

2020-2021

Christ Church

~~Program~~ Pilgrim Year

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Christ Church Program PilgrimYear

Since late Spring I've been doing a lot of thinking in these last few months about pilgrimage – that we think in new ways about those things that we once knew as constants in our lives. For churchgoers like you and me, that has meant regular in-person corporate worship, the sharing of Holy Communion, a parade of infants newly baptized every few months, and then catching up on what is happening in the parking lot or around a table in the Parish Hall over coffee and donut holes.

We hope and trust that in due time Baptism and Eucharist will return to ground our weekly and seasonal sacramental life, for it is through the waters of baptism we are formed and made Christians, and at the altar, we are nourished with Christ's presence in the bread and in the wine.

During this extended Pandemic-tide (as I've heard it referred to in church circles) we might want to place another experience alongside these two foundational sacraments: pilgrimage. What is being suggested especially now is that we re-imagine what it means to be a part of the local church community. A church, a parish, a congregation is no longer a static thing contained by physical space. We are worshipping and meeting online – staying connected while physically apart. Until there is a safe vaccine available, the vision for our common life may be one where persons are more spread out, on a shared journey together, gathering in small groups. These are days when we make more of a solitary walk. A pilgrimage. This coming program year (September to May) I invite us to learn what it means to be a Christian pilgrim.

New Faithlife Community

Welcome to our new online community!

Over the summer, Christ Church switched to a new parish database system and website using the Faithlife platform. Faithlife, based in Bellingham, Washington, has been around since

1992 and describes itself as a "tech company committed to the Church." If we have learned anything during this Covid-19 pandemic it is the value of belonging to a community and connecting in new ways. Some people who had never heard of Zoom are now regular online worship attendees.



Faithlife is a way for you to check back and stay up-to-date on upcoming events, learn more about opportunities to serve, share prayer requests for yourself or loved ones, encourage one another, and connect in small groups.

How to join Faithlife

Get started today by visiting Faithlife.com with your PC or Mac and creating an account with your email. It will invite you to find the [Christ Church Exeter](#) group.

Steps to get the free Faithlife app for your phone:

1. Download the Faithlife app as you would any other app
2. Login to your account or create a Faithlife account
3. You'll see posts if you're a member of our Faithlife group
4. If you're not a member of our Faithlife group, search for our church by name in the search bar at the top
5. Select Christ Church Exeter
6. Join the group

Our Shared Work: Racial Reconciliation

We will spend four Monday evenings this fall to check in with one another on the ongoing work of racial reconciliation. Join Mark via Zoom at 7 p.m. beginning Monday, September 21. We will convene online again on October 5 & 19 and on November 2. We will reassess after those first four conversations. We will be looking through the resources provided by the Episcopal Church at <https://episcopalchurch.org/racial-reconciliation> and <https://episcopalchurch.org/responding-to-racist-violence> and the excellent Seeing White podcasts from Scene On Radio <http://www.sceneonradio.org/tag/season-2/> This process and work will be ongoing – it is not a four-week project rather a place and a time to begin again. Join us to learn, pray, and act.

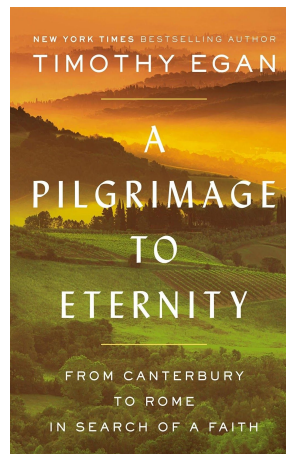
FORMATION AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Book Groups

[A Pilgrimage to Eternity: From Canterbury to Rome in Search of a Faith](#) by Timothy Egan

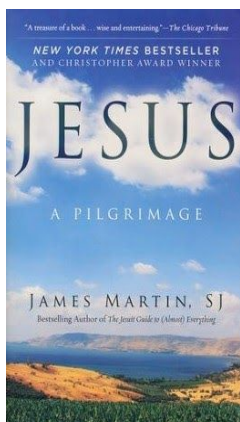
From "the world's greatest tour guide," a deeply-researched, captivating journey through the rich history of Christianity and the winding paths of the French and Italian countryside that will feed the mind, body, and soul (New York Times).

