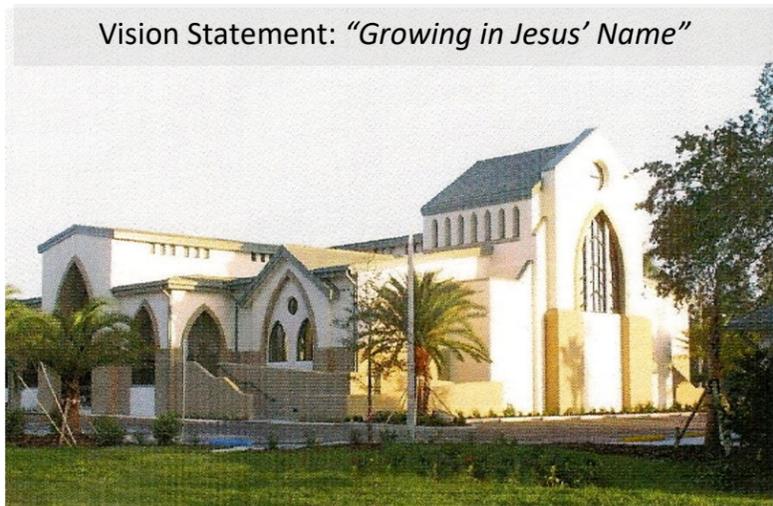


Christ Church of Longboat Key,  
 Presbyterian U.S.A.  
 6400 Gulf of Mexico Drive  
 Longboat Key, FL 34228



TO:



Dr. Norman M. Pritchard, Pastor

941-383-8833

Web-site: [www.christchurchoflbk.org](http://www.christchurchoflbk.org)

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
**Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30 - 1:30**

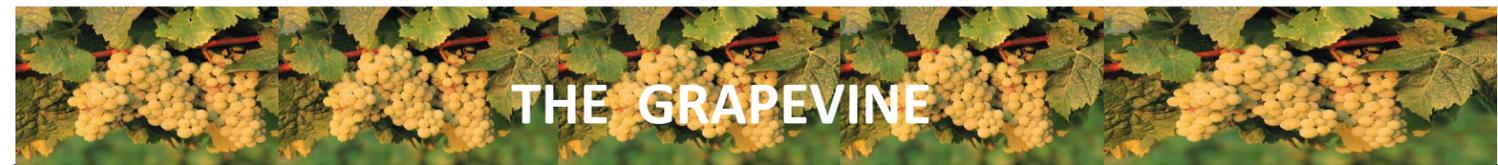
**Members of Session:**

**Class:**

- 2024 Kristine Bemko, Spiritual Growth/  
Technology
- 2025 Steve Bergman, Missions
- 2023 Noel Ebrahim, Clerk of the Session
- 2024 Bob Elwell, Personnel
- 2025 Mike Gardiner, Nominating/Membership
- 2024 Mark Hausberg, Admin/Finance
- 2025 Hannah Miller, Spiritual Growth
- 2025 Debra McKenna, Caring Ministries
- 2023 Diana Neely, Worship
- 2023 Ann Quackenbush, Membership/  
Nominating
- 2023 John Shehorn, Admin/Finance
- 2024 Lutie Uihlein, Fellowship

**Deacons:**

- 2024 John Dixon
- 2023 Holly Finks
- 2025 Gary Frank
- 2025 Cheryl Fraser
- 2024 Steve Miller
- 2023 Susan Stuckert



MAY 2022

CHRIST CHURCH OF LBK MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

VOL XII, Issue V

**The Pastor's Page**

**Memory and Continuity**

**By: Dr. Norman M. Pritchard, Pastor**

It was with considerable sadness that on Sunday, April 10, I announced to the congregation the passing of Charlie Gorham. Along with his wife Jean, he was one of the founding members of Christ Church and they poured their enthusiasm and commitment into our life together as a church from the very first.

