



OCTOBER 2023

IN THE INTERIM. . . .



Many of you will have no doubt heard me say that I have been a vergger in the church for many years and wondered what is a vergger? This month I have decided to answer your questions and tell you:-

“What is a Vergger”

The office of vergger has its roots in the early days of the Church of England. Evidence from Rochester, Lincoln, Exeter and Salisbury Cathedrals points to the existence of verggers in the 16th century. The title of vergger arises from the ceremonial rod, known as a verge that they traditionally carry. In earlier times the vergger might use his verge to keep back animals, an overenthusiastic crowd or “ruffians” from the person that they were escorting.

The vergger is normally a lay minister who takes care of the inside of a church building and also assists the clergy in the conduct of public worship, especially in the marshaling of processions. A vergger will often be seen leading Clergy or Laity through the church. They may be full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer. In small churches the role of vergger is often combined with the role of sexton. The typical robes of a vergger are a black gown over a black cassock. The gown may be trimmed with velvet, which may be in a different color.

My first experience acting as a vergger was in my early twenties at St. Andrew’s Church, Kettering in England. I substituted for our full-time vergger while he had an extended vacation. My duties were taking care of the inside of the church and preparing for weekday and Sunday services. I cleaned, polished, prepared the sacraments, opened and closed the church and general repairs. At that time there were four services on a Sunday and the hardest job I had to perform was ringing the church bell before each service to summon the faithful. It was a proper bell hanging in a small bell tower and needed to be rung for two minutes (100 times). My problem was after about sixty pulls of the rope I lost count!

My time at St. Mark’s Episcopal church in Upland California was my most rewarding as a vergger. I worked very closely with the priests, initially implementing their plans and as time went on I became more involved in the planning of services. I was responsible for marshaling processions of all types. During my twenty-four years at St. Marks I had the pleasure of meeting and working with so many Bishops, Priests, Deacons and Laity. I participated in so many wonderful services and so many times felt the presence of the Lord in the work that we were doing but more importantly I saw the presence of the Lord in the members of the congregation. I will always remember one Friday evening at a wedding rehearsal having to use my verge to escort a Possum out of the church!!

Since moving to this area my work as a vergger has been considerably reduced and the only notable services that I have participated in were both the Consecration and the Installation of Bishop Eric. Maybe at some time in the future there will be an opportunity for me to put on my verggers robes and lead someone down the aisle at Christ Church.

John

Vestry Report – Friday, September 15, 2023

- Jeff Nocket gave an update on the current situation regarding the renovation plans.
- John Minney reported on his conversations with Bishop Eric.
- The Scrip program has closed, although we are looking at a special Christmas program.
- Plans for the Stewardship Campaign 2023 were finalized and would start on Sunday October 15th. and Pledge Cards returned on Sunday November 5th.
- The ingathering for Manna House and Christmas Child boxes will be held on Sunday November 12th.
- The Vestry approved the purchase of a new Fair Linen Cloth for the Altar.

DID'JA KNOW?

Bill Atwood

Many have questioned whether they can get sick from germs by using the common chalice...

Quoting Fr. Matthew Spencer, who studied this very issue, "Believe it or not, wiping the chalice with a purificator is helpful, it makes a difference. Secondly, the material of the chalice matters. Silver and gold have some antimicrobial characteristics to them." So what's interesting is that it's important for not only theological reasons that we use precious materials for the chalices from which we distribute Communion. Fr. Spencer continues, "Third, viruses and bacteria cannot survive long in alcohol. Clearly it's not wine anymore, it's the Precious Blood, but the characteristics of alcohol remain. It's difficult for germs to survive in alcohol for any length of time, especially if it's a good wine with a higher alcohol content."

Christ Church Financial Report

January 1st 2023 - August 31st 2023

	Budgeted	Actual
Income	\$54,960	\$53,565
Expenses	\$74,394	\$36,838
Net	-\$17,005	\$16,727

Celebrations of Life

Birthdays:

- 10/01 Madeline Burton
- 10/04 Carol Atwood
- 10/12 Ken Hunter
- 10/16 Sally Simpson
- 10/20 Frank Gilb
- 10/27 Ken Berry

GIVE THANKS.....

Many thanks to the following members of the congregation who helped clean the church, trim trees and clean the Rector's office during the workday on Friday September 8th, in preparation for the visit of Bishop Eric.

Jeff Nocket	Sally Simpson
Joanne Steffke	Heather Prescott
Patsy & John Minney	Camella Nair
Candy & Frank Gilb	Jeff Nocket
Kim & Sean Langley	Frank Simonis
Jay Smith	Becky Smith

MEN'S GROUP

Bill Atwood

All men of the parish are cordially invited to attend the monthly Breakfast Bible Study held the last Saturday of each month. The place? Bill Atwood's house at Bass Lake and the traditional time is 9am. In October we will be studying John Chapter 10 with Ken Hunter leading the study and discussion. Men of the parish are also encouraged to invite a friend to join us as well. Casual dress!!!

