

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



TO:



Dr. Norman M. Pritchard, Pastor
Dr. Fred Finks, Honorary Parish Associate
941-383-8833

Website: www.christchurchoflbk.org
E-mail: info@christchurchoflbk.org

OFFICE HOURS:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:00 - 1:00

Members of Session:	
Class:	
2025	Steve Bergman, Missions
2024	Bob Elwell, Personnel
2024	Michael Chester, Personnel
2026	Cathy Daily, Worship
2026	Fred Finks, Spiritual Growth
2025	Mike Gardiner, Nominating
2024	Mark Hausberg, Admin/Finance
2026	Barbara Liggett, Worship
2025	Debra McKenna, Caring Ministries
2026	Steve Walter, Technology
2025	Joyce Wartinbee, Membership
2024	Lutie Uihlein, Fellowship
John Shehorn Treasurer, Building and Grounds	
Noel Ebrahim Clerk of Session and Evangelism	
Deacons:	
2025	Glenn Cassens
2026	Holly Finks
2025	Gary Frank
2024	Susan Crumpler
2024	Karen Jennings
2026	Kathy McLean

THE GRAPEVINE

"I am the vine, you are the branches."

May 2023

CHRIST CHURCH OF LONGBOAT KEY NEWSLETTER

VOL XIII, Issue 5

The Pastor's Page

At Home With God
By Dr. Norman M. Pritchard, Pastor

So far we have completed much of the process involved in exploring the Seven Marks of Vital Congregations. We've held two series of small group discussions, reflecting on and reacting to the sermons on each of the marks, and we have completed the congregational survey. In the process we have acknowledged many congregational strengths and identified a shortcoming which Session has sought to remedy with the creation of a Committee on Evangelism. As a first step in engaging with the community around the church, we held a Saturday morning cook-out which gave us the chance to meet and enjoy several of our neighbors. Other projects will follow.

Now we want to prepare for what is arguably the most important feature of the 7 Marks initiative: a week of congregation-wide, intentional prayer for Christ Church and its ministry and mission in the world.

To help prepare for this, I am offering a series of sermons on prayer and relating the series to the seven marks. Reaction, reflection and response will be encouraged through Sunday School and small group meetings designed to stimulate our understanding of and desire for prayer. To complement the series, we are recommending the book, *Prayer, Finding the Heart's True Home* by Richard J Foster. This book is a Christian classic, with more than 2,090,000 copies sold and now available in a 10th anniversary commemorative edition.

Richard J. Foster is the author of several bestselling books, including *Celebration of Discipline*, which has sold more than a million copies. He is the founder of Renovaré, an intra-church movement committed to the renewal of the Church in all her multifaceted expressions, and a general editor of the *Renovaré Spiritual Formation Study Bible*.

Foster believes prayer is God's gift to us—much under-used, often misunderstood—and God's invitation to us. Foster writes, God is "inviting you—and me—to come home, to come home to where we belong, to come home to that for which we were created." Foster believes God is inviting us to be at home with God. He writes,
He invites us into **the living room of his heart**, where we can put on old slippers and share freely. He invites us into **the kitchen of his friendship**, where chatter and batter mix in good fun. He invites us into **the dining room of his strength**, where we can feast to your heart's delight. He invites us into **the study of his wisdom**, where we can learn and grow and stretch...and ask all the questions we want. He invites us into **the workshop of his creativity**, where we can be co-laborers with him, working together to determine the outcomes of events. He invites us **into the bedroom of his rest**, where new peace is found and where we can be naked and vulnerable and free. It is also the place of deepest intimacy, where we know and are known to the fullest.

Each of these rooms offers us a chance to connect with six of the seven marks, and I hope the series will then stimulate our prayers for our Christian walk, both individually, so that we grow in faith, and congregationally, that we develop the vitality that enables ministry and mission (which is the seventh mark, congregational health). I'll connect each room to a chapter in Foster's book, to develop our focus and stimulate reflection and discussion.

