



CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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SMITHFIELD, VA 23430
OFFICE: 757-357-2826 OR 357-2810
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THE WORD



SEPTEMBER 2026



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

CREATION CARE

The Historic Southside Master Naturalists have a very popular project, which is to monitor the yearly nesting success of bluebirds for the Virginia Bluebird Society. Beth Harris and I participate in the project. From March through August, we monitor 17 bluebird nesting boxes on the Ruritan-Orbit Road trail. About once a month, we are trained to visit each box, open it up, and record whether there is a nest, eggs or chicks in it, and if so, are they bluebirds or one of the other birds that sometimes use the deep cavity nests (including: tree swallows, chickadees, Carolina wrens and the invasive house sparrow). As you can see from the pictures, this is a delightful experience, most of the time. We noted that the bluebirds stopped laying eggs earlier than usual this summer. We believe this is due to the hot weather and the drought conditions that meant less insects and grubs for the birds to feed their young.

Alison



ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Dear Ones,

For some time now, the Vestry and I have been discussing the possibility of offering more adult spiritual formation options. As we consider this move, however, we want to ensure that we are offering opportunities that will be helpful and meaningful to you. There are so many possibilities, both in structure and in scheduling. Should we have a Bible Study, a Book Study, Guided Storytelling, and so on. And when is the best time to offer these opportunities; before church on Sundays, in person here at the church during the week, online, etc.?

To this end we would like to solicit your input, first to gauge whether or not there is interest at all, and then to decide on logistics. Next Sunday, Sept 13, I would like to meet briefly after Coffee Hour with any who are interested. We'll gather in the Nave and I promise to keep it short!

Blessings!

Todd+



VESTRY NEWS /UPDATE

Be sure to read our monthly vestry minutes that are sent out with your weekly announcements a week after the meeting. The next set will be sent on Sept. 3rd. The vestry also has completed its initiatives for the year! Please don't forget to put suggestions in our suggestion box on top of the piano in the parish hall. Paper and pencil SHOULD be beside the box.



ST. LUKE'S UPDATE

(our mother church)

As your representative to St. Lukes I wanted to inform you that we are currently having a MATCHING DONOR Drive. Every dollar you can give towards St. Luke's operations will be doubled by the Abbitt Matching Grant Program through September 30th. You may send a check to: St. Luke's Church 14777 Benn's Church Blvd. Smithfield VA 23430. Please note Abbitt Grant on the check to DOUBLE your impact. Thank you for your support.

Annamaria Pencola



NAME TAGS

We have several new faces in our church so PLEASE wear your name tags so you can easily be identified. If you have lost your name tag, please let Letty Gambacorta know and she might be able to make you a new one. If you are new to our church and do not have one, please let Annamaria Pencola know and she will contact Letty for you. Thank you.

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE NEW CEC T-SHIRT ORDER 😊

The Vestry is pleased to announce that we are assembling an order for custom designed and printed Christ Episcopal Church t-shirts. We are hoping that our church members will want to buy a shirt and wear it proudly in the community.

We are offering two styles:

This is a classic crew neck, in Softstyle material, which is a nice, light poly-cotton mix.



Sizes S-XXL are available. The color is the blue of the Episcopal flag. On the front it says “Christ Episcopal Church, Smithfield, Be Inspired.” On the back it says “Come for our sermons, stay for our hospitality.” Hopefully, this will pique interest in our Church and lead to some interesting conversations ! 😊

This is the more feminine V-neck design. It will come in a fitness material (Milk Silk), sizes S-XL. The front and back messages are the same as above.



The estimated cost for each shirt is \$20-25. The more shirts we order, the lower the price. We are hoping to place the order on September 10th. There will be a sign-up sheet to order the t-shirt you like in the Parish Hall on the small table next to the entry into the kitchen. We will let you know the final price when we confirm the size of the order with the printing company.

If you have questions or wish to place your order, contact Alison Crocker at acrocker53@gmail.com or call [518-505-5966](tel:518-505-5966).

HOSPITALITY

We have had several months of our new hospitality procedures and I think we can all agree that hospitality has become a **GREAT** place for fellowship. Please remember to sign up to bring something to share. If you are unable to bring something, please consider a donation to the hospitality fund and place it in the bucket we provide on the table. Finally, it would be VERY HELPFUL to take your plates, silverware, and glasses to the kitchen. You may even want to rinse them off and put them in the dishwasher! Thank you so much!



