

2009 Parish Profile
Christ Church Quaker Farms
Oxford, CT
(203) 888-4936
www.ccqf.org

Our Mission:

Jesus is Lord! We know Him, we love Him, we serve Him, and we make Him known!

Our Vision

Christ Church is motivated to be a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled, Bible based, Eucharistically oriented church. We accept the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the infallible Word of God. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only means of Salvation. Entrance into the Kingdom of God is summed up in the Gospel of John, chapter 14, 6th verse. "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me." [Jesus speaking] We believe that commitment to Jesus Christ is a life-changing experience. We are literally transformed when we make the Lord of all life the center of our life.

INTRODUCTION

Christ Church Quaker Farms is a Christ centered, mission oriented, spiritually alive, warm, family friendly parish located in the town of Oxford, Ct. We are a congregation of approximately 110 families. Our congregation is made up mostly of people who grew up in the Episcopal or Catholic faiths. Christ Church is a cross section of Oxford and the surrounding towns. We have many older parishioners as well as young families with young children. We have approximately 63 children enrolled in our Christian Education program. Our last full time priest was in 1993. In the years since we have had the service of two different part time priests. Our present priest has announced his desire to go into full time retirement. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now seeking a full time rector who feels God's call to help lead this parish and help us to grow, both in numbers and in Christ.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRIST CHURCH QUAKER FARMS

At the beginning of the 19th century Quaker Farms was a busy farming and sheep raising community. The residents of the community had to travel to Oxford Center to attend church at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, a difficult trip in the winter over a steep hill.

By the year 1812 the Quaker Farms community felt a need for a church on their side of the hill. In October 1812, work on the chapel, "Oxford Church," was started. The parish was to stay united with Saint Peter's Episcopal Church. Because many of the subscribers were not Episcopalians a proviso was made stating that the chapel was to be a community church. On September 3, 1817 the church was consecrated by the Right Reverend John Hobart, Bishop of the Diocese of New York. The church was consecrated as "Christ Chapel." On July 26, 1826 Christ Church made a formal separation from Saint Peter's Episcopal Church. The first

parish meeting was held on December 2, 1882. Various priests have served both Christ Church and St. Peter's simultaneously. In 1966 the Reverend John A. Rogers was appointed Vicar to devote himself entirely to Christ Church. In 1972, when the parish was at last able to financially support itself without support from the Diocese of Connecticut, the Reverend Timothy O. Carberry was called as Rector.

WORSHIP

We hold two services on Sundays. In our 8am service we use the Holy Eucharist Rite I liturgy with no music or singing. The 10am service uses the Holy Eucharist Rite II. The adult choir sings, and an organ for traditional hymns and a keyboard for more contemporary praise songs provide the music. We use both the 1982 Hymnal and Lift Every Voice and Sing Hymnal. Lay people participate as chalice bearers, acolytes, lectors, and ushers.

Members of our healing ministry are available for prayer every Sunday. In addition, one Sunday per month we have a healing service with time dedicated for individual prayer. Once a month we have "Family Sunday" where children in fourth grade and older are encouraged to attend the entire service.

CHOIR

Our choir at Christ Church is always eager to sing praises to our Lord. We are a diversified bunch with willing voices. However, we are always in need of more members. The choir of any Church has the responsibility of leading and energizing the congregation, inspiring them to sing songs of praise and worship. It is our hope to continue growing the choir to lead the parish to new heights of the love of Christ through music.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our Sunday school program meets during the 10:00 a.m. service until about 10:45 when the children and teachers reunite with their families during the Peace offering. For the past several years (approximately 7 years) we used the David C. Cook Bible in Life Program. This September we made a change to the Group Publishing Hands on Bible curriculum. We currently have four Sunday school classrooms for grades pre-school through fifth, and three classes for the Journey to Adulthood (J2A) program for grades 6 through 12. There is currently no toddler program, because we have only one toddler at this time. Classes meet from September until June.

We have a "Family Sunday" on the 2nd Sunday of each month. During this time the children in the 4th and 5th grade class and the children in the J2A program attend the entire church service. They are encouraged to participate in the service in a variety of ways such as reading, ushering, and singing in the Jr. Choir. Our Jr. Choir sings during the second half of the "Family Sunday" service.

We also have a tradition at Christ Church in which every Sunday a child is chosen to take home our church "Jesus Doll." Bishop Curry gave us a "Jesus Doll" during one of his visits to our church. The children record their experiences in a journal that is passed along with the doll.

In the recent past there was an adult Christian education class that met between the 8:00 and 10:00 services. At the present time there is no formal Sunday Christian education class for adults.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School is held for one week in July. The VBS is open to the general public. The grade level of the students is pre-K to 5th grade. There are about 60 kids that attend. The VBS is run by a dedicated group of adults and about 12 teen volunteer parishioners. We use the David C. Cook curriculum. We also incorporate mission into our VBS. In 2009 we raised money to purchase mosquito netting for an African diocese to distribute.

MUSIC MINISTRY

The love of music at Christ Church is quite apparent. We have our wonderful organ from the 1800's for all our traditional hymns, and we have a keyboard for more praise type music. Both pieces give us a very good mix to please anyone's love of music. We do from time to time invite people who will play guitars and other instruments and lead us in song at special services on Sunday. We also bring in groups of singers for a Friday or Saturday evening concert who will also give a testimony of their Love of Christ. At Christmas time it has been tradition of late to have a Christmas Carol sing along with a very special youngster playing the piano. That is always a joyous time for all especially, the children. We shall continue to endeavor and fill the hearts of all who come to Christ Church with Gods Love and Grace through music.

ECW

The ECW of Christ Church is open to all women in the parish. We are committed Christians dedicated to mission outreach. All monies raised or received are earmarked for Christian mission. We have two major fundraisers each year. We have a tag sale in spring and a cookie walk in winter. We support local (shelters, Christian Counseling Center,), national (Trinity Episcopal Seminary, United Thank Offering), and international Christian organizations (The Diocese of Western Tanganyika, Africa and The Diocese of Tabor, Africa). We support these groups through prayer and monetary donations. The president and treasurer of the ECW had the pleasure of visiting with the Bishop of Tabor and his wife while the bishop and his wife were in Connecticut. We have agreed to continue to nurture and grow our relationship with both the diocese and the Women's Union (their version of the ECW). We also purchase big-ticket items (tables, chairs, etc.) for internal support of Christ Church Quaker Farms.

POMPERAUG COMMUNITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Pomperaug Community Golf Tournament was originally set up by three Episcopal churches in Woodbury, Southbury, and Oxford. The fund raising program is an 18 -hole golf tournament at an exclusive golf course with lunch and dinner. The tournament income is supplemented with raffles and recently, separate dinners. The program, which does have tax -exempt status, only funds local Christian youth programs and activities. Some of the activities funded are trips to build after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, re-building homes in other areas of the United States, Christian summer camps, religious experiences in Ireland and New York City, and building a classroom for teenagers at Christ Church.

SHELTER DINNER

The Spooner House is a homeless shelter operated by Area Congregations Together (ACT). Spooner House is one of only a few shelters in the state that is open to families as well as individuals. The shelter is also home to the valley food bank. We support different events and fundraisers for the Spooner House throughout the year, but we are dedicated to sponsoring a shelter dinner monthly. On the first Monday of every month, Christ Church is responsible for providing dinner to the residents of the shelter. We have the option of cooking dinner at the shelter or bringing the residents to Christ Church for dinner. We have opted to have the residents bused to Christ Church to enjoy a dinner out of the shelter and to have fellowship. Christ Church serves approximately 25 people each month.

SUPPORT MINISTRIES

Healing Ministry

We have graduated our first class of Prayer Ministers who have completed all three levels of Francis MacNutt's School of healing prayer. They now offer their ministry on Sunday morning for those who want prayers for healing or who want to intercede for someone for healing. Prayers for healing are available every Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to join this prayer group. A longer time of prayer counseling is available with two members of the healing team by appointment. The healing team listen, love and pray for those who come seeking the Lord's blessing.

Altar Guild

Members of the Altar Guild prepare the sanctuary for Sunday services and all other services. Duties include preparing the altar, cleaning linens, brass, and silver, arranging flowers for the sanctuary, and tidying up the sacristy after worship. Each team of two persons serves for one month at a time covering all services during that time period.

Acolytes

The ministry of service by our acolytes at the altar is open to boys and girls in the fourth grade and higher. The acolytes attend one training/refresher session per year. Acolytes serve at the 8:00 and 10:00 services as well as special services throughout the year.

MINISTRIES FOR GROWTH

WEDNESDAY MORNING LADIE'S BIBLE STUDY

The Wednesday Morning Ladies' Bible Study consists of 8-12 committed Christian women of various ages at different stages in her Christian journey meeting for 2 hours each Wednesday. We usually meet at the parish hall. We use a variety of resources for study. We have studied books pertaining to Christian women's issues, but we also study books pertaining to Christianity and Christian growth in general. We also take in depth looks at different books of the Bible. These studies and open communication in our group have helped each of the participants grow in her Christian walk.

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

The men of the parish and friends have been meeting monthly on one Saturday morning for breakfast for about two years. The breakfast, which starts at 7:30 and ends around 9:00, is prepared by a few of the members; the rest of the attendees share the work load by helping set up and cleaning. A free will offering covers the cost. There is a range of 10-15 men present at any given breakfast. The breakfast is a time for fellowship and good conversation. Father Crocker or a guest lecturer provides a Gospel based program followed by active and stimulating conversation.

FACILITIES

Christ Church is a two and one-half story white clapboard Christopher Wren designed building, with its bell tower rising from the ground rather than the roof. The building was built in 1812 and sits on 3.5 acres of land. The church seats approximately 250 people. The church building has many antique features including a stained glass chancel window, an 1800's Hook and Hastings pipe organ, and a cut crystal chandelier from the 1800's. In 1966 the parish hall addition was completed. The hall has a capacity of 200 people. In 1970 the Christ Church Pre-school was started in the upper level of the parish hall. In 1998 a fire occurred in the church, and the interior of the church needed to be restored. Renovations to the building have occurred throughout the years, but the church retains the general character of its original design

We are currently undergoing major renovations to our kitchen. The \$70,000 projects' expected completion date is spring, 2010. The church also owns a rectory; which at present time is rented to a local family.

CHRIST CHURCH PRE-SCHOOL

Christ Church Preschool is a state licensed, non- sectarian school established in 1970. A volunteer board of parents and teachers oversee the administration of the school. The director of the school is Kathy Cuccaro. She has been with the school for 19 years as lead teacher for both 3 and 4 year olds, and now as director. The school is open to 3, 4, and 5 year old children. The three year olds attend two sessions per week and the four and five year olds attend three sessions per week. The educational philosophy of the school is children learn through play. Each day's schedule is designed to balance structure and free choice as well as active and quiet time.

The preschool is sponsored by the Christ Church and is an outreach of the church, but the preschool is financially independent of Christ Church.

More information about Christ Church Preschool can be found on its website www.pre-k.net.

ATTENDANCE

Our attendance has seen a sharp increase from our low point in 1996 to the present. The following chart shows our attendance trends over the last decade. We presently have approximately 60 families that attend regularly. We also have approximately 10 home-bound parishioners that are unable to attend on a regular basis. The average attendance at the 8:00 service is 15, and the average attendance at the 10:00 service is sixty.

Year	Attendance	Communions
1998	4165	3774
1999	5232	4742
2000	5847	5097
2001	6733	6440
2002	6175	5859
2003	6808	6161
2004	6292	5826
2005	5660	5381
2006	5193	4686
2007	5173	4989
2008	5303	4146
thru JUN09	2285	2018

FINANCES

We operate on a "Faith Budget." The pledges made by the parishioners are known only to the parishioner and God. We make a symbolic gesture of burning our pledge cards after they are presented as an offering. Our 2008 operating budget was \$121,481. Our pledge and plate offerings have increased from \$42,355 in 1998 to \$91,734 in 2008. We receive approximately \$18,000 from rental income from our rectory and approximately \$8,500 to Christ Church. We do have investment accounts that we control, and we reinvest the interest received. We also have accounts that are controlled by the diocese. The interest made in these accounts is distributed to the church and is considered as annual income.

Revenues (2008) \$121,481.18

Expenditures (2008) \$119,875.59

Investment income (2008) \$13,097.22

Investments market value (2008) \$311,754.00

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

According to our survey results the biggest strengths at Christ Church are that we are a warm, friendly congregation, and we are filled with the Holy Spirit. We pride ourselves on being a Christ centered, Bible -based church. Most replied that they feel like we are a family that offers each other great support. One of our greatest assets is our youth. While we have a diverse population in age, our children know that they are loved by Jesus Christ and by the members of this parish. We truly have multigenerational interaction at Christ Church. Our lay ministry is highly developed, and our members are dedicated to service.

We know however that we are far from perfect. While our youth are a great asset, we are failing them in their spiritual growth. We do need more avenues for them to explore and grow- be it missions or simple get-togethers at the church. A strong youth group would be a wonderful asset. We also need to offer more adult education opportunities to the congregation. And we are lax in our fellowship with the sick and homebound parishioners.

While our attendance and stewardship have risen in past years, we still worry about finances for our church.

We are also not immune to the unrest in the Episcopal Church. We are conservative in our theology. Fifty-two percent of the survey respondents say it is important to follow the Anglican tradition while eighteen percent feel it is important to follow the Episcopal tradition. However there is not a strong desire to be independent of the Connecticut diocese- only seven percent felt being independent of our present diocese important, six percent felt it not important and forty percent had a neutral response.

GOALS

What we seek in a rector

We seek a rector who is a committed Born Again Christian, who is led by the Holy Spirit. He will encourage our growth in Christ and guide us in our Christian walk. Our new rector will set apart time daily to attend to his own spiritual needs. Our new rector will have keen social skills, the ability to listen, evaluate, and then make hard decisions based on faith, and he will be compassionate and understanding of life's obstacles. He will be warm, caring, personable, outgoing, and have a good sense of humor.

We seek a rector who will preach sermons centered on the Gospel. The sermons will help us to feel God's presence and encourage spiritual growth. Our new rector's sermons will be engaging, filled with inspirational stories that incorporate daily trials and good experiences. The sermons will make us think and challenge us to lead a more Christ centered life. The sermons will leave us upbeat for the week to come.

We seek a rector that has a strong heart for children. We have a strong ministry for young children and would like someone who sees children's spiritual growth as a priority. We would like someone who can help grow our ministry for teen -age parishioners.

Previous experience as a rector is not a prerequisite. Christ Church has many people and leaders with many different gifts and talents. If a person is willing to work with parish leadership he can develop his experience as he grows with parish members. But we do need a rector who has the leadership, administrative and organizational skills needed to manage a variety of personalities.

OUR COMMUNITY

When driving through the hills and valleys of Oxford one is struck by the rich land still farmed by families who have been here since the early settlers. While new subdivisions grace some of those very fields and apple orchards, Oxford is still a little country town. Very New England in nature, it is a quiet town where people are centered around their own family's activities. However, when there is a Town event, a big game, or a neighbor in need, the whole town turns out en force. You will find the same feeling at Christ Church Quaker Farms. Families tend to linger long after the Church services, adults visiting with each other at a relaxing pace while the children romp on the lawn and in the play area. There are constant requests to provide activities throughout the week to get together. Children love their Church friends. Our Vestry never needs to beg for volunteers to repair the building, work a fundraiser, serve on a mission project, because it is another opportunity to share some time with each other. If you are searching for a small family-oriented town and a congregation who will welcome you with open arms, it is here at Christ Church Quaker Farms.

Oxford, Connecticut is a rural community located southeast of Interstate 84 between the cities of Danbury and Waterbury, Ct. The town is just under one hour from Hartford, CT; two hours from New York City; and about two and one half hours from Boston, Ma. Oxford is also about 15 miles from Yale University in New Haven. The train station to catch a train into New York is about 3 miles away in Seymour. There are also buses to NYC leaving Southbury, CT hourly. The Southbury bus terminal is approximately 6 miles from Oxford. Oxford has a land area of 33 square miles and has a population of approximately 12,500 people. The median age is 40 years and the median household income is \$96,000. Since 2000 Oxford has been the fastest growing community in Connecticut.

Oxford has two elementary schools, one middle school, and one new high school.

More information about Oxford can be found at www.Oxford-CT/gov.

THE DIOCESE OF CONNECTICUT

The Diocese of Connecticut is the oldest diocese in the Episcopal Church. It began with the consecration of Rt. Rev. Seabury as bishop on November 14, 1784. The first convention was held in Middletown, CT in 1785. Bishop Andrew D. Smith, the 14th bishop of Connecticut, is our current bishop. He is set to retire on January 31, 2010. We have two bishops suffragan-the Rt. Rev. James Curry and the Rt. Rev. Laura Aherns. Bishop James Curry will be the ecclesiastical authority for the diocese until Bishop- elect Ian T. Douglas is consecrated on April 17, 2010.

The Diocese of Connecticut is the only diocese in the state. There are currently 175 parishes, approximately 64,390 baptized members in the state, and the average Sunday attendance for the diocese is approximately 20,120 people.

More information on the Diocese of Connecticut can be found at www.ctdiocese.org.

WELCOME TO CHRIST CHURCH QUAKER FARMS JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