Sunday School conversations and the small group meetings in people's homes will begin in the week following Sunday May 14. We are hoping to be able to offer live streaming for Sunday School, to allow members and friends up north to participate. More details will be given in the Sunday announcements and we hope to engage as many members as possible in this exciting process.

Your Mission \$ at Work

1 in 5 school age children in Manatee County are hungry.

Elks Feeding Empty Little Tummies has been providing weekend nourishment for homeless and food deprived children in Manatee county since 2011. Christ Church of Longboat Key is proud to support E.F.E.L.T. As one of our mission partners through financial aid as well as donations of food items.

You can help!
There is a labeled box just inside the door of the Fellowship Hall available for food contributions.

Items needed are:
Peanut butter 15 oz.
Individual fruit drinks
Small boxes of raisins
Ramen noodles
Individual packets of oatmeal
Pudding cups
Tuna packets
Small Mac n' cheese boxes
Small packets of dry milk
5-7oz. cans of vegetables & fruit

Presently 575 children, ages 5-12, take home backpacks filled with non- perishable meals and snacks every Friday. Volunteers collect, sort, pack and deliver weekly to 11 different schools. There are no paid employees and no administrative costs.

During the pandemic, summer efforts continued as bags of food were delivered in cooperation with Meals on Wheels. This year there will be a short break between school year end and middle of July when purchasing and receiving donations will begin for the coming school year.

You can participate in this worthy mission by contributing the aforementioned items and also donating to the annual Giving Partner Challenge each March.

" Not all of us can do great things . But we can do small things with great love."
Mother Teresa



Easter Sunday 2023

Easter Sunday was a joyful occasion with a very full Sanctuary, a beautiful service, welcoming greeters and children!



Enrichment Program at the 13th Avenue Dream Center

Derric Gobourne, dancer, singer, producer and writer, performed for the Dream Center children as part of our enrichment program. Derric grew up in the Dream Center neighborhood and was able to relate to the children on a very personal level. Although enthralled by Derric's talent and charisma, it was when he read his recently published book, *Mommy, Am I Special?* that he was able to show the children all the possibilities that lay before them. The Reading Buddies program gratefully acknowledges the West Coast Black Theatre Troupe for partnering with the Reading Buddies program to share this extraordinarily talented (24-year-old!) young man with the Dream Center children. "If you can dream it, you can be it."



Membership:

Are you interested in becoming a member of our Church family? Please stop by the Welcome Desk any Sunday and speak with Joyce Wartinbee or contact her at (248) 408-5834 or jwartinbee@juno.com



BRIDGE CLUB

Join us in the Café Area
on **Tuesdays** at 1:30
p.m.

All levels of players are welcome!



The last meeting of the season is **Wednesday, May 17, at 1:00 p.m.** in the Conference Room. The book to be discussed is "Wish You Were Here" by Jodi Picoult.



Christ Church is committed to assisting members and friends on their personal journey to a deeper relationship with Jesus. Opportunities for growth include worship, Bible study, small groups, retreats, enrichment weekends and prayer. The Committee seeks to include many opportunities for 2023 and we pray that many within the Christ Church family will take advantage of these opportunities.

Psalm 91:1-2
He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust!”

This verse gives me strength and comfort and also provides direction. It reminds me that He has been and will continue to be my refuge and my fortress; and that it is my responsibility to keep my eyes focused on Him and stay in close relationship with Him. Shirley Venkatraman

Church-Wide Initiative on PRAYER

Throughout our year and a half engagement in *The Seven Marks of Vital Congregations*, Christ Church has explored the strengths and weaknesses of our ministries. Simply stated, we are a strong and vibrant church with unlimited possibilities for ministry excellence.