"Egan draws us in, making us feel frozen in the snow-covered Alps, joyful in valleys of trees with low-hanging fruit, skeptical of the relics of embalmed saints and hopeful for the healing of his encrusted toes, so worn and weathered from their walk."--The Washington Post



Moved by his mother's death and his Irish Catholic family's complicated history with the church, Timothy Egan decided to follow in the footsteps of centuries of seekers to force a reckoning with his own beliefs. He embarked on a thousand-mile pilgrimage through the theological cradle of Christianity to explore the religion in the world that it created. Egan sets out along the Via Francigena, once the major medieval trail leading the devout to Rome, and travels overland via the alpine peaks and small mountain

towns of France, Switzerland, and Italy, accompanied by a quirky cast of fellow pilgrims and by some of the towering figures of the faith--Joan of Arc, Henry VIII, Martin Luther. The goal: walking to St. Peter's Square, in hopes of meeting the galvanizing pope who is struggling to hold together the church through the worst crisis in half a millennium. A thrilling journey, a family story, and a revealing history, *A Pilgrimage to Eternity* looks for our future in its search for God. ***Stay tuned for dates.***



Jesus: A Pilgrimage by James Martin, SJ brings the Gospels to life and invites believers and seekers alike to experience Jesus through Scripture, prayer and travel. Combining the fascinating insights of historical Jesus studies with profound spiritual insights about the Christ of faith, Father Martin recreates the world of first-century Galilee and Judea to usher you into Jesus's life and times and show readers how Jesus speaks to us today. Martin also brings together the most up-to-date Scripture scholarship, wise spiritual reflections, and lighthearted stories about traveling through the Holy Land with a fellow (and funny) Jesuit, visiting important sites in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. **Book to be read throughout the Lenten season.**

Wednesday Morning Women's Group

The focus of the Women's Group is to learn and grow while deepening the faith in God, and developing bonds with one another so that we hold confidences and pray for one another. Recently the group has explored the ancient tradition of Centering Prayer, with a book by an Episcopal priest, Cynthia Bourgeault, "Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening."

The group meets every Wednesday at 9:30 through Zoom. Contact Cynthia Mariano for more information. Women of all ages welcome!

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Join the clergy each Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. via Zoom to study the Bible readings for the following Sunday. It is an hour of conversation and reflection. As we continue to adapt and adjust our days, may this time be a source of spiritual grounding and insight. All are welcome.

Soul Sisters- A Group for Moms with School-age Children.

A mom's group that meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 pm. We will continue to meet either outdoors with social distance restrictions or via Zoom. The group has recently read books like "Educated", "The Spiritual Child" and "The Giver of Stars". We enjoy the books together but have also realized we learn from one another and have been sharing books that speak to us as well. It's a great opportunity for moms to get together to gather and unwind. Location varies. Contact Sally Farrell for more information.

Christian Formation "Pilgrim Year" 2020-2021

Chapel Time for Children and Families

In lieu of a weekly Zoom lesson (as I am sure many of you and yours are "zoom weary") We will be sending an email each week with a Youtube video of the lesson. It will give the families the readings of the upcoming Sunday and the chapel service that will look familiar to the kids. We will also provide some music to sing along with and activities for the family. It is our hope that using this format will allow families to worship as they feel comfortable and when they have a quiet moment to enjoy it together. We will also have a few Zoom lessons as the year goes on, maybe for the big feast days.

How Worship at Home looks during COVID:

Begin the worship time when everyone can sit together, preferably in a circle.

- Gather all the members of your household who plan to participate in one place. Get comfortable! Maybe sit on the floor or on cushions. Maybe sit in a circle. Take a moment to pause and breathe together.
- Invite a member of the household to lead the gathering prayer. Read line by line, with the rest of the household repeating back to them.
- Follow along using the service video provided.
- Enjoy a peaceful time together.

Email Sally Farrell with any thoughts you may have.

Blessings and prayers to you all.

