets by Zoom where we discuss a current title that relates to our contemporary spiritual life. Usually, we read a chapter or two a week and may meet for 5 or 6 weeks. Bible studies are organized around themes: the Psalms, Women in the Bible, etc. Adult Ed may be led by the Rector or a lay leader.

5. Sacraments & Rites (Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Funerals)

Baptism

When a family wants to have a child baptized, they will be invited to talk to the priest and receive instructions on how to proceed. The family will choose two Christian sponsors to be godparents to help guide the growing child in faith. All baptized children may receive Communion regardless of age.

Confirmation

As a child matures in age and understanding, they may request the sacrament of Confirmation which is usually done for high school aged persons. Also, an adult who has been confirmed in another faith may request to be received into the Episcopal Church when a bishop visits the parish. Confirmands, (candidates for confirmation), whether youth or adults, undergo a specific education that helps to prepare them for a full life in the Holy Spirit and the church. Young people may join with other congregations for preparation and participate in a confirmand retreat at Camp Washington. The Confirmations may take place during a Bishop's visit or during regional confirmation services.

Weddings

Those couples requesting to be married in our church shall contact our rector to discuss dates and wedding ceremony details. Guidelines outlined on the ECCT website (episcopalct.org/marriages-in-ecct/) shall be followed.

Wedding-Related Fees – For Parishioners:

Rector or supply priest: no fee for the parish priest; if supply priest, fee to be negotiated with the supply priest

Organist: \$300 (paid directly)

Church: \$500 (requested donation for use of church)

Wedding-Related Fees – For Non-Parishioners:

Rector or supply priest: priest fee to be negotiated

Organist: \$300 (paid directly)

Church: \$700 (requested donation for use of church)

Typically, decorating the church is the responsibility of the wedding couple but if requested, our Altar Guild will decorate. The wedding couple is responsible for any costs incurred for the decorations.

Funerals/Memorial Services

When a family requests a memorial service or funeral, they will meet with the Rector/Senior Warden and follow the planning guide for appropriate scriptural readings and music from the *1982 Hymnal, Wonder, Love, and Praise, Lift Every Voice and Sing* or other sacred sources. All burials will be noted in the Parish Register.

While there is no set fee for the priest, an honorarium is customary. If a supply priest is required, the usual honorarium is \$300, paid directly to the priest. If the family requests music, the organist fee is \$300 and paid directly to the organist. A soloist may be requested but the fee will be determined at the time. The engraving on the stone is an extra charge set by the monument company.

The bulletin will be prepared by the Parish Administrator and printed on the office copier. If they prefer a more stylized look, the family may send the bulletin to a local printer.

When a funeral director requests a service in the funeral home rather than a church, a priest or lay leader may perform the service based on the rites in the Book of Common Prayer. An honorarium of \$300 is customary.

The **Memorial Garden** was created in 1996 in loving memory of parishioners and relatives of parishioners who have finished their life on earth. The Garden is a place for quiet meditation and celebration of life. The Memorial Garden is available for members of the parish and their families with a customary donation of \$300. Only ashes may be interred; no containers, urns, or boxes are permitted. The names of all who are interred in the Garden are to be recorded in the parish register.

We have prepared a **pre-planning guide** for folks to spend time thinking about what they would like for their memorial service. It is a gift we give to our families ahead of a difficult time and is available on our website.

III. Pastoral Care & Support

1. Pastoral Visitation, Blessings, and Home Communion

Hospital Visiting

Most Christ Church parishioners go to either of two hospitals: Bridgeport Hospital or St. Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport. Some also go to Danbury Hospital or Yale New Haven Hospital.

Bridgeport Hospital does not notify the church if a parishioner is a patient. The most effective way to be notified that a parishioner is a patient is for the parishioner, or family of same, to notify the church office.

St. Vincent's will occasionally send a postcard to notify Christ Church of parishioners who are patients. However, this card is usually received several days after the patient has been admitted and thus may be received after the patient has been discharged. Again, the most effective way to be notified that a parishioner is a patient is for the parishioner, or family of same, to notify the church office. Eucharistic Lay Visitors may bring Communion to hospitalized patients.

Home-bound Parishioners

Licensed Eucharistic Lay Visitors, after having completed Safe Church training are authorized to bring Communion to home-bound parishioners. They will work in pairs and usually travel following the Sunday service. Anyone wishing to receive this Ministry for themselves or a family member should notify the church office.