The second half of year two’s initiative is a focus on prayer. Christ Church has a rich tradition in the area of prayer. Our Prayer Chain is a rich asset that holds the sacred trust of those who seek prayer. Faithful prayer warriors pray unceasingly for those requests that come before them. Intercessory Prayer is another valuable resource provided each Sunday by our Deacons. Our congregation finds it easy to share their concerns and to seek prayer through these valuable channels.

We want to take the next step and provide another personal approach to prayer. Beginning on May 14, Pastor Norman will launch a six-week study on the topic of personal prayer using Richard Foster’s book on Prayer. We are encouraging everyone to participate in the worship series either in person or via the internet. In addition, Pastor Norman will lead the Sunday School class each of the six Sundays on the material from Foster’s book and his sermon material. Several Small Groups will also meet both in person and via Zoom throughout the week to discuss the same material.

Let us be in regular prayer for an inspiring and enriching summer.

Men’s Spring Retreat 2024

The Men of Christ Church will hold their first ever overnight Men’s Retreat at Day Spring Retreat Center on March 8-9, 2024. This promises to be a special event of building relationships and bonding as men of God. This will be nothing like you have ever imagined and promises to be fun as well as enriching. Put the date on your calendars as participation is limited to the first 40.



“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.

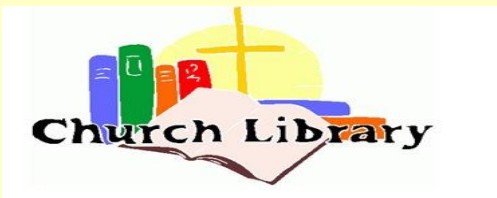
If you have a need or praise for which you would like prayer, contact either of our prayer chain coordinators:

Karen Jennings ~ karenjennings1239@gmail.com
Shirley Venkataraman ~ shirleyvenk@hotmail.com

We recently received a donation of \$36,300 designated for Mission. The donors asked for guidance in selecting 6 Mission partners. Mission Committee recommended, and the donors agreed, to send the funds to Harvest House, Beth-El Ministry, Our Daily Bread, Selah Freedom, Agape Flights, and Turning Points. God is good.

Going Away Party

The balmy weather at our annual End of Season Party put everyone in a festive mood. Attendees enjoyed sharing summer plans, including time with family, travel to distant locales and the opportunity to just relax after the busy season. Hugo’s II offered their popular schnitzel and numerous delicious side dishes plus a bonus pasta as a surprise addition to the planned meal. The dinner concluded with everyone’s favorite, our traditional carrot cake, prepared by our talented in-house baker.



During May, we are highlighting our Faith based collection about **family, aging, illness and dying well**. Select from books such as *Plan B* by Ann Lamott, which offers hope to those who are anxious about the state of the world, aging, or difficulties with your children, *The Gift of Years* by Joan Chittister or books about how to support those who are facing serious illness or death. One such title is *Just Show Up* by Kara Tippetts. Look for section 240 Family in the Faith collection. Be encouraged by the words of God and the wisdom of others.

Three series about British Sleuths are on the Highlighted Collections bookcase this month. Inspector Lynley is the aristocratic, Oxford educated detective in the crime novels by **Elizabeth George**. This popular televised series is still available on multiple streaming channels. **Charles Todd** is the author of two series set either during World War I or immediately after: the Ian Rutledge series about the Scotland Yard detective who suffers from shell shock and the novels about British Army nurse Bess Crawford, who spent much time on the battlefield caring for soldiers.

Stop by to browse our Faith based, Nonfiction and Fiction collections. We also have audio books and DVDs to share, as well as puzzles, children’s books and family games. Library hours are 9:00 to noon Sundays, 8:00 to 1:00 Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

Giving to CCLBK Through Your IRA Can Save Taxes

If you are 70 1/2 or more, you can give through your IRA and avoid taxes on the amount contributed. This applies to non Roth IRAs, where you can have a portion of your required income distribution paid directly to a qualifying charity (such as CCLBK) by the custodian of your funds. Because the gift amount is not included in your tax return, no tax is accrued. If you claim the standard deduction - as more individuals and couples are doing since the 2018 tax law changes - the IRA giving option enables you to still have a tax benefit for your gift because it’s not included in your income. If you have questions about this avenue of giving to CCLBK, please contact:

Mark Hausberg or John Shehorn

READING BUDDIES AWARDS ASSEMBLY

The Annual Reading Buddies Awards Assembly took place on April 5th. The children in the reading program were recognized for excellence in four major categories: Attendance, Progress, Effort and Citizenship. Additionally, seven children received bicycles, helmets and locks in recognition of having successfully completed three years in the program. The children's parents turned out in record numbers to celebrate their children's accomplishments in reading and to join the children, the Dream Center staff and the Reading Buddies for a buffet dinner of pizza, beverages, fresh fruit and snacks. A special feature of this year's celebration was provided by our Christ Church knitters who knitted pencil cases for every child in the program, praying for the children with each stitch. The Reading Buddies Program, with the generous and enthusiastic support of Christ Church, relentlessly pursues its mission of being a light in the lives of at-risk children and shining that light on reading.



PASTOR IN PARADISE

Greetings from your Pastor Nominating Committee!!



In February, Rev. Pritchard informed us all of his desire to retire from ministry at the end of this year. That simple, but consequential announcement, began a journey involving a partnership between the Peace River Presbytery, our congregation and the Pastor-to-be. Having met with Rev. Melana Scruggs, the General Presbyter of the Peace River Presbytery, the Christ Church Session approved a motion to seek permission to begin a pastoral search. Before a search could begin, however, the Peace River Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) was required to give its approval, which was promptly obtained. Once permission was given by the COM, the congregation needed to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) which occurred at the congregational meeting on January 29th. Since that time, your PNC has been hard at work. With weekly meetings and numerous e-mail conversations, and with the help of our Peace River liaison Linda Getzen, our first order of business was to create our Ministry Information Form (MIF) describing our church and the type of pastor we are seeking. After much prayerful consideration, discussion, and internal contemplation, our MIF was created. But of course, it needed approval from both our Session, and the Peace River Presbytery COM before we could proceed. Gratefully, our MIF received a fairly quick and final approval on March 14th. We could now begin serious recruitment knowing who we are, and the type of individual we are looking for. The question before us, however was, and is, "God, who are YOU calling to lead our church? Show us your choice".

Within days of approval, our MIF was posted on the PCUSA's Church Leadership Connection (CLC), which is a web-based information system that identifies churches looking for pastors (via their MIF) and pastors looking for churches (via their PIF, Personal Information Form). Not much different than some well-known on-line job recruitment services attempting to match employers with employees. Looking to cast a large net, and to "get the word out", we sent letters to over 900 individual churches, Synods and Presbyteries. We also contacted several Presbyterian Seminaries and placed classified ads on their job posting websites, as well as placing an on-line and hard copy classified ad in *Presbyterian Outlook*. And, of course we asked for your help in recommending or identifying potential candidates who may be a good fit for our congregation.

As a result of that activity, your PNC has been actively reviewing and evaluating over 40 candidate applications for our Pastor position. This includes evaluating Personal Information Forms, searching the web for background information on potential candidates, and reviewing hours, and hours and hours of past sermons of potential candidates on YouTube and other on-line services.

When the time is right, a few of our top candidates will be Zoom interviewed and some invited to Christ Church so we can meet with them and give them the opportunity to get to know us. For these initial visits the candidates will not be introduced to the congregation and will not be preaching or attending Sunday worship out of respect for their confidentiality. That said, we are still accepting and reviewing applications and we appreciate and ask for your prayers and your help in our search. If you know a candidate who would be a good fit, encourage them to apply via the PCUSA Church Leadership Connection, or you can speak with one of the PNC members.