I loved—and thoroughly agreed with—the lovely way his obituary put it:

*Charlie was a man of God and a great, loyal friend to many. He was selfless and generous. He helped many people and organizations. His accomplishments in business and his personal life were bountiful.*

The value of Charlie's service was quickly apparent to Dr. Bruce Porter who asked him to become an elder in 2010 and then serve as Clerk of Session. "When Bruce asks you, you simply can't say No," was the way he put it to me when we first met. Christ Church practice at that time required that, following ordination, elders would normally serve for three years and then rotate off session. Charlie, however, was asked to continue to serve as Session Clerk after his three years were completed, which he willingly did, attending all Session meetings but without a vote. In my view, that only served to increase the value of his service. He was re-elected to Session in 2017 and finally retired in 2020.

One of the values of a three-year rotation of elders is the way that process avoids the danger of a person or a small group of persons dominating the life of the Session and thus controlling the life of the congregation. There is, however, also a serious drawback to the process. The three years rotation restricts what we may call Session's institutional memory to that brief span of time, and it can happen that no one can recall why some decision was arrived at four or more years earlier. But Charlie could! He became our congregational memory bank, so to speak, and I found it particularly valuable in the early years of my

ministry to be able to ask him about the background to an issue, or to have him explain why some practice was followed. He was always gentle and gracious in doing this, never suggesting that the past was binding in some way and unchangeable.

Thus the complaint that is often, and not always unfairly leveled at congregations, that they're captive to a mindset that says "But we've always done it this way!" never applied as far as Charlie was concerned. It is a quality I have long appreciated and admired.

Still do! And it is always in my mind as we seek to live our faith in a world that is changing far more rapidly and even more radically than many people want. How do we preserve what is valuable from the past—our heritage and tradition, for example—yet at the same time remain open to challenges that may require us to consider a very different approach going forward? Congregation vitality—much in evidence at Christ Church—requires us to look both ways, back and forward, as we respond to our calling to be the church in our place at our time.

That is the underlying premise behind the Vital Congregations Initiative that we take up this month. Through sermons, prayers, studies and conversations we want to reflect on the meaning of our call and the best ways we can fulfill it. The studies and conversations may be joined via Sunday School after worship or in week night small group gatherings which are being offered to encourage members and friends up north to join in the conversations. As this seven-week series develops, I hope everyone will join in prayer for our life together and a growing commitment to serve our Lord in making Christ Church the congregation he wants it to be.



# DEACONS

*Following to Lead | Leading to Serve*

Christ Church has welcomed two new deacons, Gary Frank and Cheryl Fraser.



Gary Frank grew up near Grand Rapids, MI as did his wife, Linda. They moved to Chicago for work and then to Isle of Palms, SC, where they raised their two daughters. Over six years ago, Gary and Linda made their move to Florida. They found Christ Church and joined as full members. Gary served as an elder at their church on Isle of Palms and is looking forward to serving Christ Church as a deacon.



Cheryl Fraser hails from Charlotte, NC. She and her husband McCord raised their two children in Tampa. With the children grown, they moved to Longboat Key where Cheryl, a life-long Presbyterian, found Christ Church within a week. She loved the welcoming warmth of the congregation and McCord appreciated the great preaching. They joined CCLBK on the spot! They have recently moved to Tampa but, despite the commute, remain faithful members of Christ Church. She is looking forward to being a Deacon.



**National Day of Prayer** has a long history in our country. In 1775, the Continental Congress recommended there be a day for public prayer and fasting. It took awhile but in 1795, President George Washington proclaimed a day to be set aside for public thanksgiving and prayer.

The national theme for this year is "Exalt the Lord Who Has Established Us". Christ Church will again participate in this observance. Our church will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on **Thursday, May 5.**

We invite each of you to join the Christ Church Deacons in this solemn event. Along with your personal prayers, we are asking you to pray for the people of Ukraine.

Prayer gives us a rich connection to our spiritual life and provides comfort in times of crisis.

## Welcome

New Members



We welcome to Christ Church Joey and Chrisann Cheek, neighbors of Jack Isherwood in Bradenton. They are joining as full members by transfer of letter from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Brandon.

Originally from Texas, they are both retired, Chrisann from a career with Maas Brothers, then as Sales Manager with L'Oréal in Tampa and Joey from a career in retail oil and gas. After their move to Bradenton five years ago Jack introduced them to CCLBK as they began their search for a new church, visiting a wide variety of options. Ultimately, they settled on CCLBK because, as was the experience of so many members: "we felt right at home".

