

# CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ASPEN, COLORADO



# Letter to our Next Rector:

Thank you for visiting our website and reading our profile. Christ Episcopal Church is situated in the historic West End of Aspen on the edge of the beautiful combined campus of the Aspen Institute and the Aspen School and Music Festival. When most people think of Aspen, they think of world-class skiing. Aspen was reimagined in the 1940s as not just a ski town, but as a community centered on the ethos of “mind, body, and spirit”. As you will read in our profile, Christ Church is not without difficulties. While our eyes have been opened to our challenges, our eyes have also been opened to the bountiful opportunities before us. Our community is one in which people are yearning for a deeper understanding of God through worship, prayer, and study. As the Roaring Fork Valley grows, we believe we are uniquely situated to create meaningful change. Our natural environment is one where people experience profound beauty. The offerings of the Aspen Institute, Aspen Music Festival, and abundant cultural opportunities offer world-renowned intellectual stimulation. We believe our Church can be the driving source of spiritual wonder and connection with God. We believe God has given us much to do as we look for renewal, restoration, and re-engagement in our church. We seek a rector who will not do the work for us, but who will shepherd us and walk with us to the future God has in store. We invite you to dream with us and discern whether God is calling you to be our next rector.



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## OUR COMMUNITY ASPEN AND THE ROARING FORK VALLEY

Aspen has always been more than a ski resort. The town started as a booming silver mining town in the 1880s. Later, Chicago industrialist Walter Paepcke led the reclamation of the old mining town shortly after World War II, envisioning that the spectacular natural beauty of Aspen should offer not only premier skiing, but activities that would expand intellectual and cultural thinking. This ethos, which was expressed in shorthand as mind, body and spirit, remains the philosophy that guides the life of Aspen today. It resulted in the establishment of the Aspen Institute and the Aspen Music Festival and School. These world renowned institutions were joined over the years by the Aspen Physics Institute, the Anderson Ranch Arts Center and other organizations to create a dynamic cluster of activities that reflect the mind, body and spirit ethos and draw a spectrum of government, academic, science, social and arts leaders from around the world to Aspen. This rich lode of activity is wrapped around the range of outdoor mountain sports that also draw worldwide visitors.

Aspen is a town of 7,000 residents. It has experienced changes typical to the times, but unique to a resort community. The high cost of housing was met early on in a robust affordable housing program. The influx of Latino population has been seen mostly as a benefit to Aspen's workforce while at the same time demanding attention to needed social programs and efforts for increasing inclusion into our communities.

These underpinning social and cultural changes that have been taking place in Aspen for decades are now joined by the rush to places like Aspen, triggered by the pandemic, to escape the density of urban life and environmental threats. This new inflow presents Christ Church with opportunities to provide a spiritual home and community for newcomers. This is a challenge and opportunity that the parish's leaders recognize and welcome as part of its vision for the future.





In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

## OUR CHURCH

### WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

Christ Episcopal Church was established in 1884 when Aspen was a thriving mining town. The town had seen tremendous growth due to the discovery of silver in nearby mountains. The silver crash of the 1890s caused a decline in population and economic activity. The church building was moved to Marble, a town about 60 miles away, in 1908. The building is still there, now a community congregation. The “quiet years” ensued in Aspen until the advent of skiing in the late 1940s.

In the 1950s services were held in a miner’s cabin. In 1960 land was donated by a couple active in the church. The architectural design was a gift from another parishioner -- a rather unusual one at that. The new church building opened in 1962. Shortly after, property was purchased next door, and a rectory was constructed and occupied in the late 1960s.

# WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

(continued)

In the 1960s and 1970s, Aspen came alive as did the church. These were active times at Christ Episcopal and continued into the first decade of the 21st century. A major renovation of the church was undertaken in 2009. The worship space was expanded and a new fellowship hall was built adjoining the sanctuary. With large doors opening into the sanctuary, this area also serves as overflow seating as needed. A narthex now separates the entrance doors from the sanctuary and a beautiful stained-glass window was installed behind the altar. A chapel was added and the lower level now houses a large multi-function space, offices, and teaching rooms.