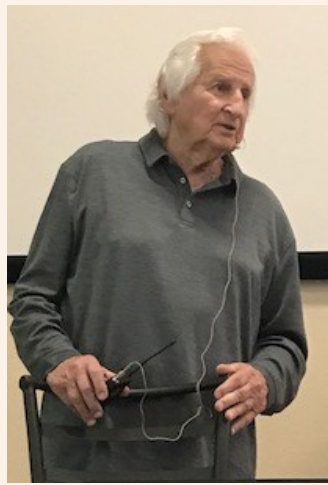
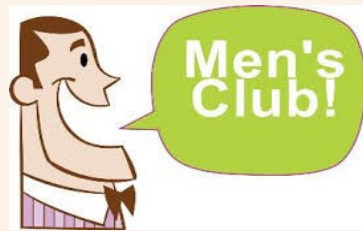
To review a sample of our recruiting materials or to see a copy of our Ministry Information Form (MIF) go to the Christ Church web site and tap on the tab for "Pastor Search".

Our PNC would like to give a special thank you to Marc Fors, who has been instrumental in creating many of our marketing materials, and working behind the scenes to guide us through and implement our web-based marketing program.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the members of the PNC for their unwavering dedication, thoughtful insights and willingness to take this journey together to find the person God is calling.

Please continue to pray for us and for Christ Church.

PNC Members: Steve Bergman, Judy Ebrahim, Karen Fors, Jerry Fox, Barbara Liggett, Susan Stuckert, Bill Wartinbee, Michael Chester (Chair)



This season's final gathering of the Men's Club featured Richard Cohen talking about his career as a talent agent for some of the major names of the rock and roll era. He "found" Janis Joplin in a bowling alley in Texas and worked with Ike and Tina Turner. His path crossed many others. It was an interesting and personal look at the recording industry. His presentation ended with an impromptu visit from none other than the "King", aka Doug Schultz, doing a rendition of Blue Suede Shoes.

To honor Elvis, Chef Lugano prepared a breakfast fit for the king. Next season we will be back beginning in early November with another great series of speakers. Stay tuned!



Mission Response

Hi, Christ Church Members,

I had to stop and read your letter twice when it arrived this morning. I was just getting my mind around the "...increase in funding for Agape Flights in 2023..." when I read the part about an additional donation of \$6,000. Thank you and all the good people at Christ Church. Allen Speer and I read our respective copies of your letter at about the same time and met each other in the hallway as each of us was eager to tell the other.

What great timing!

As you know, the situation in Haiti is getting worse every week as the lack of a formal government and increasing gang activity have the country's economy in a freefall. Inflation is at 50% already this year, but that only matters to the people who have money and can find a store. Most people don't and can't. A missionary recently shared that "just about everybody in Haiti is hungry." An article in this month's Christianity Today says that in 2020 there were over 1,700 career missionaries serving in Haiti, plus the countless others there on short-term mission trips. But that has changed dramatically. "Relatively speaking, almost no missionaries are traveling to Haiti at present. The risk of kidnapping—the risk simply of driving past areas where gang snipers indiscriminately shoot an average of six victims a week—is too high," according to the Christianity Today article.

But the need is only increasing. We believe as so many believe: The only hope for Haiti is Jesus Christ. To that end, we are currently serving close to 300 missionaries in Haiti, as well as missionaries serving in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas. Lives are being changed for the better and the name of Jesus is being proclaimed. We thank God for every opportunity to serve His missionaries.

Yesterday was a two-flight day. It's an exciting event when both planes are in the air at the same time. They both stopped in the Bahamas for gas, and one of them made some deliveries to a Bible college on the island of Eleuthera. From there, our big plane went to Les Cayes, Haiti, with 3,018 pounds of supplies missionaries desperately needed. That plane got back early last night. The other plane serviced our other airports in Haiti before overnighting in the Dominican Republic. I'm tracking their progress back to our hangar this afternoon and they're passing between Long Island, Bahamas, and Cuba right now. That plane delivered 2,300 pounds of supplies and is bringing a missionary family back from Haiti. I can only imagine the stories they'll have to share.

