



321 E. Church Street
 Martinsville, VA 24112
 276-632-2896
www.christchurchmvl.org



We are a community of faith striving to love God fully and our neighbors as ourselves.

Dear members and friends of Christ Church,

At the end of Lent, in the days leading up to Easter, the Church follows Jesus through his arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection. This year, Christ Church’s Holy Week schedule remains full but slightly less so than in prior years. **Palm Sunday** commemorates Jesus’ procession into Jerusalem on a donkey while the crowd cheered and strew palms along his way. In worship, we wear and/or wave around palms, reminding us that we hail Christ, and no earthly ruler, as our King. The ecumenical service in the park focuses solely on this event, while the Sunday morning Episcopal service transitions from the Liturgy of the Palms to the reading of the Passion (this year, from Luke); with multiple voices reading different parts, we hear the story of Jesus’ arrest, trials, and crucifixion before partaking in his sacrifice through Holy Communion.

Tenebrae (a Latin word meaning ‘darkness’ or ‘shadows’) is a symbolic prelude to the Triduum (the three nights that follow) in which candles are gradually extinguished while we hear Psalms and readings of lament that prepare us to go with Jesus into death. On **Maundy Thursday**, we celebrate the institution of Holy Communion in Jesus’ last supper with his disciples and additionally wash one another’s feet (in obedience to Jesus’ command about loving one another as he loved the disciples) before stripping the altar at the end of communion in preparation for the next day. Those interested are invited to return during the night to pray in the chapel.

The evening service on **Good Friday** is one of solemn readings and prayers. In addition to hearing John’s version of the Passion of Jesus, we pray for the world for which Jesus died. This gives way to the **Easter Vigil** after sunset on Saturday (according to the Jewish calendar, the start of the third day because Jesus died before sunset on Friday). Beginning in darkness (an echo of the conclusions of Tenebrae and Maundy Thursday), we light the first flame of Easter before chanting the Exultet (the Church’s great prayer of Jesus’ triumph over death) and hearing the history of salvation by candlelight. After bringing up the lights and shouting the first Alleluias of Easter, we renew our Baptismal Covenant and celebrate the first communion of Easter. Taking advantage of the Episcopal Church being in full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we will be joined for this service by our neighbors from Holy Trinity Lutheran, and their Vicar, Andy Taminger, will be our preacher.

The week concludes with the festive Eucharist of **Easter Sunday**. As is Christ Church’s tradition, the wire-covered cross will be available in the narthex so that adults and children may bring a few flowers (with stems wrapped in foil or otherwise held together) to make a flowering cross for Easter. Everyone is further invited to bring a bell and ring it every time we say (or sing) ‘Alleluia’ during the Easter service.

- Fr. John

Easter Flower Memorials

If you wish to give Easter lilies as a memorial, “in honor of” or “in thanksgiving for” friends and family members, please complete the attached form and mail it to the church office or put it in the collection plate along with your check.

The cost is \$15.00 EACH - Checks should be made payable to Christ Episcopal Church, with ‘Easter Flowers’ on the check memo line. Please Note: to print your flower memorials and thanksgivings in the Easter bulletins, we need to have your orders in the church office no later than Friday, April 11th, preferably sooner. Due to space constraints, only the name of the person(s) the memorial is for will be listed.

Wednesday Eucharist

On Wednesdays, we celebrate Holy Eucharist at Noon in the Chapel (enter via the glass Undercroft door at the back of the church building). These brief (thirty minutes) spoken services commemorate the saint of the day from the Episcopal calendar of Lesser Feasts and Fasts and are perfect for those who want to attend a service but are unable to come Sunday mornings or who want an additional gathering for corporate prayer to help them through the week. **Our schedule in April is inconsistent: there will be Wednesday Eucharists on April 9 and 30, but no Wednesday Eucharist on April 2, 16, or 23.**

Ecumenical Lenten Lunches

The churches of Martinsville are again coming together to offer lunch and a brief devotion **at Noon** on the Thursdays of Lent. All are invited to attend any or all of these lunches; the devotions will conclude by 1:00 pm. The schedule is:

April 3 - First Presbyterian (1901 Patrick Henry Ave.)

April 10 - First Baptist East (1043 E. Church St.)