Requested Blessings

When a parishioner moves into a new home, they may request a priest to provide a House Blessing included in the *Book of Occasional Services*.

A Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child or Adoption of a Child may also be requested, either at the hospital or with relatives after the parent(s) returns home.

2. Caregiving and Crisis Support Resources

Pastoral counseling is available by appointment with the Rector. This is to support spiritual growth and guidance and is not meant to replace mental health care, which might be recommended by the Rector. Anyone in danger of self-harm should call a crisis hotline 988 or 911.

IV. Parish Governance

1. The Rector or Priest-in-Charge

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge is the spiritual leader of the parish. It is their role to perform the sacramental rites that ordination prescribes. Besides directing the worship, the priest oversees the staff, the Vestry, and parish financial structures to ensure that the leadership is focused on the mission of the gospel and acts accordingly. Along with the Wardens, the priest shares responsibilities for job descriptions, performance reviews, expanding leadership roles, conducting adult formation and children's religious education.

The priest has the primary responsibility of pastoral care, conducting home and hospital visits when required, and recruits and assists a team of Eucharistic visitors. Counseling should be conducted with an eye to refer to a professional when it is deemed necessary. The priest also represents the parish at interfaith and community groups when opportunities arise.

Our rectory is rented out for additional income, so the priest is responsible for their own housing with the stipend recommended by ECCT. The priest has the use of all the grounds and facilities of the parish.

2. Parish Bylaws & Organizational Structure (Annual Meeting Procedures)

The Parish is governed by the Parish Bylaws, which are found in the appendix. The bylaws may be amended by a vote at the Annual Meeting or at a special meeting, called with notice to the parish members.

Annual Meeting Procedures

The Annual Meeting is a review of the vitality of the parish and activities from the past year. Reports are due from each committee two weeks before the actual meeting, which is usually held in February during Sunday Service. The reports are emailed to the congregation and posted on the website a week before the meeting, so that parishioners may take time to review and formulate questions. Reports include the following: minutes from the previous year (including the previous year's sermon), Treasury/Stewardship, Building and Grounds, Altar Guild, Mission and Outreach, Music Ministry, and CCNS. Votes to approve the minutes from the previous year, the new year's budget, Vestry nominations, diocesan delegates, and any revision to the Parish bylaws must be moved, seconded, and recorded. Minutes are kept and archived in the cloud (Google Drive).

3. The Vestry

The Vestry consists of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer, Secretary, and at-large members and acts as the Board of Directors for the parish. Vestry meetings are generally held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, either in-person or on Zoom. All vestry members are required to take the Safe Church training provided by ECCT and to renew it every three years.

Each vestry member receives a copy of *Vestry Resource Guide* published by Episcopal Church Foundation to ground them in this important ministry and agree to the Vestry Covenant which governs our relationships. Vestry members generally serve a three-year term. All new members also receive a copy of the Parish Bylaws (see Appendix).

Roles & Responsibilities

The Vestry is led by the Senior Warden along with the Junior Warden. The **Senior Warden** works in close partnership with the Rector and runs the Vestry meetings. The **Junior Warden** oversees the Building and Grounds Committee. Both are legal representatives and may sign all contracts relating to the church.

The **Treasurer** creates and maintains the budget, issues all checks, and works with both the Parish Administrator, who updates Quickbooks, and with the Bookkeeper, who reconciles the books with our bank statements. The Treasurer gives a financial report at each Vestry meeting and a Quarterly review four times a year.

The **Clerk** keeps the minutes of the meetings and sends them to the Senior Warden for proofreading and then emails them to the entire vestry as well as to the parish administrator, who archives them in the cloud. The Clerk also keeps record of any votes taken. A Parochial Report must be filed with

ECCT annually before March 1 and will be signed by the officers responsible for the information within.

At-large vestry members may be enlisted to help with ad hoc committees such as Stewardship, Fundraising, Publications, etc.

4. Stewardship & Giving Policies (Pledge campaigns, Fundraisers, Memorial Gifts, Monetary Giving & Scholarships)

Stewardship at Christ Church encompasses monetary contributions for operations, special events and capital needs. Stewardship also includes resources of time, talents, people, and finances.

