



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Mar 1, 2024)

Christ Church, Kent, Ohio

118 S. Mantua Street, Kent, OH 44240, United States

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time) | Receiving Names until 04/19/24.

Contact:
jdodson@dohio.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) 33	Number of Weekend Worship Services 2	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services 2
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement \$3825	Compensation Available for New Position \$47175	Housing Available for	Pension Plan We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Vacation Weeks One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)	Vacation Weeks Details 4	Continuing Education Weeks 2 (standard)	Continuing Education Weeks Details 2
Continuing Education Funding in budget \$501-\$1000/year	Sabbatical Provision Yes	Travel/Auto Account Yes	Other Professional Account Yes

Housing allowance included in comp. SECA 7.5% of comp paid to clergy 1/qtr. \$5k moving exp reimb

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

Our parish is especially proud of the momentum we have achieved in the past 18 months since COVID. We delayed parts of our return to worship out of concern for members' health. We decided to seek a three-quarter time rector after the departure of our rector of 16 years moved in 2022. During our transition, our strong community, with the dedicated support of our interim rector, reestablished worship in the sanctuary, and maintains a Zoom worship option for members who cannot be here in person. We reinstated Sunday School for 1st - 6th grades led by volunteers for the first time since 2018. We continue our tradition of good music at our services, despite the loss of our music director due to our finances. We resumed, continued, and expanded our outreach programs. We also completed several major building improvement projects in 2023.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

Our parish has always been inclusive, accepting all people; the friendliness and caring shows in our outreach programs and progressive culture. We are a diverse, inclusive group; many members are part of the LGBTQ+ community. We welcome everyone's active participation. We look forward to the ideas of change and growth brought by a rector who understands that there is a strong history of helping the community as a whole and engage the strong faith leaders within our community. We understand we have a long road to travel to bring our financial strength to the level it has been historically. Our parish is refocusing on the areas that have sustained our parish for nearly two centuries, such as starting youth programs and involving youth in the service to bring more family involvement, working with local community groups to utilize existing space and develop partnerships, and communicating and supporting the university Christian outreach groups. These small steps are already showing results, but a parish needs a guide to walk with us on the journey; not only spiritually, but as we move into our future.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community

Youth-focused empowerer of faith knowledge. Outreach Enthusiast with diverse communities. Servant-hearted Inspiration Leader. Joyful Church Growth Advocate.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community

Our liturgical style is broad church, with a slight tendency toward high church. For example, we do not use incense, but we do have an aumbry. Our clergy often wear our chasubles. We participate in and are open to a range of liturgical practices. Both of our Sunday Eucharist services follow Rite II. Our parish values lay participation in worship including Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, intercessors, and acolytes. On Sunday, we use a rotation of Eucharistic Prayers A, B, and C, but also use other authorized forms such as Enriching Our Worship and the Expansive Language liturgy. Several times each year we offer Morning Prayer, followed by the Eucharist if a priest is present. In the past, when clergy were not present, Worship Leaders led Morning Prayer. One member is currently a licensed Lay Preacher who preaches 6-8 times each year. In 2023, we offered a full complement of Holy Week services of Tenebrae, a Maundy Thursday service with Stripping of the Altar, preceded by an Agape meal. On Good Friday, we prayed the Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross. We began Our Easter celebration with the kindling of the new fire at dusk, followed by the Easter Vigil.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Most of the active members of our community participate in ministry of some sort, by invitation and choice. We are a giving community, willing to serve once a need is presented. Opportunities are posted online in our weekly newsletter, announced during services, or shared between church members through conversation, phone calls or texts. We accept responsibility for our worshiping community and our facility. Our congregation is known for our community outreach like cooking and serving at the quarterly Lord's Lunch. It is not unusual for a parish newcomer to join our activities. We want to become more visible to the people in our neighborhood. Our gardening, grounds and building maintenance activities are social events that help others to know us better. In 2023, we invited all nearby residents to a social event offering hot dogs, a bounce house, and facility tours.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Our spiritual center is the worship service. We participate wholeheartedly: singing, praying, and joining in fellowship together following the service. During the pandemic, we mailed the children Sunday school packets, and engaged in Zoom fellowship before and after services. Emotionally, we lean on each other during hard times and celebrate together in times of joy. It is common for us to accompany each other to medical appointments or provide meals when needed. We support each others' activities and projects, and have many social activities, including a game night, crafting groups, and garden parties. Physically, we are still rebuilding since the pandemic. In years past, we have engaged in group hikes, bike trips, and enjoyed healthy meals together during Lent. Several of our members have participated in Bellwether Farm Camp, Retreat, and Education Center activities for parishioners and camps for youth.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

