

Christ Episcopal Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin warmly welcomes children, college students, families, singles and seniors. We embrace friendship, hospitality, music, and the arts. You will always find fellowship, a friendly smile, a warm hug, inspiring music and great food.



O God of patient and gentle strength, who knows our needs even before we ask, may your loving presence guide us as we seek the next Rector for our Parish. Give us an open spirit, discerning hearts and clear minds, that we may trust your will for us and become ever more united in your son our Savior, Jesus Christ. Inspire our conversation, deepen our prayer, and make us a community of humility and grace. Raise up for us, we pray, a priest and shepherd who will boldly proclaim your Gospel, faithfully administer your sacraments, and serve your people with love and compassion. All this we ask through Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.



Interim Rector, Wardens and Vestry

History

Christ Church is the oldest continually operating congregation in La Crosse, WI. For nearly 170 years we have welcomed locals, travelers and guests alike. We are excited about the opportunities to grow our outreach, ministry and congregation, vibrantly sharing God's grace and salvation for the next 100 years and beyond.

The Five Marks of Mission
The Mission of the Church is the Mission of Christ

- † **To proclaim** the Good News of the Kingdom
- † **To teach, baptize and nurture** new believers
- † **To respond** to the human need by loving service
- † **To seek to transform** unjust structures of society
- † **To strive to safeguard** the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of earth.

Missionary James Lloyd Breck celebrated the first Eucharistic service on Grandad bluff June 23, 1850, in *prairie* La Crosse. The missionaries camped by the Mississippi river overnight and climbed the bluff at dawn to perform the first Christian divine service in what became the City of La Crosse six years later.



Bishop Jackson Kemper directed Rev'd Breck's mission work in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Breck (known as the Apostle of the Wilderness) established numerous missions in western frontiers embracing the Ho-Chunk, Ojibway, and Oneida people. This led to the creation of many missions and Nashotah House and Seabury seminaries.

Grandad is the largest bluff in the area. At 600 feet high it provides a spectacular view of the city, marsh and river. It hosts a park shelter where commemorative services are hosted. It offers hiking, cross country, running and snowshoeing trails.



Church members met in homes until 1857 when the first church was built on the corner of 9th and Main Streets. The congregation quickly outgrew that building, it was demolished to build a new larger church which could be the new Cathedral for the emerging Diocese of Eau Claire. The original architect died before the building was complete. His daughter (one of the few female architects in the country) completed the Romanesque Revival church which continues the mission of actively serving Christ in all people.



The size, beauty and acoustics of the sanctuary, adorned by heavenly stained-glass windows and glorious music, make it the perfect place to fall in love with the Lord. We believe Urban Holmes's insight that when Anglicanism is at its best "its poetry, its music and its life can create a world of wonder in which it is very easy to fall in love with God." (What Is Anglicanism?). We remember that in its fullest attainment love is both personal and shared.

The ability to accommodate 300 worshippers or more make it the perfect location to host large Advent and Holy Week services, plus University and Chamber Chorale concerts. We are grateful recipients of stunning architecture that still retains its pertinence, glory and beauty nearly two centuries later.



Who we Are –

At Christ Episcopal Church, we are a congregation whose mission is to know Christ and to make Him known to others. We are a welcoming congregation. You may be a cradle Episcopalian, a non-believer or somewhere in between. We are an inclusive community which supports all lifestyle choices. We want to be your loving family and home where you are nourished and grow in God's love. We want to accompany you on a journey which deepens your faith, grounds you spiritually and surrounds you with loving acceptance. When we share the peace of our Lord - we mean it! Children eagerly scamper to share the peace with parents in the choir, while acolytes light from the altar to greet family in the pews. Our peace may take a while longer than you're used to as we warmly greet each other in Christ's name.

We are located in the heart of downtown and actively partner with the Salvation Army, New Horizons Shelter (from abuse), United Campus Ministries and Coulee Council on Recovery to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and the greater La Crosse Community. We minister daily to those living on the margins of

society seeking acceptance, spiritual guidance, financial assistance and hope in a world where they seek to find their place in God's plan.

Hospitality, outreach, and education are all part of our mission within and beyond our congregation. We minister to our members and visitors alike. We bring Communion, blessings, anointing, guidance and counseling to members within our parish as well as those who cannot come to church due to age, illness, or disability. We are committed to our children, seniors and all those in between.



Annual blessing of the pets https://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/annual-blessing-of-the-pets-brings-creatures-great-and-small/article_88289d35-0a6f-5836-b7b0-029969bbeac6.html

Our church members include a broad cross section of society. La Crosse hosts two world class hospitals highly rated by the U.S. World News and Reports. We also host three colleges; vast recreational, hunting and fishing opportunities; plus a thriving art and music scene. All these are situated within two miles of our front door. <https://ladcolax.com>

We are one of 19 parishes of the Diocese of Eau Claire. We're members of the worldwide Anglican Communion, part of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America who reside and worship in North and Western counties of Wisconsin.