A stewardship campaign for pledges is held annually in early November in conjunction with the next year's budget development. Pledges can be donated via cash, check, Paypal, or via our website (christchurcheaston.com). Online pledge donations are processed on our website by Tithely.

In consultation with the Treasurer, the Parish Administrator creates and mails quarterly statements in April, July, and October, and annual statements by January 31st to each pledging member.

Fundraisers & Events

Christ Church traditionally holds the following fundraising events:

Concerts on the Hill (COTH): a series of outdoor concerts featuring local bands held weekly during the early summer months. We charge admission and procure sponsorships from local businesses and individuals. A food truck meal, drinks, and snacks are available for purchase, or attendees can provide their own BYOB picnic.

Annual 5K Race: hosted in conjunction with the Town of Easton every October. The event includes a formally timed race, bake sale and children's activities.

Fall Concert: typically held the night before the 5K race, indoors in the church, with the Jackson Pike Skifflers and Friends.

Memorial Gifts

Those making a flower donation in memory or in celebration of a person or family at Easter or Christmas are acknowledged in the church bulletin.

Donations for specified capital donations are documented in a "Book of Remembrance" which was started at the inception of our present building and continued for those making a donation to the Church Bay window renovation.

Monetary Assistance

From time-to-time, individuals seeking money or food come into or call the church office. The policy is that we do not give money, however, we do offer gift cards, which are donated by parishioners. A record is kept of all gift cards received and distributed. Usually, we restrict the distribution to one per family per month, per the discretion of the Rector or Wardens. A Rector's discretionary fund may be set up in accordance with a letter of agreement with the Rector or Priest-in Charge.

Scholarships

If budget allows, scholarships to church camp, mission trips, or other scholarships as requested will be considered by the Vestry.

5. Diocesan and Canonical Relationships

All Episcopal Churches in the diocese are governed by the Canons (laws) of ECCT. Christ Church property is owned outright by the parish but is held in trust for the diocese (ECCT). This means that any encumbrance must be approved by the Standing Committee which has an online application for leases or sales of church property. The procedure may take several months for approval.

V. Ministries & Volunteering

1. Music Ministry

The Music Ministry consists of the choir, led by our Music Minister, Tracy Carlucci. Tracy also incorporates instrumentalists in the service and is always eager for to hear of anyone's willingness to participate.

2. Outreach & Mission Partners

Our Outreach Ministry is compelled by the gospel of Matthew 25:35-36: "for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

We have a relationship with **nOURish Bridgeport** where we go to their kitchen every other month and cook meals for their "Feel the Warmth" dinners. Afterwards, we go to the serving site on State Street to serve takeout meals to the needy. Volunteers may sign up with the Junior Warden. We have organized twice-yearly diapers drives to supply their Baby Center on North Ave. and have provided volunteers for their Wednesday Food Pantry.

We have a relationship with **Cheyenne River Episcopal Mission** in South Dakota. Our Christmas Tree lighting bake sale and other fundraisers are directed to their mission, where our former Rector, Rev. Ellen Huber, is now a Superintending Presbyterian. Mission Trips to the Reservation have been facilitated through the Diocese of Texas.

We have a relationship with **St. John's Bridgeport** and have collected food and clothing for their Family Center as well as sharing worship with them for Good Friday and Pentecost.

In addition to receiving and distributing gift cards to grocery stores and gas stations throughout the year, we increase our giving at Christmas time with gift cards to larger stores, such as Target, for those in need of gifts and holiday items. These gift cards are recorded in the same ledger as grocery gift cards.

3. Altar Guild and Ushers

The **Altar Guild** prepares the altar for Sunday services and cleanup afterward. This includes:

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- Set up the altar with appropriate linens, vessels, and paraments, ensuring candles are lit and fresh, and tidying up the sacristy and other areas used during the service.
- Place the altar cloth, the corporal (a square cloth), and any necessary stands for the altar book and Gospel book.
- Light candles (both altar candles and any candelabra).
- Ensure the chalice, paten, and other vessels are clean and ready for communion.
- Replace or refresh altar linens as needed, including the altar cloth and the corporal.
- Ensure the correct color of frontal (the cloth hanging from the altar) is used for the liturgical season.
- Clean and tidy the sacristy, sanctuary, and other areas used for the service.
- Put away sacred vessels, remove altar cloths, extinguishing candles, and ensuring everything is tidy.
- Decorate the church, including flowers, during Advent, Christmas, Lent and Holy Week.
- Work with the Parish Administrator to buy flowers and recognize those who donated in the church bulletin.
- Order palm fronds and ashes for Ash Wednesday and candles as needed
- Keep a supply of hosts (including gluten free) and wine for communion

Ushers are the first face of the congregation, and so they perform an important role in hospitality. There is a [separate brochure](#) describing the role of the usher.