There is an overlap between our involvement in the wider community and how we engage in pastoral care for those beyond our worshipping community. We welcome anyone to join us for our regular worship services as well as special services (such as pet blessing). At Christmas, members of the congregation participate in the Angel Tree, providing gift cards for residents of local group homes. Our clergy and church members respond to the needs of members of the Kent community and our connected organizations, especially in times of loss. Clergy and members offer home or hospital visits. We have a prayer list that is regularly updated. Those on the list are contacted with cards and phone calls. In the past, our parish has been involved in KIFA (Kent Interfaith Alliance), CROP Walk, the Summit Mission Area Council, and UCM (United Christian Ministries at KSU). Some of these programs are still rebuilding after COVID.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

Over the past several years, we have lost a number of members due to relocations, deaths, and transfers to other congregations. Pre-COVID, we were involved in a wide range of activities, ministries or other opportunities within our community. Post-COVID, some of the opportunities have been paused or have ceased. One way we stay connected to the community is by offering a meeting space for craft groups. Some crafts are sold with funds going to various non-profits; other items are given away. We continue to advocate for equality and inclusion through Kent State University (KSU) LGBTQ+ events and local Pride events. Our volunteers help at the local county Clothing Center, Kent Social Services, and the temporary housing shelter. Our parish was very involved with KSU students in the past. We hope to restore some of these programs in the future. We have a history of youth involvement in mission trips and Episcopal youth activities. One of our teens attended EYE in 2023! Our 45-minute proximity to Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland allows for convenient participation in diocesan events.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

One area in which we have sought to grow during the past five years is that of Christian formation. Over time we have established new ministries and restored traditional ones that had gone idle. We have undertaken several focused, topical, short-term adult Christian formation discourses. Example discourses included lay lead study group reading "Whom Shall I Fear" by Rosalind C. Hughes, shared congregational Lenten devotional practice, and topical biblical studies led by retired clergy of the congregation. Additionally, we are developing our children's Christian formation ministries by restarting a long dormant Sunday School program and creating opportunities for youth involvement in worship.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

The annual stewardship campaign at Christ Church is a season when members reflect on the role and importance of the church in their lives and share that message with the congregation during worship services. In this way, members remind one another of the true value of a faith community at the time when pledges for the following year are being made. Members have at times made large one-time contributions, including donation of the rectory and planned giving in members' wills. Throughout the year, stewardship manifests in a variety of ways. Members give of their time and talent by regularly participating in the worship service as acolytes, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, altar guild members, and choristers. Others show leadership through organizing fundraisers and donation drives for specific purposes. Still others bring together volunteers to help maintain the church building and grounds. Stewardship becomes a part of the regular life of our church and its membership, helping members to build connections with one another as they grow in faith together.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Allowing conflict and hurt feelings to simmer is never advisable. It happened in our past. Conflicts caused some people to leave our congregation. Today, we are a healthier community. Our interim priest and lay leadership have established an atmosphere of open communication. We are a tightknit parish; we have strong relationships with each other. We openly communicate about issues in our church and wider community. When it was time to return to in-person services after COVID, we took up strict protocols of masking and social distancing to keep each other healthy. When a beloved longtime member died in 2022, conflict and hurt feelings arose when our priest and congregation were in conflict about limiting funeral attendance. In the end we struck a compromise. We did not set a limit. Since we could not bear the idea of turning people away, we insisted everyone observe masking protocols. We all needed the opportunity to mourn together. Those of us who attended the funeral were grateful to be able to support each other, especially the family of the deceased.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

The lay leadership of Christ Church recognizes the necessity of congregational input and collaboration to work through change as a community. This is front of mind for our church. In the past input has either not been sought or not taken into full consideration in decision-making. In contrast, the current season of change - this process of seeking our next priest - has been a positive model of healthy, collaborative transition. Some key lessons from this experience include the value of taking time to reflect and pray over a decision rather than rush to a conclusion, the benefits of following a process built on the successful experiences of others, and the importance of disagreement as a source of diverse perspectives.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Mary L. Staley	Interim	2022-09	

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Julie Blake Fisher	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2006-09	2022-07

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Gary Mitchener	Interim	2003-11	2006-06

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
Yes	2	6

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
2	2	2	8

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School

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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://christchurchkent.org>

Media Links:

Online References:

> <https://www.facebook.com/ChristChurchKent/>

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

Our Mission: To worship God, To proclaim God's Love by word and deed, To spiritually nurture a diverse parish, and To serve the community and all who come among us.

References

Bishop: 216.771.4815 annebjolly@dohio.org
The Rt. Rev. Anne B. Jolly

Diocesan Transition Minister 216.774.0447 jdodson@dohio.org
**The Rev. Canon Jessie
Gutgsell Dodson**

Current Warden/Board Chair
Christina Rouse

Previous Warden/Board Chair
Sarah Wilson

Search Chair
Sara Baxter

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader