

Insights Gained at Parish Meeting

Christ Church held a parish meeting on Nov. 23, 2025, to discuss the transition to a new priest-in-charge. The Discernment Committee was looking for answers to the following questions. Here are our main takeaways from that meeting.

1. What are the five big things you would want someone to know about Christ Church?

- Christ Church, and the Episcopal Church generally, is very inclusive.
- As the only church on Philadelphia Street (the main street in town), we have an excellent location.
- Our proximity to Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) is a real asset.
- Indiana is a smalltown community located in a beautiful rural countryside.
- Our building is quite attractive.

2. What are the five big challenges that Christ Church faces?

- We have a small, aging congregation.
- We are struggling with updating our current technology and exploring other options to better communicate “who we are.”
- We have no youth group by which to attract new families.
- Financial constraints prevent the upgrading of our physical facility.
- Currently, maintaining our energy during this season of transition is difficult.

3. What five gifts do you believe are most important for your next priest to possess?

- They must have a willingness to help us grow the congregation.
- They should be a strong worship leader.
- They should be visible in the community to the extent possible by the half-time nature of the position.
- They need to be an energetic person who is willing to help us reach out to the university community.
- They should be able to visit and provide pastoral care to home parishioners.

4. What are five new ways in which the people of Christ Church could minister to one another or to the larger community?

- We could make the community room available for children’s activities.
- We could use the kitchen more for community service (like the Shrove Tuesday pancake suppers we held before the pandemic).

- More generally, we could provide meals to the community.
- We could find ways to reach out more to each other within the parish.
- We could bring household items and clothing periodically to the church to give away or for a low-priced rummage sale, thus supporting our community and making us more visible.

5. What are the five big things that you, as a parish, learned during the Covid-19 pandemic and the period of recovery following it?

- We learned the continuing value of streaming services to minister to people unable to attend in person.
- The parish and clergy adapted admirably to keep the parish going through the pandemic.
- We experienced creativity, strength, and perseverance, all of which are gifts.
- Parishioners who had been less active stepped up in an act of unity and support.
- The parish owes gratitude to our rector and others who creatively led us through adaptations that upheld our spiritual mission through very difficult times.