Getting to know you....

Pat Eby



MaryHelen Mierkey was born June 6, 1943, at Fort Rucker (now Fort Novosel) in Alabama. Her Father was a chaplain in the Army during WWII and was sent to France, the South Pacific and finally ended up in Japan after the surrender. She did not know him until after she was almost two years old. "Mom did a great job of putting him in my memory during this time with pictures and stories pertaining to his service He was a Baptist

minister, so after the war he immediately went back into pastoral ministry.

"I spent years at the church. It was part of life" Mary Helen explains.

She attended Grand Canyon College in Phoenix where she met her husband, Pat. They graduated in June and got married in December of 1965. Pat was a music and theater instructor, and Mary Helen was an elementary teacher in the public school system. In 1969 Pat and Mary Helen took on the responsibility of music and youth ministry at St Andrew's Methodist Church. For the next 12 years they built a youth choir ministry. During the summers, that group toured all over the United States singing in churches. This was their way of being involved in the Jesus Movement during the '70s.

Mary Helen worked part-time jobs while raising kids. Pat worked at Mesa Public Schools As their children, Melinda and James, grew up they wanted them to have a Christian education. Positions became available at Redeemer Christian School in Mesa, Az, so they taught there for five years. Eventually the school had to drop its high school grades, so the family moved to southern California in 1988. They taught in Christian schools finally ending up in Oakhurst at Gateway Christian School.

Pat went back to teaching in the public school system where he substituted and taught Special Education

In 1999 Mary Helen began working at Sugar Pine Christian Camp as an administrative assistant. It was the greatest position and highlight of her working years. She was there 10 years.

In August of 2014 they lost their home in the Junction Fire. At that time there were 3 families living on the property: Pat and MaryHelen, James, his daughter Grace. Jennifer Janine, and her 2 children. They were given 15 minutes notice to leave so basically not much was saved. Between Pat and James they lost some priceless musical instruments, recordings, and studio equipment. Mary Helen wrote pages in her journal about "Lessons Learned from a Fire." She has had the opportunity to share these reflections with a couple of church groups.

Mary Helen was a friend of Karen Shelton, who played keyboard for Christ Church. It happened that Karen had to be away one weekend, so she asked MH to sub for her. MH thought she'd better find out a little about the church so attended first. She fell in love with the liturgy and appreciated Fr Gordon's sermons. She started to attend regularly which eventually led to confirmation classes and her being confirmed by Bishop Eric in 2018.

About the time of the fire MH became involved at the Golden Chain Theatre. It had been years since she had been on stage, but the spark was still there. While Pat enjoyed his time with the Yosemite Jazz Band and Community Band, MH was involved at GCT. She has been in shows every year since 2014 – well minus COVID. During these almost ten years she has been involved in 25 productions. She has had leading roles, supporting roles, and ensemble roles. She has worked back-stage for shows and even directed.

Mary Helen presently lives with her son James on his property in Oakhurst.

CCW NEWS

Laura Ashley-Spencer

The ladies of CCW went on a Fall field trip to the Forestiere Underground Gardens on September 22nd. It was a beautiful day and we had lunch on the patio at Heirloom in the Traders Joe's shopping center afterwards.

Our next CCW meeting will be Tuesday, October 10th with midday prayer at 11:45 am followed by lunch and then our meeting. We will continue with plans for our annual holiday boutique which is November 11th. Please bring a bag lunch and join us.



GIFT CARDS

Becky Smith

The Vestry voted to discontinue the regular Gift Card (SCRIP) program. We will do special orders for Holidays or if you need a large order for a project. Contact Heather, let her know what you need (there are hundreds of retailers cards available) and pre-pay for your order. It takes a week for us to receive orders. Deadline for Christmas orders will be November 26th

DIRECTORY CHANGE

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BASS LAKE PICNIC



"Following Christ, Discipling His People, Reaching Out to the World."

22nd Annual
**CHRISTMAS
BOUTIQUE**

*Saturday
November 11, 2023
9 am - 2 pm*

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

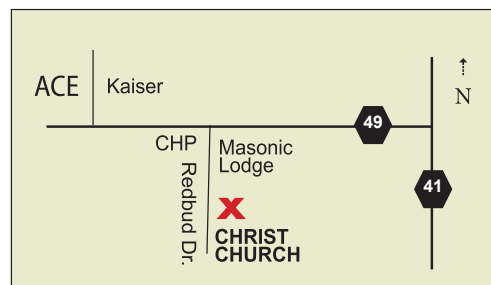


**Shoppers have helped us raise over \$65,000
for local schools and charitable organizations!**

Christ Church members and friends work year-round creating a variety of sewing and needlework crafts, baked goods, Christmas decor, and SO MUCH MORE! Net proceeds are shared with local organizations to help meet the needs of the community.

**Christ Church Anglican
40447 Redbud Dr., Oakhurst**

(Next door to Masonic Lodge, across from CHP)



559-683-7374 • MarthasMarket.net • ChristChurchOakhurst.org

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