The Cheeks have two daughters, one living in Raleigh and another in Dallas. Chrisann is looking forward to growing her faith through the women's club and Bible studies. In her spare time, she enjoys biking, walking, pilates, boating and entertaining neighbors and friends, while Joey's interests include men's club, choir and Bible studies.



## CHRIST CHURCH OF LONGBOAT KEY

### TOUR OF THE HOLY LAND

October 24 - November 2, 2022

Hosted by Dr. Norman Pritchard and Dr. Fred Finks

**\$5058\* pp from Tampa, FL**

**All Inclusive:** Round trip airfare, 4 & 5 star hotels, land transportation, guide, entrance fees, tips, carrier surcharge, travel insurance, breakfast and dinner daily and 4 lunches. **Not included:** Drinks, souvenirs and personal items.

Journey with us to the land where Scripture comes alive. Visit the towns and places where Jesus lived, taught and performed miracles. Walk the ancient streets of Jerusalem, experience the Old City and travel the Way of the Cross, sit among the ancient trees on the Mt. of Olives, Sail on the Sea of Galilee and swim in the Dead Sea. From Caesarea, Tiberias, Galilee, Capernaum, the Jordan, Masada to Jerusalem this will be a life changing experience. Contact Dr. Fred Finks.

Optional Extension to Petra, Jordan: Nov 3-5, 2022 - **\$1049\***

Optional Extension to Egypt: Nov.5-10 2022 - **\$2106\* \*estimated**

## Prayer

*"Be anxious for nothing but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." ~ Phil 4:6*

*May we pray for you?*

The Christ Church prayer chain is committed to lifting you up in times of difficulty and giving thanks and praise in times of gladness. You can be assured our team keeps your requests in the strictest of confidence.

If you have a need or praise for which you would like prayer, contact either of our prayer chain coordinators:

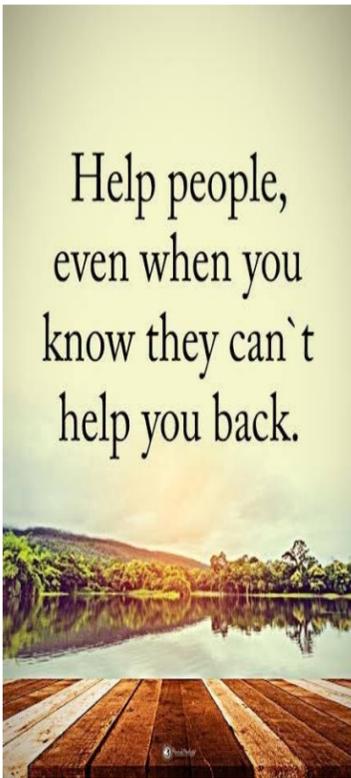
Karen Jennings  
Shirley Venkataraman

For I **know the plans** I have for you, declares the **LORD**, plans to prosper you and **not to harm** you, plans to give you **hope and a future.**

*Jeremiah 29:11*



Thank you to all for your generous donations of Easter Baskets and various assorted food items and diapers.



Help people, even when you know they can't help you back.

Growing in Jesus' name through Bible studies, Sunday School, small groups, and special events.



Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV - *Trust* in the **LORD** with all *your heart* and lean not on your own understanding.

In all your ways *acknowledge Him* and he shall direct your paths.

*This has been a favorite verse of mine for a long time. It sums up two very important things God asks of us.*

*1 - Trust and 2 - Acknowledge His way instead of my way.*

*Throughout my life, I have found that the best outcomes I have had stem from listening and following God's answer to my situation. In fact, last Easter, I made my 2 granddaughters a plaque to hang on their wall with this verse. However, I used the Message version because I thought it was easier for them to understand. It said:*

*"Trust God from the bottom of your heart. Don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen to God's voice in everything you do and everywhere you go. He's the one who will keep you on track."*

AMEN -- Jean Buckley--



If reading the Bible is difficult for you, download this App. You get one verse a day sent to you that you can think on all day and memorize so that you can plant God's Word in your heart.