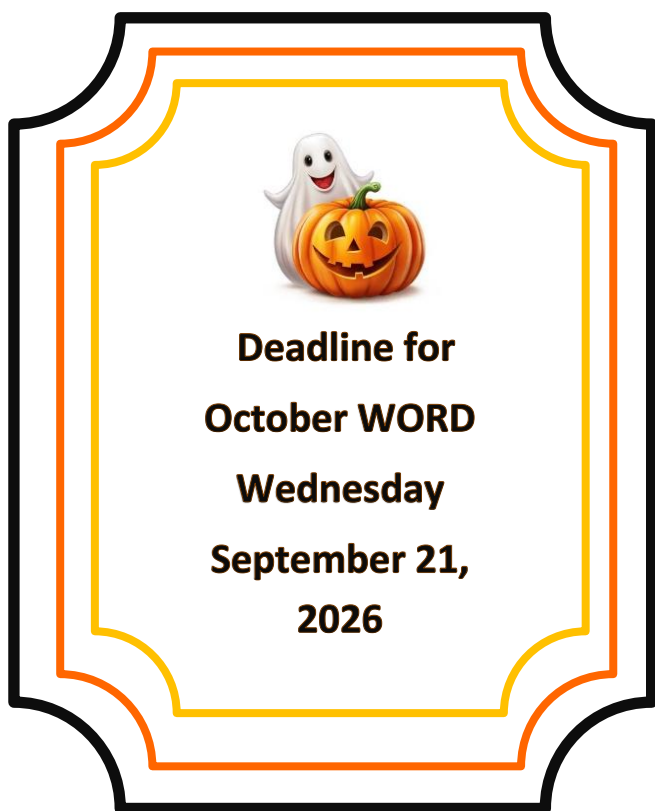
BACK TO SCHOOL SUCCESS

Many thanks to all of those who contributed to our Back to School “Fill a Backpack” project. We were able to fill 29 back packs with needed items. Also thanks to Annamaria Pencola who contacted the school system for a list of items needed and packed many backpacks along with Martha Underwood. It was quite an undertaking. A special thank you to Kimberly Leazer for moving this successful idea ahead so quickly. All of the backpacks that we filled have now been distributed by Christian Outreach Program!



LIGHTS AND LOCKS

If you enter the church for any reason, other than for Sunday service, please be SURE to turn off lights and lock doors when you leave. We have discovered several lights left on several times over the last month in multiple places and the door was unlocked on one occasion.



A poster for an "Open Mic Nite" event. It features a photograph of a microphone on a stand and a wooden stool on a wooden floor. The text on the poster reads: "Open Mic Nite Friday 7 PM Musicians, Comics, Poets, Stories". Below the photo, it says "DONATIONS GO TO OUTREACH" and features the "be inspired" logo with a cross icon and the text "CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH". At the bottom, it states "Next OMN: Friday, September 18, 2026".

SOUPER SATURDAY



The Souper Saturday sign-up sheets (one for donation of soup or dessert and one for volunteering to help on Saturday) are posted on the kitchen door. On Sept. 17th, I will take the sheets down and call in the information to someone at Trinity, so PLEASE sign up by then.

Souper Saturday is October 10th from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm at Trinity United Methodist Church on 201 Cedar Street. The church is located down the block from our parking lot. For \$10, you will receive a large portion of homemade soup, 2 ham biscuits, a hot dog, dessert and a drink. Children 12 and under eat for free! You can dine inside or pick up your meal from the drive through set up behind the church.

Please participate in this special annual event. All the proceeds will go to Social Services for people needing help with heating this winter.



OPEN MIC NITE **FRIDAY,** **AUGUST 21, 2026**



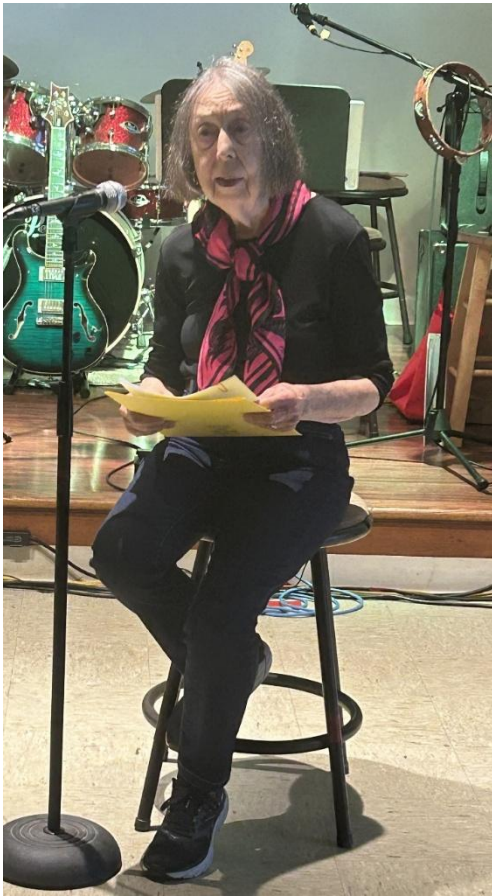
Kelly from the YMCA came to thank Open Mic Nite to thank us for our donation made to the "Y" last month.



