Christ Church Easton, CT

**BASIC INFORMATION**

Church Address: Christ Church Easton, 59 Church Road, Easton, CT 06612

Church Phone Number: 203-268-3569

Church Email: eastonparish1762@sbcglobal.net

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA): 25

How many worship services do you have on a normal weekend? 1

How many worship services take place on normal weekdays? 0

How many worship services take place on a monthly basis? 4/5

Do you have a rectory? yes but it is leased out.

How many bedrooms does it have? 3/4

For each of the last three people who have served as Rector or PIC (NOT including Interims) starting with the most recent, provide the following information. Duplicate this section as needed.

Name: Rev. Ally Brundige

Position Title (rector or PIC): Priest in Charge

Date begun (month/year): Jan 2021

Date ended (month/year):August 2023

Name: Rev. Ellen Huber

Position Title (rector or PIC): Rector

Date begun (month/year): 2004

Date ended (month/year): August 2020

We had a series of interims before Rev. Huber.

Is there a Church School? (y/n): y

How many teachers teach in the Church School? 2

How many students participate in the Church School? 8

How many teachers/leaders work with teens or young adults? 0

How many teens or young adults participate in Church School or Youth Group? 0

How many people teach/lead Adult Formation classes or programs? 1

How many adults participate in Adult Formation? 6

Is there a Parish Day School (including Nursery Schools)? yes Christ Church Nursery School

Number of Day School Students: 38

Number of Day School Teachers: 8

Number of Total Staff for Day School: 9

**NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

Please note: Each question has a **1200 character** limit for answers. A “character” includes all spaces, punctuation, and letters

1. **Describe a moment in your worshipping community’s recent ministry which you**

**recognize as one of success and fulfillment.**

A regular crew of about 10 are monthly volunteers at Nourish Bridgeport where we prepare, cook, and serve meals to the unhoused, and very needy of our neighboring city. This ministry has brought us closer to God and to each other, and has linked us with the ministry of the United Community Church.

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

I would describe us as midway between high and low church. We have one service Rite II at 9:30, with hymns from the 1982 Hymnal and Lift Every Voice and Sing, and Wonder, Love and Praise. The priest may chant as desired. Our organ is broken and unrepairable but our talented music director makes do with a Clavinova. We have a children's pageant for Christmas Eve, we light the wreath during Advent. We have choral reading for Palm Sunday where the Vestry takes parts, Ash and Dash on Ash Wednesday, a Good Friday service with carrying the cross up the hill, an Easter Egg hunt following Easter service. We currently broadcast on Facebook live after having used Zoom during COVID. In the past, we have worshipped with St. John's Bridgeport for Pentecost and Maundy Thursday but since they are between priests, we have not joined them. In the summer, we worship outside underneath the tent at 9:00. We've been alternating between HE and MP since we have 5 lay preachers who currently lead Morning Prayers.

3**. How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?**

We have a lay leadership team that leads and preaches for Morning Prayer. During our Familiy Service Sunday, we recruit children to lector. We have had a Ministry Fair where we presented various leaders of ministry to explain the opportunities available to serve. We also use the Parish Newsletter to interest the members of the congregation in taking on responsibilities. The Vestry reaches out to members of the congregation personally to discern their willingness to lead.

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

We host our coffee hour each Sunday at the back of church to engage the congregation; we have had an annual brunch following our Easter Service, parish picnics and our Concerts on the Hill, monthly Zoom meditations, and weekly outdoor meditations (weather permitting) provide opportunity for both contemplation and reflection. We bring the Eucharist to 2 homes where the congregants can no longer get out to church. This has been a very meaningful ministry to the 3 folks who are involved. When you can't get to God, God comes to you.

5. **Describe your worshipping community’s involvement in either the wider Church or geographical community.**

Members of the congregation are involved in Easton Pride which serves the LGBTQ+ community, and the Easton Diversity and Inclusion Task force (EDIT) to ensure all community members are accepted, respected and impowered to in the shaping of Easton. Two of our Concerts on the Hill highlight Juneteenth with EDIT and Pride month with Easton Pride. We believe in our baptismal vows to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves. We participated in Joining Jesus with others in the diocese. Our outreach to Bridgeport includes our volunteers with the weekly Feel the Warmth Dinners where we serve at least once a month. The Senior Warden meets with the Lay Preachers group weekly with Bishop Laura. We hold a yearly 5K to benefit the Cemetery Committee and Christ Church. We work with Parks and Rec and involve the Easton Arts Council.

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

Serving the feel the Warmth Dinner for the unhoused in Bridgeport where we not only feed but welcome our brothers and sisters in Christ, making sure that they feel loved and respected. Our Senior Warden traveled to the Cheyenne River Reservation to work repairing churches that serve as community centers for the Lakota people. She joined with 3 Episcopal churches from Texas to provide the funds and manpower to see that each community has a place where they not only can worship God but serve community meals and give out clothing and other essentials. There we celebrated Eucharist and sang hymns in the Lakota language, shared fellowship with a meal, and even played banjo with the children. The star quilt hanging in the narthex was a gift from the people of the Reservation to Christ Church.

7. **Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?** We used to have a relationship with the Bridgeport Rescue Mission, driving the food truck and engaging with the needy but since COVID they disbanded that ministry, so we moved our Mission team to Nourish Bridgeport. Jim Swann (our Junior Warden) met with one of the volunteers there who suggested we might try working in the pantry. A bunch of folks did but then moved to working at the Feel the Warmth Dinner once a month. We also hold two diaper drives each year to support Nourish Bridgeport's Baby Center. We are the hands and feet of Christ in the world to spread the love of God to all who we encounter.

**8. How are you preparing yourself for the Church of the future?**

We have an aging population so we have instituted a capital campaign to build an ADA compliant restroom on the main floor. Our hybrid service acknowledges that some folks can't or choose not to worship in person. We are open to see where God will lead us.

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

We have a Stewardship team that uses the TENS format to correspond with the congregation. During our stewardship season, various members of the congregation speak about the importance of Christ Church in their spiritual lives. We also reach out to vendors from the local community to sponsor our Concerts on the Hill which is our major annual fundraiser.

10. **What is your worshipping community’s experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?**

Our Vestry decided to investigate a solar farm on our hill and decided to bring the options to the congregation. Some folks were initially not pleased with the idea since we have such beautiful grounds. Our meeting discussed using solar to bring carbonless power to the grid thereby protecting God's creation, and giving us the needed income to continue to be God's presence in Easton. Then our incumbrance application to the diocese was delayed through the process of the Standing Committee and then denied. The Vestry was angry and some threatened to leave the church. The wardens phoned and wrote the bishop and were able to meet with the Standing Committee and plead our case. They eventually gave us permission to go ahead with the project which unfortunately now is in jeopardy.

1**1. 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?**

Leading through Covid and getting a new priest in charge was a period of change after losing our priest of 16 years. We consolidated 2 services and added a Family Sunday once a month since we had no real Sunday School. These events caused us to really circle the wagons, so to speak, growing closer in the process. Through Joining Jesus,  we learned that "the Church" is us, not just a building.

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**12. Please provide four words or phrases describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.**

Living lives of love and service to God and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Please provide a link to your worshipping community’s website:

www.christchurcheaston.com

Please provide links to other places your parish is present on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, etc.)

https://www.facebook.com/christchurcheaston

https://www.facebook.com/concertsonthehilleaston

Instagram : christchurcheastonct

Instagram: concertsonthehilleaston

Are there languages other than English significantly represented in your parish? **No**

**Current Senior Warden Name:** Vicki MarkAnthony

**Current Senior Warden phone number and email:** 203-551-4728, vickimarkanthony@gmail.com

**Previous Senior Warden**: Andy Zumwalt-Hathaway

**Previous Senior Warden phone number and email:** 203-241-7759, andyzhathaway@gmail.com

**Parish Leader Name**: Jim Swann

**Parish Leader Ministry**: Junior Warden, Building and Grounds, and liaison with Nourish Bridgeport

**Parish Leader phone number and email:** jrswann@jrswann.com, 203-722-5111

**Local Community Leader Relationship with the parish:** Rev. Sara Smith, CEO of Nourish Bridgeport, pastor UCC Bridgeport

Reverendsara.smith@gmail.com

**Local Community Leader Name**: Lynn Zaffino, Easton Library Director lzaffino@eastonlibrary.org; 203-261-0134

**Local Community Leader Relationship with the parish**: worked to cosponsor a Racial Justice Film Series