Music and Art

Christ Church is notable for importing the first pipe organ to the city. That tradition continues with the installation of a beautiful new pipe organ in the apse in 1993. Music and art are valued and integral parts of our services. Our congregation includes many professional musicians and artists.

We have strong ties to orchestras, bands and chamber chorales. Our members comprise a rare quality of multi-faceted musicians (organist, pianist, harp, woodwinds, strings and flute among others) who generously share their talents during services.



Our art gallery hosts monthly art receptions and our Icon guild meets and paints weekly.

We are blessed with a stunning sanctuary which showcases artwork spanning fifteen decades of ministry. We believe in the power and holiness of religious art. In 2005 we fully restored our 'Transfiguration of Christ' stained-glass Tiffany window. Two prominent windows were dedicated to the memory of founders Angus Cameron and Frank Hixon. The Hixon's later bought land adjacent to Grandad bluff to preserve it as a public park and forest. The Cameron family dedicated a public park downtown which now serves as a farmer's market featuring locally sourced foods. We are faithful stewards of La Crosse's rivers, bluffs and trails, preserving them for future generations. We seek a rector who shares our love of Christ, his children, art, music and nature. Our goal is to thrive into the next century by being the reflection of Christ in our community.



Accommodations

Vinter Hall was built in 1962 with office, gathering spaces, Sunday school rooms, nursery and later an elevator. In 2005 we completely renovated our Fellowship Hall capable of hosting events to seat 300. Our commercial kitchen is used weekly for community meals and monthly potlucks. In 2013, we installed a T-coil hearing loop in the sanctuary for those with hearing aids. In 2017, we renovated the foyer and first floor adding more ADA Compliant restrooms and upgrades. We added a two vehicle drop off zone with curb less sidewalk and two heated ramps (to melt snow) leading to wide doors into the lobby with elevator. Our goal is to remove all barriers to attendance and full participation. We will bring you communion in the pew and provide gluten free wafers. We welcome many worshippers with unique needs including certified service animals.

Membership. In 2019, Christ Church had an Average Sunday Attendance of 112. One-third of that number attended the 8 AM Rite I service and the remainder the 10:30 AM Rite II service. We reported 202 members and 194 Communicants in Good Standing, 17 of our Communicants were under 16. Demographics suggest that our congregation has disproportionately more empty-nesters and retirees than the surrounding community.

Finances. Our Annual Operating Budget is \$325,000. \$250,000 is Plate & Pledge from our 130 financially active families. The remaining \$75,000 comes from investment income from our \$2.0 million Endowment Fund. The congregation is debt free. The vestry follows a practice of balancing its budget over the long run. That is, a modest deficit in one year is offset by a modest surplus in another. Shrinkage of our financial base over the last decade combined with maintenance needs of our 120-year old church building has created a challenging financial environment.



Educational and Spiritual Growth Ministries

Sunday School and Youth Group Programming – Youth and family ministry is our church’s top priority. We embrace children and families through active participation. We welcome children at the altar during monthly children’s sermons during the 10:30 service. We provide a coloring table with stuffed animals and blankets in the rear of church for our youngest wigglers who just need to stretch during the service. The children lead the Christmas Eve procession with statues from the Creche at the early Christmas Eve sing-a-long service. Most of our youth serve as acolytes and others learn about the Altar Guild while assisting their parents or grandparents.



We engage children from 3 – 6 years old through the Godly Play program. “Middlers” 7-12 use Bible Fun Factory. Older teens use the Confirm not Conform program to prepare for Confirmation. Musicians teach children songs used in services and the kids sing as a group on special occasions.

First Holy Communion classes are provided on Wednesdays. Confirmation is usually an annual event for teens and adults. The Youth Group hosts the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and hosts a special Stations of the Cross service on Palm Sunday carrying a life size cross.



Our children participate in local service and global projects to provide food, clothing, and other essentials to partner organizations.

The Confirmation team has collaborated with United Campus Ministry (3 college campuses) sharing bible studies, meals and “survival kits” with Gatorade, protein bar, homemade cookies, coffee and cup along with a battery tealight with gospel readings & treats during Finals. This semester we partnered with other churches to provide “Finals Feast” a potluck of food and treats from various area churches to nourish the students before final exams.

The Youth Group hosts picnics, a houseboat trip on the Mississippi River, and other outdoor activities which include all members of the parish.



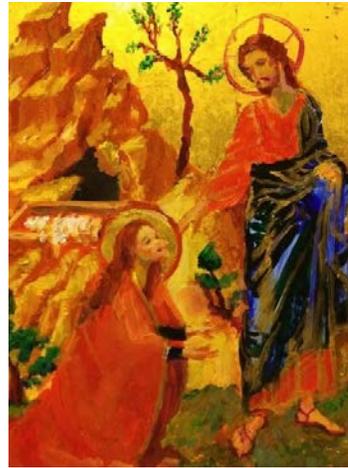
During Advent, teens and adults host baking days to provide Lay Eucharistic Visitors home baked treats sprinkled with love for those receiving home/hospital Communion.



Family fellowship opportunities include annual summer camp to meet members of other parishes in our (and neighboring) Dioceses in WI. A team of youth leaders and teachers collaborate to cover all bases.

Adult Lectionary Discussions - Delving into the daily readings helps us deepen our understanding of God's word. Adults meet Sundays (at 9:15) in the Heritage room (between services) to discuss the readings of the day or a book. They are currently studying "Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis. Short evening courses are offered during Lent and Advent followed with a light soup and salad meal.

Icon Painting – Meets at 1:00 PM on Tuesday afternoons in the basement of Vinter Hall. Artists gather for worship through art. No experience necessary. The artists will guide you every step of the way.



Morning Prayer and Breakfast – Meets on the first and third Tuesday mornings of the month at 8:30 AM at the St. George altar beside the Beatitudes window. We join in the Daily Office of Morning Prayer and then recess for breakfast at Fayze’s restaurant.

Taizé – Is a new ministry combining prayer, singing, silent meditation, readings with contemplative contemporary music. We meet at St. Paul’s altar alternately on Friday at 7PM or Saturday at 4PM.

Thursday Bible Study – Meets at 11:00 following 10 AM Holy Eucharist. We use group readings and in-depth discussion to explore inspirational books. Past studies have included, “Jesus Calling” and “More than a Carpenter”.

Women at the Well – Meets on the first and third Saturdays of the month at 10-11:30 AM in the Heritage room. Practice the spiritual discipline of *lectio divina* (scripture reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation). The goal is to move from a life of self to a life of giving oneself away and being Jesus to others. As we listen for and hear the word of God, we are changed.

Fellowship and Outreach Ministries

AA/AIAnon/NA Recovery programs – We support recovery programs by providing a meeting room on the second floor of Vinter Hall. Church bakers provide special treats for these groups during holidays. NA meets at 6PM on Tuesdays, AIAnon meets at 7PM on Thursdays and a new group of NA plans to meet at 12 noon on Fridays.

Art Gallery – The Augustine Fellowship Center celebrates visual art dedicated to the glory of God, in thanksgiving for His gift of the creative spirit. Exhibitions are intended to enrich the community and to provoke dialogue regarding the function of art in cultural, religious and daily life. <https://www.facebook.com/undercroftgallery/>

Community Concerts - We actively partner with the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse; the La Crosse Chamber Chorale and professional musicians to host concerts in the sanctuary. Area high schools occasionally join us during the service to showcase their select choirs. Our large seating area and wonderful acoustics make us a great host for large musical events.

New Horizons Shelter – We support those leaving abusive relationships with full size personal care items, inspirational books, household goods and clothing donations. Our members make weekly donations and we deliver monthly to the shelter’s boutique where anyone can benefit free of charge.

Prayer Link – We accept prayers for families and friends and elevate them to God for divine intervention. Send your request via text or email to activate our strong prayer warriors. Our church family is the living breathing proof of God’s miraculous works.



Salvation Army – We actively partner with our neighbor in many ways. We collect food donations every week and ramp up for the annual Christmas food basket program. This year we collected more than 500 cans of fruit and frosting to help fill those baskets. We fulfill Angel Tree and Back to School requests for new clothing for families in need. In the summer, we prepare 200 sandwiches each Tuesday at 9 AM for delivery to area schools. This helps school children who would miss a free meal when school is not in session. We also create and deliver nite-nite bags with a small blanket, toy and book to comfort children who are living in the shelter.

Sunday Potluck – the congregation comes together every 2nd Sunday of the month following the 10:30 service. We are blessed with a number of great cooks who share great savory ethnic and Midwest dishes. We want to know you beyond the pew. We always have food and coffee before and after services.

Thursday Community Lunch – is served most Thursdays at 12 noon. Volunteers prepare a meal which includes salad, a hot meal, sandwiches, fruit and dessert. Coffee, milk and juice are available. Donations are accepted, but not necessary. We look forward to your friendship and fellowship.

United Campus Ministry – We support students with snacks/meals during holidays and finals plus prayers and worship opportunities. We collaborate with area ministers to serve the student population of 3 colleges in our midst.