4. Hospitality & Parish Life Events

Volunteers are responsible for offering hospitality after each service for coffee hour. There is a sign-up sheet for each week. Parishioners for other events (5K, Concerts, etc.) volunteer on an ad hoc basis.

5. Building & Grounds Ministry

The Building and Grounds committee maintains our church property and is in need of volunteers to help at fall cleanup and spring cleanup. The Memorial Garden is a meaningful place on our property and can use volunteers to help with weeding and general maintenance.

VI. Operations & Policies

1. Safe Church Policies (Abuse Prevention, Background Checks)

All employees are required to have background checks through the “Protect My Ministry” platform and to complete Safe Church Training. Our employee manual outlines all pertinent policies. All Vestry members, Lay Visitors, Lay Leaders and Sunday School teachers are also required to complete and update the training.

2. Facility Use Guidelines (Weddings, Rentals, Events)

Rental or use of the building or grounds must be approved by the Vestry. A typical fee/donation of \$100 per day is requested and is subject to negotiation as needed. The user is required to provide a
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Certificate of Insurance of one million dollars. All users are required to leave the facilities/grounds in proper order as found – clean and all trash and recycling placed in the garbage and/or recycling cans located in the wooden enclosure. A deposit of \$100 is required for security in case the facility is not cleaned but will be returned at the conclusion of the event, if all is in order.

Alcohol, in reasonable quantities, is allowed at a private gathering. The party using the buildings and/or grounds is required to ensure all guests are of legal drinking age, are drinking responsibly, and provide transportation as needed. A town alcohol permit is required for any public event.

No firearms or weapons of any kind are permitted on church property, unless carried by duly authorized law enforcement officers in the exercise of their duties or a church-hired security guard.

3. Communications Policy (Email, Website, Social Media)

Mail

The Parish Administrator will open all the incoming mail and distribute it to the appropriate mail slot in the office. The Administrator will send out all outgoing mail and ensure that there is a supply of stamps and envelopes.

Social Media

The parish maintains two social media accounts for both Facebook and Instagram under Christ Church Easton and Concerts on the Hill Easton. Social media is currently managed by the Senior Warden and Parish Administrator.

Email

Mailchimp is our email platform and is used weekly for our Sunday Service information and other times to announce events and pastoral notices. MailChimp is also used to send concert info to a separate email list of COTH subscribers.

Website

Our web address, www.christchurcheaston.com, is hosted by Wix. The Parish Administrator and the Senior Warden have the primary responsibility for its maintenance.

Google Calendar

Events and information on services are added to our Google Calendar by the Senior Warden and Parish Administrator. Our Google Calendar is imbedded on our website.

Newspaper

Articles are written by the chair of the Communications Committee or Rector and published in *The Easton Courier* or other local news outlets.

Sunday Bulletin

The Sunday Bulletin includes a list of announcements and upcoming events. Refer to section II for more information on the bulletin.

Newsletter

The Rector and Senior Warden prepare a monthly newsletter, *Christ Church Chronicle*, which is disseminated through email, posted on our website, and printed as handouts. Anyone who wants appropriate announcements or photos to be included in the newsletter should send them to the office by the third week of the month. Text should be sent in Word format, and photos should be jpg format.

4. Financial Policies (Budget, Audits, Reimbursements)

The parish Treasurer collects, holds custody and disburses all monies belonging to the parish. In addition, the Treasurer prepares the annual operating budget for the parish, which must first be approved by the Vestry and subsequently by the entire parish (typically, as part of the parish annual meeting). Monthly budget updates as well as quarterly reports are provided to the Vestry by the Treasurer.

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut has adopted financial reporting requirements to fulfill its responsibility for annual financial oversight of its parishes in accordance with the canons of The Episcopal Church. A detailed Financial Review is prepared annually by parishes with less than \$750,000 in annual operating income to help ECCT determine the financial health of its parishes and whether adequate accounting procedures and safeguards are being followed. The Treasurer works with an independent accountant engaged by the parish to complete the Financial Review, which is approved by the Vestry prior to being submitted to ECCT by September 1st of each year.