Sally

Associate for Christian Formation and Parish Life

Youth Confirmation

2020-21 Confirmation for Youth Ages 13 & up. Classes begin November 2020

Confirmation, God willing, will take place in person on Sunday, May 2, 2021. In preparation, we will be offering confirmation classes for young people and adults. The youth classes will be on Sundays from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. We will start remotely via Zoom, though we realize that everyone is quite tired of this platform. We hope to build in some safe in-person activities as we monitor conditions. Plans for a weekend retreat are on hold due to all the realities around Covid-19.

We will use resources that expose youth to a wide range of topics, including Scripture, sacraments, creeds, church history, prayer, and serving others, and ask them to think through what they believe and why. We emphasize finding one's own voice rather than simply conforming to an external standard. We trust that when people put in the effort to articulate what they believe and why they will make good choices about their next step in faith.

If you are interested in having your son or daughter participate, please contact the rector Mark Pendleton at mpendleton@christchurchexeter.org or phone the office.

Choir & Music in the time of COVID

This spring, as we grappled with canceling shows and services, and began rethinking the 2020-2021 year, it became clear that airborne spread of the COVID-19 virus through breath was of particular concern. News headlines flashed with high infection rates among choirs who rehearsed together and churches who sang hymns in services. Then, the National Association of Teachers of Singing along with the American Choral Directors Association and other prominent organizations gathered medical, scientific, and music professionals for a presentation on the risks of singing and potential avenues during this time. The consensus was that singing in groups is not safe, and we don't yet have a way to make it safe.

Globally, professionals and researchers are exploring every avenue they can think of to create safer conditions, and the Music Department is following these developments closely. We all want to sing together safely again. Early conclusions from a recent study conducted by the Bavarian Radio show that a distance of 5 feet between stationary singers was not enough to prevent aerosol spread, and that greater distances could work only if the room were

permanently ventilated (all of the air is removed from the room and does not recirculate at all). Masks were shown to allow aerosols to escape from the sides, and on the communication side, they muffle text and dampen our ability to use facial expressions. The list goes on and on.

We are deeply missing singing together, and this research is disappointing. What's even more difficult is that there are folks disregarding the danger and risking the safety of their fellow musicians, families, and community in order to sing. It all feels unfair right now, and we must allow space to mourn this loss.

I have been a musician all my life, and one of my greatest joys is sharing the thrills and challenges of singing together with others. As soon as there is a way to sing safely together again, we will. Until then, we have each other to lean on.

The Christ Church Choir will move to **remote ensemble recordings** for occasional hymns and anthems and continue with **in-person solo or duet recordings** in the church as long as safe conditions can be maintained. We will explore non-vocal ways of making music together as well, including **hand chimes** and **other instruments** (according to our forces) that can be played together in small groups.

Anybody interested in taking part in these offerings is encouraged to reach out to Maggie O'Neill at moneill@christchurchexeter.org.

Thank you,
Maggie O'Neill
Director of Music

The Wonder Group

The Wonder Group is our Middle School aged youth group. In the past, we have read books together and during COVID time, enjoyed the book "Stamped" by Jason Reynolds. A timely book that discusses racism in our country. The group also participated in a COVID socially distant outreach by writing letters to elderly residents in RiverWoods. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30. It is our hope to find an in-person get together before the winter weather hits and then be on Zoom going forward. We welcome any and all youth grades 6th and up! Contact Sally Farrell for more information. First meeting will be in October.

Men's Breakfast Group

Once a month on Saturday morning- Christ Church's Men's Group gathers to create opportunities for men to develop friendships, deepen faith, and to support one another through life's journey. We meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. The group is facilitated by the Rector Mark Pendleton. Contact Mark for more information.

OUTREACH- 2020-2021

Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets Continue

Carla Ranks has reached out to St. Michael's and Christ Church has once again been given 30 families to prepare for at Thanksgiving and Christmas this year. Stay tuned as Carla learns how this will happen with social distancing in place. Once we find out we will share the plan on how we will get the baskets and gifts to these families. For more information or if you'd like to get involved and help, contact Carla Ranks at cmranks@comcast.net.

CHRIST CHURCH

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Alison Watt

Deb Fournier

Jeff Neil

John Gilbert