



Close Call

A 'close' is the precinct or space around a cathedral or a church.

Historic Christ Church is a mutually supportive Christian community worshipping in the living Anglican tradition of beauty in liturgy and music. Christ Church bears witness to the love of Christ in prayer, service, and fellowship. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE.**

Christ Church in New Brunswick, New Jersey • 732.545.6262 • January 2009

Rector's Column

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and
everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while
the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

—W.B. Yeats, "The Second Coming"

Beloved in Christ,

This is a strange new year. In Iraq and Afghanistan, wars rage on. The economy continues to falter. In many places, extremists struggle to destabilize democracies, willing to harm anyone at all in order to prove their point, which seems to be that they can. In Texas and on the Gulf Coast, people remain uprooted and displaced by storms. Outside the doors of our church, the hungry line up for food, shivering in the cold: thirteen hundred of them in the last month alone. Yeats' words, written in

WILL YOU HELP US PRESERVE OUR PLANET?

As we enter the new year, we will begin sending out the *Close Call* electronically to as many of you as have given us e-mail addresses. While we will still print copies for visitors and will mail printed copies to those of you who do not use e-mail, or who prefer to receive it in print, it is our hope that many of you will choose to receive it electronically *instead of* in a printed edition. This will be better for our environment, save time for our staff and volunteers, reduce our printing and postage costs, and will ensure that you receive the *Close Call* in a timely fashion. We will begin distributing the *Close Call* electronically in February; for that month only, we will mail it out to the full mailing list as well. Before that time, those of you on our e-distribution list will receive a special e-mail reminding you of this change and giving you the option of opting out of e-delivery. If you do not opt out, you will begin to receive the electronic version *only* in March. *Please remember: e-delivery will work only if you inform us when you change your e-mail address!* If you do not currently receive our e-mails, but would like to, please send a message to Julia Utz at admin@christchurchnewbrunswick.org.

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1920, in the aftermath of World War I, seem strangely apt.

And yet, and yet in the darkness of our times there are signs of hope. The sheer magnitude of our problems frees us from having to pretend that everything is OK. Our nation seems to be coming together across party lines to work with and hope for a new administration. In every community, people of good will are reaching out to care for one another. In our homes, people are learning new ways to value their families, ways that have less to do with money and possessions, and more to do with the gifts of time and listening and shared laughter.

The season of Epiphany reminds us that God walks among us, waiting to be revealed: in a burning bush, a great silence, in the smile of a child or the welcome given to us by a stranger. In our church community, we come together to share our joy, our confusion, to lay our anxieties on the altar of God, whose Life can bear them so much more easily than ours.

That Life is the great secret we have as Christians: we know that our life is not ours alone, but sheer gift bestowed by the prodigal Creator, who scatters the seed of life wherever she can, and tends it and waits for it to bear fruit.

When "the worst are full of passionate intensity," the best must be even more full of conviction. We who know that God desires to shape our communities according to God's compassion must push back against the tides of indifference and self-interest. We who know (at least in our heads!) that "life [is] more than food, and the body more than clothing" (Matt 6:25) have the chance to help others even out of our own need. We who know that "God is love" (I John 4:16) must choose to "abide in [that] love," for only so do we bear witness to the world that God loved us enough to create us, loves us enough to be born among us,

loved us enough to die for us, and loves us still.

But for all that, bearing this witness is not an easy task. It requires us to move daily into faithfulness, to confront full-on our natural desires and fears, and to reach through them to the voice of God whispering in our heart. "We have to take inventory not only of the gifts we have to give but of the gifts we are afraid of receiving," for only so can we reach past our human "no" into the eternal "yes" of God. (David Whyte, *Crossing the Unknown Sea*, p.54) "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was not 'Yes and No'; but in him it is always 'Yes.' For in him every one of God's promises is a 'Yes.'" (2 Cor 1:19-20) God calls us to be willing to become more than we thought we could be, for in us all the fulness of God is pleased to dwell, if we will let God rest in us awhile.

And so, this year, I urge you to begin each day by practicing that yes, your yes to God to God's ways. Whenever you are frightened, whenever you are discouraged, take a moment to pause and repeat that yes, until it hums like a heartbeat in the back of your mind, encouraging you, allowing you to trust, allowing you to rest in your God, allowing you to go where you would have been frightened to God, and to welcome those you would have been afraid to welcome, and to greet with joy this one, wild, and unpredictable life you have been given, day by day.

HOLY EUCHARIST WITH MUSIC AND MEDITATION

is offered every **Wednesday from 12:15-12:45 p.m.** in the Clarke Chapel. This service is fully accessible for Parishioners and community members who use walker, canes, or wheelchairs.

All are welcome

Enough. These few words are enough.
If not these words, this breath.
If not this breath, this sitting here.

This opening to the life
we have refused
again and again
until now.

Until now.

—David Whyte, "Enough"

Blessings and grace,

Deborah+

VESTRY NOTES

—Christopher Brennan,
Clerk of the Vestry

Annual Meeting Committee

Report:

Chris Brennan noted that nominees were sought to fill the seats of the four outgoing Vestry members, as well as a one-year term. The Committee reported the seats are almost filled. Nominees must still be sought for the following offices: Deputies to Diocesan Convention; Alternates to Diocesan Convention; Delegates to Northern Convocation, and People's Warden.