Tim Jones opened our night with prayer.



Jam'n played first. Front: (left to right) Stuart Greenhalgh, Scott Hamilton, , Jeff Bolt, Jim Abicht, and Tim Jones. Back: (left to right) Bill Egan and John Petrone. First song they performed was "A Dream Like Mine". Next they sang a Jesse Winchester song, "Mississippi, You're on my Mind"; "Red River Valley and ended with "The Letter".



Mary Batten read an essay she wrote about life on the farm in Smithfield called "My Teeny Tiny Baby".



(left to right) Dana & Steve Atchley Jim Abicht and Anna Raiford, entertained us with several songs: "The Weight", "What's Up?", and "How He Loves".

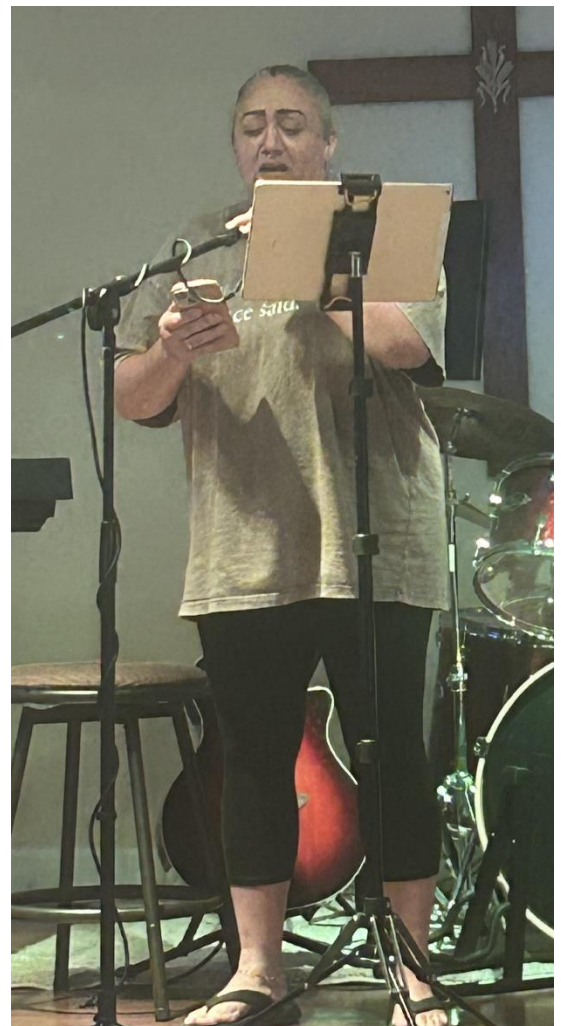


Tim Jones read a poem he wrote, "Hail to the Publican", a nod to the pubs of England.





Scott Hamilton played guitar and sang, "Lonely People", "It Was A Sin" by the band, The Revivalists; and "Me and Bobby McGee, written by Kris



Dana Atchley came back up to sing Chris Tomlinson's "Amazing Grace".



COP Food Pantry Shelves

This program was born here at CEC and was started by Gene Lowery and Fred Glanville. We deliver food to the Isle of Wight County facility on an on-going basis. On the fourth Sunday of each month, our donations are placed at the altar to be blessed by the priest. Our food is then delivered to COP after donations are given by our congregation at Christ Church. Christian Outreach ALWAYS needs volunteers (2-4 hours per month) to help distribute and take in food, diapers, etc. If you can volunteer to work for the COP, please call for details of hours of operation or check out their website at: <https://iowcop.net>. Thank you.



Christ Church participates in collecting non-perishable food items on Sundays for the Food pantry at COP (Christian Outreach Program.) Anything you can drop off at church in the “outreach” basket will be greatly appreciated. The basket is located under the mailboxes.

Thank you KINDLY and GOD BLESS!

COP Shopping List

- Canned Fruit
- Canned Soups
- Canned vegetables
- Pasta
- Peanut Butter
- Cereal
- Baby Food
- Granola Bars
- Diapers – size 5 or 6



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 10:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II	7 	8	8	20	11	12
13 10:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II	14	15	16	17	18 7pm Open Mic Nite 	19
20 10:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II After church – Vestry meeting	28	29	30			



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- 12 Donna Stanton
Rosemarie White
26 Bobbi Blesse

- 1 Elsa Bakkum
John Williams
4 Suzanne Peterson
9 Dave Stafford
14 Bill Egan
Andy Pencola
24 Peter Lowry