Ministries at Christ Church 2019 - Liturgical

Acolytes – Our acolytes have ranged in age from 5 to 85 years old. We welcome the active participation of children in our services. Our church has a rich history of siblings and parents serving together, drawing closer to each other as we grow closer to God.



Altar Guild- Men and women join together to maintain the linens, sacred vessels, vestments, candles and other essential elements for a wide variety of services. Children and grandchildren of the Altar Guild also learn as they assist.

Choir and Music Ministry – Traditionally consists of an organist/choirmaster and about 12 choristers. The choir sings at the 10:30 Eucharist on Sunday mornings and also for special liturgical events in the church. We invite anyone who loves to sing and has basic music reading ability to join the choir.

We are blessed to have many musicians in the church who perform for many Sunday morning services and for Christmas and Easter.

The church continues to host special music groups within our community – La Crosse Chamber Chorale, band and orchestral concerts from UW-L, the La Crosse Area Gospel Choir, and local high schools.

Two choir members serve as substitute organists. Another choir member graciously continues the music ministry as pianist for the 8:00 AM Liturgy.

We are grateful to another professional musician and parish member who donates his services as a tuner to keep our sanctuary piano tuned.

2018 marked the 26th anniversary of the installation of our Sipe Pipe organ.

Eucharistic Ministers – Are an active group of trained and licensed Lay Eucharistic Ministers who serve during services. Lay Eucharistic Visitors assist with home, hospital and Pastoral Care visits. We want to ensure that members and families who can't physically attend services are remembered, visited and share communion.

Altar Flowers: We give glory to God and remember loved ones by purchasing flowers for the High Altar or St. Paul Altar. The flowers bring joy twice to the parishioners at the worship services and again when divided and delivered to those who are sick, unable to travel to church, or celebrating a special occasion.

Lectors- proclaim the Good News and more during services, including re-enactments for Holy Week and Christmas Eve services.

Nursery Attendants- We take children's safety and security seriously. All members who work with children are licensed, background checked and participate in Safeguarding God's Children training.

Ushers/Greeters – On Sunday, religious feasts, weddings, funerals and more we welcome guests and answer questions about our faith, pastoral care and our gloriously beautiful church. This includes facts about the architecture and our 3 enormous stained-glass windows (2 are more than 60 feet tall and wide). We delight in our Tiffany window depicting the Transfiguration of Christ, our Blessed are the.../Beatitudes window and our Rose window.



Baptism



Bishop with the newly confirmed

Who We Seek as Rector

Growth -

Our new Rector will embrace challenges, and consider them opportunities for growth, renewal, expansion and inclusion. Our congregation is looking for a vibrant leader who will embrace opportunities to grow.

Spiritually Grounded, Good Gospel Preacher –

Our new Rector will be an insightful, inspiring preacher, bringing energy, compassion and joy to the worship of God --- a well-read leader who will be deeply grounded in scripture and committed to the sacraments and traditions of the Episcopal Church.

Expand Youth and Family Ministry –

Our new Rector will relate to families and young people. They will bless and empower our youth ministry and adult Christian education programs. We seek an educator who is experienced and committed to inspiring and incorporating children, youth, and families into the life of the congregation. Our new Rector will recognize that youth and family ministry is both the present and promising future of our church.

Humble, But a Leader –

Our new Rector will be a servant leader who creatively welcomes and guides the gifts and talents of lay leaders, empowering all to be servants in unity as the body of Christ.

Music Ministry –

Our new Rector will embrace our love of traditional music and invite diverse musical expression to enliven the choral and instrumental program. We are prayerfully searching for a new music director; we want our new Rector to be actively involved in the process finding a person with whom to coordinate Sunday messages and musical offerings. We, also, want our new Rector to be able to sing the high Mass.

Pastoral Care –

Our new Rector will actively walk with us on our faith journey, will stand with others in times of celebration and sorrow, and their comfort and counsel will remind us of God's love and presence. The practice of home and hospital visits is strong in our church and our new Rector will be eager to continue this important mission.

Full-Time Rector, Christ Episcopal Church, La Crosse WI

Christ Episcopal Church, in scenic downtown La Crosse, Wisconsin is seeking a full-time Rector. La Crosse, situated on the banks of the Mississippi River, hosts three colleges and two world-class medical facilities. Established in 1850, we are the largest parish in the Diocese of Eau Claire. As an active, highly committed community of faithful people, we seek a Rector to help us explore our identity in these changing times. Our parish profile can be found on our website:

<https://www.ceclax.org/>. Please submit your letter of interest, resume, and OTM Profile by mail (Christ Episcopal Church, PO Box 608, La Crosse, WI 54602) postmarked NLT March 21, 2020 or email the materials to search@ceclax.org by the same date.