Properly receipted requests for reimbursement should be submitted to the Treasurer, who will process the request on a timely basis.

Those parishioners who participate in the parish annual Stewardship Campaign by submitting a Giving Estimate form by the end of the prior calendar year, will receive a quarterly statement prepared by the Treasurer and Parish Administrator, acknowledging the amount donated on a year-to-date basis. Also, in January of the following year, all parishioners who have made a financial contribution to the parish (whether via pledge or general donations) will receive a statement prepared by the Treasurer and Parish Administrator, summarizing the amount given for tax purposes.

VII. New Member Information

1. Becoming a Member

The newcomer who wishes to become a member of Christ Church will speak to the Rector or Senior Warden and fill out a form with pertinent information for our record keeping. We like to know important dates like birthdays and anniversaries to share with the congregation.

2. Getting Involved: First Steps

We hold a job fair yearly during Sunday service to acquaint parishioners with the various ministries, but there is no need to wait! Speaking to the Rector, Wardens, or any ministry member might lead you in the right direction. Lay involvement is what makes this church vital. Martin Luther talked about the priesthood of all believers, and there is a ministry waiting for you here.

3. Directory & Contact Information

The church office can be reached at 203-268-3569 and is open generally from 9 to 1:30 on Mondays and Wednesdays. The email address is eastonparish1762@sbcglobal.net or christchurcheastonct@gmail.com. For pastoral emergencies, contact the Senior Warden, Vicki MarkAnthony, at 203-551-4728.

APPENDIX

CHRIST CHURCH EASTON PARISH BY-LAWS

- I. This Parish shall be known as CHRIST CHURCH EASTON or THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH and hereafter referred to as the "Parish." The Parish acknowledges the authority of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, its Constitution and General Canons, and the authority of the Diocese of Connecticut, its Constitution and Canons.
- II. Membership in the Parish shall be acquired as provided in the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut. Of the members of the Parish, only those shall be entitled to vote at any Parish meeting who shall be adult communicants and who for at least six months prior to that meeting shall have been faithful attendants at the services of the Parish, unless for good cause, prevented faithful contributors to its support, and faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the kingdom of God; these facts to be determined in each case by the Vestry in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut.
- III. There shall be an annual meeting of the members of the Parish on a day appointed by the vestry, for the purpose of electing the Wardens, members of the Vestry, Clerk and Treasurer, and of transacting such other business as may legally come before such meeting. Special Parish meetings may be called by vote of the Vestry or upon the written request of ten percent (10%) of the voting members of the Parish. The notices of all Parish meetings shall be signed by the Clerk or, in the absence of the Clerk, by one of the Wardens and shall be posted at the door of the Parish Church or sent by the Clerk to every member of the Parish at least one week before the time of meeting. The notices of all Parish meetings except the annual meetings shall contain a statement of the objects for which the meeting is called; and at all meetings the Rector of the Parish, if he or she be present, shall preside. If the Rector is absent, the Senior Warden or if they not be present, the Junior Warden shall preside. Decisions will be made by majority vote of the parishioners present and the parish will be informed of the results in the minutes of the meeting in a timely manner.
- IV. The officers of a Parish shall be a Rector, a Vestry composed of two Wardens and such number of other members of the Vestry as the Parish shall determine, a Clerk and a Treasurer (who may be members of the Vestry). The Rector shall be Chair ex officio of the Vestry; and the Rector or such other member designated by the Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Vestry. No Parish shall elect to the Office of Warden, nor for the first time to the Vestry, a member of the Parish who is not also a communicant of the Church and age sixteen (16) or over. The members of the Vestry, the Clerk and the Treasurer shall be elected at the annual Parish meeting from the members of the Parish who are eligible to vote in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut; the Wardens shall be elected in like manner from members of the Parish so eligible to vote; they shall all hold office for 3 year terms, or until others are chosen and qualify. Any vacancy occurring by death or otherwise in the office of Warden during the course of the year may be filled at a special Parish meeting duly called at the next annual meeting or at a special meeting duly called for that purpose, and may be filled until the next annual meeting by the Vestry, as the Vestry at its discretion may determine. Lay Delegates and alternate delegates to the General Convention and Deanery shall be chosen in accordance with Article 2 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Connecticut.