### Reading Buddies

### Annual Awards Day Ceremony

The Dream Center children's accomplishments in reading were recognized at the Annual Awards Day ceremony. Children received certificates and prizes for excellence in attendance, progress, effort and citizenship. Every child also received a book with a bookmark knitted by the Christ Church knitters. The Reading Buddies also presented a personally inscribed book to the children with whom they worked throughout the season. Grandparents, parents and siblings joined our young readers to celebrate their achievements.



**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** meets on **Wednesdays** at **10:00 a.m.** in the **Office Building Meeting Room**. Our current topic is "Elijah" a 7-week video study by Priscilla Shirer, exploring the prophet's voice of unapologetic truth during a time of national crisis and moral decline and the difficult choices of obedience that kept him anchored and sharpened in faith. To obtain a study guide and register for class, contact Jean Buckley at [bchbummom@verizon.net](mailto:bchbummom@verizon.net) or (941) 726-3446.

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY** continues our lively discussion on CS Lewis' *Screwtape Letters*. We have also added zoom to our in-person meeting so all can join in.

**INTRO TO THE BIBLE:** King David wrote: "I have hidden Thy Word in my heart so I will not sin against Thee". Psalm 119:11 "God's Word is trustworthy and true".

Sign up for Introduction to the Bible. Gain trust in God's Word, its relevance today and strength for tomorrow. Starts **May 11** from **1:00-2:30** in the office conference room. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact Barbara Grimes.

**VIRTUAL WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP:** Beginning in June, we will offer a study of the *Book of Mark* by Paul Eckel. Please contact Barbara Grimes.

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY** - Bags are available for parents/grandparents to pick up each Sunday to use at home to talk about God and how Jesus loves them. Included are stickers, coloring books, a cross, and a short story based on the scripture read that Sunday.

*"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose" ~ Jim Elliott*

Start your morning thanking God and asking Him to show His Steadfast love as you begin your day. Then before you go to bed thank Him as you look over how He has shown His Faithfulness to you that day.

**"To learn to read is to light a fire; Each syllable that is spelled out is a spark."**

Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*



### April Men's Club Meeting Highlights

April's meeting featured Mike and Karen Gardiner. They presented a fascinating travelogue of their Silk Road Asia trip.

Our renowned chef, Wiley Osborn, prepared a unique and delicious breakfast highlighting the foods of this exotic destination!



### Library Book Sale

Thanks to many energetic volunteers, including one delightful junior volunteer, our book sale was set up and organized in record time. More volunteers arrived on a Saturday to conduct our first ever sale to the public. CCLBK received compliments for the beauty of our sanctuary and fellowship hall and some visitors said they would be back to attend services.

Visitors and volunteers shared favorite author and book recommendations while other volunteers served Patty's famous carrot cake and more delicious treats to our guests and workers. After selling approximately 1,400 items, we still had a few hundred to donate to Turning Points. Thank you to all the wonderful members of our community who donated books, volunteered and shopped to make this our best sale ever!



Over 60 members of the CCLBK community gathered on Friday, April 22, for an end of season going away party at Cedars. Beautifully prepared hors d'oeuvres were followed by Patty Buck's sumptuous chocolate and key lime cakes. Summer plans were shared as many part-time residents said good bye until the next season. Everyone enjoyed the setting, the food and the fellowship offered by this beautiful evening.



until next time

### Library News

During May, we highlight our books about women in the Bible. Examine why Jesus interacted with many of the so called bad girls, what the meaning of Mary Magdalene might be for us today and what the life of women was like at the time of the Bible. Look for 220 Women in our Faith and Spiritual Growth collection.

Our entire WWII collection is on the first two shelves along General Harris Street and includes outstanding novels and historical accounts. Be reminded of the bravery of our heroes from the past as the Ukrainians now bravely fight for their country. Pray for peace and an end to the horrors of war.