Kings Grant Eucharist

Fr. John celebrates Eucharist in the chapel at Kings Grant at 1:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month. The next services will be on **April 3 and May 1.**

Sunday Bible Study

Our Sunday morning Bible study meets at 9:30 in the Parish House on **April 6**; this week we will read Jeremiah 26, a prose narrative of Jeremiah's trial for prophesying disaster. All are welcome and encouraged to attend as you can; no preparation ahead of time is necessary. **For most of April (the 13th, 20th, and 27th), the Sunday Bible Study will be on hiatus; we will resume on May 4.**

Women’s Club Meeting

You are invited to join us in the Parish House on **Tuesday, April 8, at 5:30** for the monthly Women's Club meeting. Beverages and paper products will be provided. Please sign up at the following link [Christ Episcopal Church - Martinsville, Virginia](#) if you plan to attend and if you're bringing a food item. **We are looking forward to our evening of fellowship!**

History of the Early Church

Our next study in the History of the Early Church will take place on **April 9 at 10:30 in the Undercroft**, as we consider 5th-century developments in the theological understanding of Jesus.

Public Theology

Public Theology meets on **Wednesday, April 9**, at Renewal Brewing in Uptown Martinsville (32 Franklin St). We begin with socializing and pizza around 6:00, with the discussion going from 7:00 to 8:00.

Maundy Thursday Vigil

In obedience to Jesus, who wondered that his disciples were unable to keep watch with him for one hour in Gethsemane, some find it deeply meaningful to stay awake and pray for a portion of the night on Maundy Thursday (April 17). Kyle Trent is organizing a vigil in the Chapel between the end of the Maundy Thursday liturgy and Friday morning; **if you are interested in taking an hour, please contact him at kyletrent@kyletrent.com**.

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 13, 9:00 am - Community Palm Sunday Service at J. Frank Wilson Park

Palm Sunday, April 13, 10:30 am - Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, April 16, 7:00 pm - Tenebrae

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7:00 pm - Holy Eucharist with Footwashing and Stripping of the Altar (followed by overnight Vigil in the Chapel)

Good Friday, April 18, Noon - Stations of the Cross

Good Friday, April 18, 7:00 pm - Good Friday Liturgy

Saturday, April 19, 8:00 pm - The Great Vigil of Easter (in partnership with Holy Trinity Lutheran, with Vicar Andy Taminger preaching)

Easter Sunday, April 20, 10:30 am - Holy Eucharist

Charles Cain Celebration of Life

A Celebration of Life for Charles C. Cain, father of long-time church member Kelly Cain, will take place in the **Parish House on Sunday, April 13, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm**; parishioners and friends are invited to attend.

Easter Flowering Cross

As is tradition, on Easter morning (April 20), parishioners young and old are invited to bring a few flowers (with stems wrapped in foil or otherwise held together) to place in the wire-covered cross in the narthex, thereby adding even more colorful joy to our celebration of Jesus' resurrection.



Loaves & Fishes

Loaves & Fishes (our monthly free dinner, open to all) is on **April 30**, with dinner being served **from 5:00 to 6:00**. Even if you are not helping with cooking, serving, cleaning, or donating fruit or dessert, church members are encouraged to come and sit down for a meal with our neighbors in the community. Sign up at [Christ Episcopal Church - Martinsville, Virginia](#) to volunteer or to bring something.

Vestry Discernment Update

On March 15, following one of the ideas generated out of our 2024 discernment process, the Vestry met with Jenni Faires, Diocesan Canon for Evangelism and Congregational Development. In addition to offering her suggestions based on best practices elsewhere in the Diocese, she also encouraged us in our own discussions of how to make Christ Church more visibly alive to the community, how to amplify what we're already doing to better connect with our neighbors, how we might re-engage our less-active members, and how we might realistically expand our calendar of events. The ideas ranged from simple things like introducing 'Table Hosts' to Loaves & Fishes so we can involve more members and explicitly recruit volunteers whose only role is to eat and chat with our neighbors to pricey but potentially worthwhile things like evaluating and updating our signage. The Vestry will be continuing to discuss and hopefully implement some of these things as we move from Spring into Summer.

Collect for the Election of Our Bishop

In a letter sent February 19, Bishop Mark Bourlakas announced his resignation as Bishop of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia (effective May 22) to serve as an Assistant Bishop (based in Falls Church) in the Diocese of Virginia beginning June 1. The Standing Committee of the Diocese has offered the following prayer for this time of transition:

Creator God, whose Church lives beyond the walls of buildings and the boundaries of cities, we ask that you guide our work as the Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern Virginia moves together through a transition of leadership. We pray for patience in dialogue and wisdom in discernment, that the richness of our diverse voices, from farmland to small town, mountain to downtown, will all be valued and heard. We pray for the person who will be elected as our next Bishop, for all those who are in discernment, and for the people of this diocese, so that the work of spreading God's love in southwestern Virginia and beyond will grow and flourish in the years to come. In the name of your incarnate son we pray, Amen.

Diocesan Search and Transition Committees

The Standing Committee of the Diocese is inviting nominations for clergy and laity to serve on the committees to search for candidates to be our next Bishop and to facilitate the election and transition. More details are available [HERE](#).

Scam Reminder

Because at least one copy of the church directory is circulating among scam artists, parishioners from time to time have received texts purporting to be from Fr. John and asking for an unspecified favor (which often turns out to be gift cards). If you receive a suspicious text, check the sender's number against Fr. John's actual number (which has an area code from elsewhere in Virginia) and, if in doubt, contact Fr. John or the Church Office directly. No one from the church will ask you for gift cards (or other forms of money that aren't going directly to the church) via text, send a vague query asking for an urgent response, or otherwise contact church members while using an unfamiliar phone number. Never respond to the suspicious text, and once you are confident that it's someone pretending to be Fr. John, always report the number as spam. In an effort to prevent newer editions from falling to scammers, the directory will be distributed by hard copy only rather than via email.

Dishes Left in the Parish House

If you have a dish(es) left from a previous reception, please pick it/them up at your earliest convenience. We have several glass serving dishes/plates and glass vases.

Let Deborah or Fr. John know if anyone needs to be added or removed from the list.

Comfort and heal *Sue (Rosser), Julia (Hall), Betty (Budde), Betsy (Smith), Jennifer, Carleigh, Carolyn (Byrd), Rebecca, Harry, Ralphie, Sanddii, Millard (Hall), Tom (Webster), Chuck (Crosby), Will (Zimmer), Virginia (Huckfeldt)*; all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Lord, in your mercy.

April Server Schedule

10:30AM	April 6 The Fifth Sunday in Lent	April 13 The Sunday of the Passion: PALM SUNDAY	April 20 The Sunday of the Resurrection: EASTER SUNDAY	April 27 The Second Sunday of Easter Morning Prayer Phil Gardner (officiant)
Lector Prayers	Ann Gardner	Kelly Cain	Susan Critz	Hank Long
Chalist	Natalie Coleman Dawn Stone	Jay Dickens John Swezey	Rives Coleman Tom Webster	
Acolyte			Baylie Coleman	
Ushers	Jay Dickens Bob Weatherall	Hank Long Pete Scouras	Gus Barber Dan Cahill	Michael Hodges Rives Coleman
Camera Operator	Andy Williams	Andy Williams	Andy Williams	Andy Williams
Counters	Michael Hodges LaRue Powers	Michael Hodges LaRue Powers	Michael Hodges LaRue Powers	Michael Hodges LaRue Powers
Nursery Attendants	Emily Williams	Emily Williams	Emily Williams	Emily Williams

Holy Week Servers

April 16 – Wednesday in Holy Week – Tenebrae – 7:00 pm – Susan Critz, reader; Natalie Coleman, acolyte

April 17 – Maundy Thursday – 7:00 pm – Hank Long, reader; Nancy Spilman, chalice; – Kyle Trent, Rives Coleman, ushers

April 18 – Good Friday – Stations of the Cross – 12 Noon

April 18 – Good Friday – 7:00 pm – Ann Gardner, reader

April 19 – Holy Saturday – Easter Vigil – 8:00 pm – Bob Bushnell reader and chalice

Passion Readers – Fr. John Adams (Narrator); Bob Bushnell (Peter/Disciples/Soldiers/Criminal 1), Kelly Cain (Jesus), Jay Dickens (Servant Girl/Bystanders/Priests/Criminal 2), and Hank Long (Pilate/Centurion)

Altar Guild Team #1 – Beth Sibbick, Stuart Webster, LaRue Powers, Jane Thomasson, Beth Cahill, Dan Cahill, Bill Sibbick

Special Flower Committee - Beth Cahill, Becky Farrar, Frankie Smith, Karen Jones, Debbie Lewis, Susan Smith, Page Beeler, Rita Hodges, Stuart Webster, Natalie Coleman, Pat Russell, Dawn Stone, Ashley Ullstein, Susan Critz, Valerie Payne, LaRue Powers

Grace Network

Our Grace Network Assignments for **April - June: Deodorant (Men's or Women's)** For **April: toilet paper, feminine products, deodorant, and hygiene items.** As a Church family, we have committed to helping Grace Network by stocking their food pantry for those in need. Please remember to pick up our assigned item the next time you visit the grocery store. **You can bring your items to the Church office OR put them in the little red wagon in the Narthex.**