In the mid-1980s, Christ Church sponsored the establishment of a parochial mission in nearby Basalt. We assisted in purchasing a building and pursued a major fundraising campaign to renovate the space and to eventually pay off the mortgage. St. Peter's is now an active parish for the mid-valley area about 20 miles from Aspen.

Today, Christ Church is a somewhat seasonal parish. We have members who live in Aspen and the valley year-round. We also have many members who live here seasonally, some throughout the winter, and others in the summer. Like most ski towns, we have shoulder seasons when visitor activity is very slow each spring and late fall, and some businesses close. This makes Christ Church unique among Episcopal Churches in that we essentially have three congregations in one: a year-round congregation, a summer congregation, and a winter congregation. We find that even when people are not here for months at a time, they still consider Christ Church their spiritual home.



# The Impact of COVID

Like every church, COVID has taken a toll on our parish this year. The church building was closed for five months over the spring and summer, and we are still limited in allowable attendance on Sundays. While we have been providing Sunday services by live-streaming, our ASA and financial giving have dropped significantly.

We have a history of good involvement in fellowship, from a monthly Sunday breakfast to monthly dinners, seasonal events and more. All these have come to a halt due to the pandemic. Annual giving in 2018 was \$545,710. For 2020, our projected giving income will be \$270,000.

In addition to the challenge of closing the church building this past spring, other trends made life more difficult for our parish. The city and the church saw a modest exodus down valley to nearby communities which are more affordable. This has continued along with the aging of the congregation. We have seen some members leave the area and some have died.

However, there is good news. The silver lining is that we have learned to embrace technology in a way that has allowed us to connect with parishioners near and far. As the world returns to normal, we pray sooner than later, we also pray that we can continue to use these newfound skills to embrace everyone who calls Christ Church home.



# WHERE WE ARE

## Our Challenges:

2017 2019

Total Membership

386

242

Average Sunday Attendance

126

82

Annual Giving

\$564,500

\$530,594

In the summer of 2020, we conducted a Holy Cow survey and hosted multiple listening sessions for our parish. 66 people filled out the surveys, and 30 participated in the listening sessions. The results clearly state that Christ Church is in a recovery phase, as well as clarifies the work that needs to be done to return to a thriving parish. We seek a rector who will see a positive, holy challenge in this! We are committed to transformation, and we seek someone with the right gifts and skills to shepherd us through these challenges.

The survey described us as a rector-focused, (as opposed to a congregation-focused) parish. In other words, we have looked to our rector to articulate our vision and make things happen. Christ Church has historically enjoyed deeper participation by parishioners, but that has declined in the recent past. We seek to develop a partnership with our next rector to set our vision and work together toward the future to which God is calling us.

The survey also revealed a lack of trust in church leadership, both within the parish and the diocese. We seek a rector who will lead with transparency and who will work effectively with our bishop, vestry, and parishioners in a way that invites and encourages expanded lay leadership.

\*based on our 2019 and 2017 parochial reports

# WHERE WE ARE

## Our Strengths:

Despite our challenges, we believe Christ Church has an abundance of strengths! Here are a few:

- Our parishioners have a deep love of God and dedication to the Church.
- We have a spiritual curiosity and are eager to expand our understanding of God and our relationship with Jesus.
- We are evenly split between those who are theologically liberal and those who are theologically conservative.
- We believe our parish has significant untapped financial giving potential.
- We have no debt and beautifully updated facilities.
- We have many untapped opportunities for deeper collaboration with the Aspen Institute and Aspen Music Festival, among others.
- We have a proud history of outreach in the local community and are eager to rekindle our efforts in the Roaring Fork Valley, to address the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.