We also have many recent best sellers, audio books, puzzles and DVDs available for your enjoyment. Library hours are 9:00 to noon Sundays, 8:30 to 1:30 Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

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## The Legacy Fund

In explaining to the congregation their decision to add Christ Church to their estate planning, Dr. Fred Finks said, "This was an easy decision for us. Both Holly and I were taught at a very young age that giving back to God was something we should do as an expression of our faith. As kids we were taught to tithe. So when we married, we both came with the commitment that giving to ministry was important and necessary."

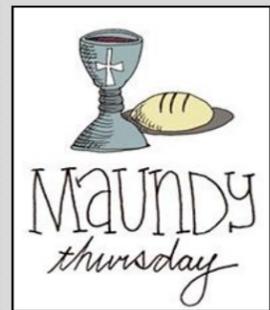
"Putting Christ Church into our estate plans was easy. Christ Church has captured our hearts and we have fallen in love with you all and the work of ministry here at Christ Church. We want to be faithful both now and after we are gone."

Holly added, "Christ Church was begun by a group of people who wanted to remain faithful to Christ and ensure that the church continues. The Legacy Funds Ministry is a way to join together to ensure that what God has created here at Christ Church will endure long after all of us are gone."

They explained, "The Legacy Funds will invest the principle gift to provide for three areas of ministry. One is the Capital Facilities Fund which provides for the maintenance of the physical plant. Second is the Ministries Fund which provides to support the various ministries including worship, music, fellowship, and spiritual growth, to mention a few. The third is the Mission and Benevolence Fund that provides for the continuation of our mission outreach. Programs like Reading Buddies, Beth El, and Turning Points will have the necessary funds they need to keep helping people in need."

Fred asked us all to give prayerful consideration to joining us and others by naming Christ Church in your will, trust, or estate planning. Together we can join forces to ensure that the ministry of Christ Church remains strong and vibrant.

~ Fred and Holly Finks



## A group from Christ Church had a guided tour of Embracing Our Differences in downtown Sarasota.

A few of our favorite inspirational quotes are:

"The more you embrace the diversity of others, the more you expand your world."

"Don't focus on what could be, create what will be."

"The problem isn't that I'm different. It is the expectation that I should be the same."

"A person is like a book. You can't judge them if you don't know what is going on inside."

"A change of mindset can change the world."

"Do you have the courage to invite someone new to your lunch table?"

"Our differences makes us unique; our unity makes us strong."

"If all are created equal, why aren't we acting that way?"

"Can you truly understand if you won't even take the time to listen."

"Diversity and inclusivity aren't just about providing seats at the table, but also recognizing the value of those sitting there."



# Your Mission \$ at Work

## Feeding the Migrant Farmworkers

It was a perfect day, as the words of Jesus to serve others resonated on that Maundy Thursday.

Eight volunteers helped to bring a hot lunch to fruit and vegetable packers in a facility located near Beth-El Farmworker Ministry. More than 100 migrant workers came by our tables in the parking lot and enjoyed a substantial lunch.

Jim Seaton cooked BBQ chicken and acquired the buns, chips, jalapenos and cake for dessert; Pat Hollis helped get the food hot and ready for transporting; and Steve Bergman, Sally Rauch, Ann Quackenbush, Sue Wertman, Kit Torchia, Joyce and Jerry Fox went to Wimauma to serve the lunch.

It is always a blessing to prepare and bring food to the struggling migrant farmworkers.



## Agape Flights Plane Is Attacked

Our long-time mission partner, Agape Flights, suffered a devastating loss last month when a group of rioters stormed the airport in Haiti. The rioters destroyed Agape's Chieftain aircraft and set it on fire. Thankfully, the Agape work team was not present at the airport when the attack took place and returned safely to Venice airport a few days later.

Agape Flights has been flying to Haiti for about 42 years, delivering cargo, mail and supplies to hundreds of missionaries and, more recently, delivering relief supplies and other humanitarian aid in the wake of earthquakes and hurricanes. Apparently, rioters did not target Agape itself, but thought the plane belonged to a local politician.

Agape Flights is carrying on with their mission to serve Haiti and other nearby countries. Even though all flights to the Les Cayes Airport (where the attack occurred) have been suspended by the government, Agape will continue to serve missionaries and the people of Haiti by delivering cargo to an alternate airport.