- a. The Clerk

The Clerk of the Parish shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties and (1) shall be the Clerk of the Vestry Ex Officio; (2) shall attend all general meetings of the Parish and all meetings of the Vestry or shall make suitable arrangements to the end that full and proper records of the proceedings are made and preserved; (3) shall see that an accurate role of the legal members of the Parish is maintained and that such role is available at every general meeting of the Parish; (4) shall be official custodian of the files, records and archives of the Parish; (5) shall perform such other duties as the Parish may assigned. In the event of the absence of a Clerk, the Vestry may assign the duties to a rotating Vestry member.

b. The Treasurer/Treasury Team

The Treasurer of the Parish shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties and (1) shall collect, receive, hold custody and disburse all monies belonging to the Parish; (2) shall make records of such collections, receipts and disbursements in such a form and manner as will provide the basis for satisfactory accounting of the same; (3) shall keep records of all trust and permanent funds showing at least the source and date, terms governing the use of principal and income, to whom and how often reports of conditions are to be made, and how the funds are invested; (4) shall attend the meetings of the Vestry and shall furnish the Vestry a financial report of condition for the quarter recently ended together with a statement of receipts and disbursements since the last report; and (5) shall perform such other tasks as the Parish may assign. The Vestry may choose members to work alongside the Treasurer, dividing duties so the burden is distributed among the team.

c. The Wardens and Vestry

The Wardens and Vestry shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties, and agree to work in a loving and open manner as covenanted.

The property and all business affairs of the Parish, including CCNS, shall be subject to the direction, management and control of the Vestry, except where the canons of the diocese of CT require the direction and decision of the Parish. Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held monthly. The Vestry shall have the power to waive the holding of any monthly meeting. Special meetings of the Vestry may be called by the Rector or 3 members of the Vestry. The Rector shall be the chairperson of the Vestry or if the rector not be present, the Senior Warden, or in Senior Warden's absence the Junior Warden shall preside or another member appointed by the Rector. A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum of all Vestry Meetings. All matters at Vestry shall be decided by majority vote of those present. Each Vestry member and the Rector shall have one vote and no person may vote by proxy but may submit a vote in writing. The Parish under the leadership of the Rector and Senior Warden shall from time to time revise the roll of Parish members. The Wardens shall advise and assist the rector in carrying out the general program of the Parish.

All duly elected lay members of convention who are not serving on the Vestry shall become upon their election ex-officio members of the Vestry with voice but without vote.

V. The Rector (Priest in Charge)

The Rector shall at all times be entitled to the use and control of the Parish buildings with the appurtenances and furniture thereof for the purposes of his/her office and for the full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto. The Rector shall preside at all Parish Meetings and at all meetings of the Vestry, or another member designated by the Rector.

VI. Mission of the Church - Christ Church Nursery School hereafter referred to as "CCNS" is a "Mission of the Church" and as such, the Parish oversees the operations, finances, etc. of CCNS. Supervisory responsibilities for the Director of CCNS falls to the Rector or an appointed member of the Vestry based on the contracted hours of the Rector/Priest in Charge. The Rector/Priest-in-Charge shall supervise the Director and their oversight of the operations of CCNS. The Rector shall serve as a non-voting member of the Board of CCNS. Should the Priest in Charge/Rector be half time or less, the Vestry shall appoint one of its members, **based on the recommendation of the Priest in Charge/Rector and Wardens**, to supervise the CCNS Director who shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors of CCNS. That member shall act as liaison between the Board of CCNS and the Vestry. The Rector will not be the supervisor in this case. The rector may interact with the nursery school at their discretion. Additional details pertaining to the Vestry and Parish membership and responsibilities on the CCNS Board of Directors is found in the bylaws of CCNS.

VII. The business affairs of the Parish shall at all times be governed by the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Connecticut, and the provisions of these By-laws. The provisions of these by-laws shall be equally applicable to men, women, and non-binary persons.

VIII. The By-laws may be altered, amended or repealed at any validly called and convened meeting of members of the Parish entitled to vote by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of such members present at such meeting.

Updated March 2022

Approved at the 3/27/2022 CCE Annual Meeting