Next month we'll begin bringing tissue samples to the US from a breast cancer center in Haiti so doctors can better diagnose specific cancers and prescribe the correct treatment regime. This will save lives. And, as you probably know, missionaries from yet another nation have raised their metaphorical hands and asked if we could start serving them. So, there's a lot going on, for sure. All the more reason we are so grateful for Christ Church of Longboat Key's support of our work. Allen always says that missionary aviation is expensive – but to the missionary, it's priceless.

Thank you and all the nice people at CCLK. We are so very grateful for your friendship, your gifts, and your prayers.

In Christ,
Tim Kenny
Director of Donor Relations & Development
Agape Flights

From Melana Scruggs, General Presbyterian, Peace River Presbytery:

Please thank the congregation and the Mission Committee for the very generous gift to hurricane relief in the Presbytery. So many communities were devastated and churches with extreme damage have continued to serve them. Your gift will make a tremendous difference.

In Faith, Melana



HOPE SEEDS INTERNATIONAL

Matching Fund Opportunity! Thanks to a generous donor, Hope Seeds International (HSI) is able to offer a matching fund opportunity to double your gift up to \$20,000, from April 28th - May 5th. Please consider making a positive difference through education, seeds, and The Message of Hope! Our goal at HSI is to combine two very important scriptures: to love our neighbors as ourselves, the Great Commandment, and to go into all the world and make disciples, the Great Commission. I know times are not easy and there is much fear in the world, however, He has overcome the world, and difficult times are an opportunity to reach those who hurt and hunger.

How to double your gift: • Checks need to be dated between April 28 to May 5 for the match. Please Mail your gift to Hope Seeds (4501 Manatee Avenue West, #161, Bradenton, FL 34209). Donate on line - visit our website: www.hopeseeds.org/donate. Phone the office at 941-228-5660 with your credit card donation. Or hand your check to Ann Quackenbush payable to Hope Seeds.

Thank you for partnering with Hope Seeds to Plant A Seed! Feed A Soul! during this year's matching gift campaign! Questions: Ann Quackenbush (941-735-9454) or quack800@aol.com.



May

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 National Day of Prayer 10am –2pm	5	6
7 Worship 10a Communion	8 Men’s Bible Study 9a– FH	9	10 Women’s Bible Study 10a– CR, MR	11	12	13
14 Worship 10a	15 Men’s Bible Study 9a– FH	16	17 Women’s Bible Study 10a– CR, MR	18	19	20
21 Worship 10a	22 Men’s Bible Study 9a– FH	23 Session 9a–CR	24 Women’s Bible Study 10a– CR, MR Book Club 1p CR	25	26	27
28 Worship 10a	29 Men’s Bible Study 9a– FH	30	31 Women’s Bible Study 10a– CR, MR			
						CA–Coffee Area CR–Conference Room FH–Fellowship Hall MR–Meeting Room

May Birthdays

- 1-Sharon Kincaid

3– Lutie Uihlein

6– Carol McLaughlin

8– Jon Grimes

8– Jerry Fox

8– Michele DeLucca-Lowrey

11- Jean Raymond

11-Deane Baron

12– Ruth Schultz

15- Shirley Venkata-raman

16– Ken Bowes

16– Joan Mattison
- 16– Don Arndt

17– Winnie Schroeder

19– Nancy Cardin

21– Margaret Chirgwin

23– Sue Wertman

23– Ann Quackenbush

23– David Julian

24– Bill Wartinbee

27– Bonnie Willings

27– Edward Buening

28– Andy Sawyer

30– Sally Caswell

May Anniversaries

- 2- Ravi & Shirley Venkataraman

4– Vic & Binnie Irelan

5– Ross & Cindy Alander

5– Rob & Barb Kenny

10– Mark & Kathy McLean

22– John & Debbie Wilson

25– David & Iris Julian

27– Bob & Nancy Elwell

30– Yoram & Rebecca McPheters-Airely