Agape is working through the insurance claim process, which as we know is a slippery slope.





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am WORSHIP	2 9:00 Men's Bible Study	3 9:00 Mission 9:30 Worship	4 10:00 Women's Bible Study	5	6	7
8 10:00am WORSHIP	9 9:00 Men's Bible Study	10 9:30 Fellowship	11 10:00 Women's Bible Study 1:00 Intro to Bible	12	13	14
15 10:00am WORSHIP	16 9:00 Men's Bible Study	17	18 10:00 Women's Bible Study 1:00 Book Club	19	20	21
22 10:00 am WORSHIP	23 9:00 Men's Bible Study	24	25 10:00 Women's Bible Study	26	27	28
29 10:00 am WORSHIP	30 9:00 Men's Bible Study	31				

Days and times for Vital Connections are listed to the right →

THIS IS THE  
Day  
THAT THE  
LORD  
Has made,  
SO LET US  
rejoice  
and  
BE GLAD in it.  
PSALM 118:24



## SEVEN MARKS OF VITAL CONGREGATIONS

Christ Church is embarking on a journey of renewal to continue the steps taken in our 2017 Vision Statement and to join other churches in the Peace River Presbytery to seek vitality of worship and discipleship through Seven Marks of Vital Congregations.

**Our Vision:** Christ Church seeks to be a vital congregation by engaging in vibrant communication to discern, live and increase the vitality of our worship and mission.

**Our Purpose:** Christ Church will explore seven marks of the Vital Congregation initiative through worship and small group gatherings to explore, empower, and renew our commitment to live more fully as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

**Our Initiative:** This is not a program! It is a faith journey for our church to continue on the path our founders laid before us. Over the past seventeen years, we have become a vibrant church on Longboat Key. We have built a major campus, a worship experience with Christ as the center, an intentional faith community of caring members, and an outreach and mission commitment which seeks to focus resources on those in need.

Our desire is to strengthen the foundation upon which we stand and to enrich our expressions of faith by ensuring that we are constantly moving forward in meaningful ways. Like our Vision Statement of 2017, we want to engage as many people as possible to seek their input on ways we can maintain and increase our vitality as Christ Church.

**Our Values:** We are committed to an honest and open approach to discern what it means to follow Jesus faithfully and to make disciples. We will:

- Seek God's leading through a commitment to prayer
- Rely upon the Holy Scriptures as our guide
- Be led by the Holy Spirit
- Be faithful with courageous conviction to make any necessary changes that honor God in our life together
- Be bold in our conviction to love one another

**Our Approach:** In many ways we have already begun. Part of the process of the Seven Marks is to begin by "telling our story." Our story was presented at our Tenth Year Celebration resulting in a relevant pictorial history. Another part of the process includes an analysis of our opportunities. This too, has its foundation in our previous work as we developed our Vision Statement.

A committee has been formed to lead this initiative and will report to Session. The members include Pastor Norman, George Rauch, Kristine Bemko, Jon Grimes, Janet Walter, Noel Ebrahim and Fred Finks, Chair.

On Sunday, May 1, Norman will begin a seven-week sermon series on The Seven Marks. A Sunday School class will follow in person along with several Zoom gatherings for those who are not present during the summer. We want to involve as many people as possible as we enter into this venture. Opportunities for participating in small groups called "Vital Conversations" will be available for anyone interested in these conversations.

We are hosting 6 Vital Connection Groups via Zoom beginning the week of May 1 to discuss the sermon series by Pastor Norman. Pastor Norman will be leading the seventh Vital Connection group in person following the worship service each Sunday morning.

We are urging as many people as possible who are not in residence during this time to sign up with one of the 6 Zoom Groups.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83505746263?pwd=V1B2cTM2SFNhU1gzUUViY205dld1dz09>

Meeting ID: 835 0574 6263 Passcode: 889475

### Leaders:

Noel Ebrahim	Monday	7:00 pm
George Rauch	Tuesday	5:00 pm
Janet Walter	Wednesday	12:00 pm
Jon Grimes	Thursday	4:00 pm
Fred Finks	Thursday	7:00 pm