# WHERE GOD IS CALLING US TO GO

## Our Vision Statement:

Christ Church is dedicated to answering God's call to be a resource to the Aspen community by offering a welcoming and inclusive place to worship, engage in fellowship, learn, and experience inspiration. Through helping parishioners and visitors realize a deeper connection with Christ, we will be able to go forth and let our light shine in the world.



### WE SEEK A RECTOR WHO IS

- An inspiring preacher with a strong grounding in theology and the Bible and who can challenge us to think in new and deeper ways about our faith.
- A teacher with proven skills to provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual growth.
- Gifted at providing pastoral care and who develops personal relationships with church members.
- Dedicated to recruiting and empowering strong lay leaders who serve within the church and in the greater Aspen community.

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

2 Corinthians 5:17

# OUR GOALS



To deepen our sense of connection to God and one another through stronger worship services.



To create more opportunities for Christian Education and spiritual formation for all ages.



To strengthen the pastoral response of the church in serving people in need, both within the parish and in the larger community.



To develop a strategy and make necessary changes to attract younger people and families.



To adapt the church to be more accessible to the current pace and schedule of our lives.

# FINANCIALS

Christ Church has enjoyed a balanced budget for many years with income and expenses in the area of \$500,000 annually. Unfortunately, in 2019 a couple of significant donors indicated that they would no longer be supporting the church. We also had several people relocate and leave the church in 2018 and 2019. The loss of these pledges led to the 2020 pledged budget being reduced by one-third.

The closing of our church building this past spring due to the coronavirus and our limited use of the church building even now has resulted in a significant income shortfall for 2020. Our budget for the year projected income of \$385,000, down from previous years. With reduced income due to the pandemic we expect an income shortfall of about \$60,000. We have reserves of \$255,000 and will dip into these funds to cover the shortfall for 2020. There is no debt on the church building or the rectory.

# OUR DIOCESE

## The Episcopal Church in Colorado

The Episcopal Diocese of Colorado encompasses the entire state of Colorado - around 105,000 square miles - and is comprised of 95 worshiping congregations and nine Diocesan institutions. Our Bishop is The Right Reverend Kym Lucas, who was elected as the 11th Bishop of



Colorado on October 27, 2018 at the 131st Annual Convention of the Diocese. Bishop Lucas was consecrated as our bishop on May 18, 2019 at St. John's Cathedral in Denver. Bishop Kym is the first female bishop as well as the first African American bishop in the Diocese of Colorado's 132-year history.

For a more detailed history of the Episcopal Church in Colorado, please go to [episcopalcolorado.org](http://episcopalcolorado.org).

**BISHOP KYM LUCAS**



Christ Church is blessed with a comfortable Rectory adjacent to the church. The house is two stories with a full finished, large basement. The home features four bedrooms and four baths. This year we made repairs including a new boiler, kitchen renovations, painting throughout, renovation of the master bathroom, and new carpeting throughout. There is a small, useable back yard and parking spaces for two cars in addition to on-street parking. The house is in a premier, central neighborhood, and just a block from the Aspen Music Festival campus.

The city center is a short walk away and nearby bus transportation provides easy (and free) access to town. Aspen's excellent public schools are just a few miles away as is skiing at Aspen's four ski mountains.



# VESTRY, SEARCH COMMITTEE, AND STAFF

## Vestry

Warren Klug, Senior Warden

Cari Kuhlman

Katie McLellan

Donna Rowlands

Joel Shannon

## Search Committee

Lindsay Gorman, Co-chair

Jan Blaich, Co-chair

Peter Grenney

Chris Klug

Warren Klug

Katie McLellan

Alex Smith

## Staff

The Reverend Peter Munson, Interim Rector

Molly Noel, Director of Music

Katrina Gallant, Parish Administrator

Jamie Lawrence, Financial Administrator

Juan Sanchez, Custodian

# TO APPLY

Please send your resume, OTM portfolio, and letter of interest to The Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass, Canon for Transition Ministry at [vanessa@episcopalcolorado.org](mailto:vanessa@episcopalcolorado.org)