Deacon's Report:

In addition to his usual liturgical duties, Deacon Cornell provided technical support and participated in the Women's Schola's program on Hildegard of Bingen. He also represented Christ Church at the St. Peter's Medical Center's 100 year celebration of community and pastoral care. At the event Christ Church was recognized for its work in support of SPMC and for "providing the spiritual element of the healing process for the sick." Deacon Cornell proudly displayed the award for the Vestry.

Rector's Report:

Dr. Meister sought Vestry views on two recommendations. The first would encourage parishioners to switch to an electronic

version of *Close Call*. If most people switched, the parish could save \$1,400 in printing, paper and mailing costs. The second was a recommendation not to print a full bulletin for the 8 a.m. service, since most attendees are comfortable with the Prayer Book.

A full bulletin would still be printed for special services (e.g., baptisms), as well as for the 10 a.m. service (which tends to draw more people unfamiliar with the *Book of Common Prayer*). The sense of the Vestry (including 8 a.m. attendees) was this suggestion represented a wise use of parish resources.

Dr. Meister noted that the Parish overall exhibits signs of health and vitality. Attendance is up 10 percent over last year. Church School enrollment is high. People are participating actively in adult forums and the agape groups. Volunteer participation has increased, particularly in the Food Pantry.

What is not healthy is the state of parish finances. When she arrived, the assumption was that we had eight to ten years to increase pledges that could carry the bulk of the budget. Given the economic downturn, that assumption is no longer realistic. We urgently need to prioritize spending and develop a new source of income that is not based in pledges or investments.

Treasurer's Report:

Income to date is \$258,000, which is roughly what was budgeted. If trends continue, we will finish with a budget deficit of \$279,000, which again is about what we budgeted. *It should be noted*, however, this amount represents a draw against the Investment Account of about 15 percent of the last three-years' rolling average of the Investment Account (before the recent economic downturn).

Finance Report:

Don Edwards presented a draft of the 2009 budget. The final budget will be adopted in January. The budget presumes pledge income of \$250,000. It also adds a salary adjustment for all staff, but without increases for paid choristers. Even so, the deficit next year will be \$114,000, less than this year, but still a 12.1 percent draw of the three-year rolling average. This level is unsustainable, as it represents 22 percent of our current Investment Account balance of \$1.3 million.

The Finance Committee recommends reducing the *total Investment Account withdrawal* in 2010 to 10 percent, 8 percent in 2011, 6 percent in 2012, and 5 percent from 2013 forward. This will require budget reductions of \$30,000 in 2010 unless new sources of income can be found.

Stewardship:

To date \$203,000 has been raised in pledges (against the goal of \$250,000). It appears that 184 individuals or families have not yet pledged. The Stewardship Committee will review those who have yet to pledge and determine how to close the gap.

New Business:

Resolutions: Two resolutions were moved, seconded and passed.

The first authorizes expenditures in January at 2008 levels, pending approval of the 2009 budget in February.

The second authorizes a larger portion of Dr. Meister's salary be designated as housing allowance, so as to bring it in line with diocesan norms. The latter action is budget-neutral. Both resolutions were approved as presented.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

—Deborah+

The 2009 Annual Meeting will take place on **Sunday, February 1, at 11:30 a.m.** in the Auditorium. The Annual Meeting is when we gather to elect new members to the Vestry and to other elected offices. (Nomination forms are located at the back of the church, if you wish to suggest people. All communicants in good standing who are members of the parish are welcome to vote. If you have come to the parish within the last year, please contact the parish office to determine your eligibility.) It is also the time when we review the parish budget, speak together about the state of the parish, and shape priorities for the coming year.

We in the Episcopal Church take very seriously our belief that the Holy Spirit resides within each baptized Christian. This shapes our form of governance toward councils and meetings, because God can give to any individual the insight or idea which the rest of us need to hear. In 2009 in particular, the recession has eroded the value of our endowment to the point that we will have to make difficult choices between priorities we value highly. We need your wisdom and creativity. I hope that all of you will attend.

Parish Announcements

CAN WE MAKE THE SUNDAY SCHEDULE WORK BETTER?

—Deborah+

As you know, for many years we have worshiped on Sunday mornings at 8:00 and at 10:00. Many of you may be less aware of what happens between and around those services. On any given Sunday, the youth choir begins to rehearse at 9:00, the adult choir starts at 9:15, Sunday school starts at 9:45 and continues during the Service of the Word, and Rite 13 starts at 11:30. This works, but it also has its drawbacks. 1) We have difficulty attracting parishioners to teach Sunday school because many people do not wish to miss the first half of church. 2) Several families have children whose age spans both church school and Rite 13; for some of these, whose children participate in choir, Sunday morning means arriving at 9 a.m. and leaving close to 1 pm. 3) Additionally, the current schedule makes it very difficult to schedule adult education. If we place it between the services, we have very little time. If we place it after the 10:00 service, we have time, but worshipers from the early service have to leave and come back. If we schedule it on a weeknight, most people cannot come.

In order to address some of these concerns, we are going to experiment with a new service schedule between Lent and Pentecost. Starting March 1st and continuing until May 31st, Sunday services will be held at 8:00 and 10:30, with Christian education for all ages from 9:30 to 10:20. After Pentecost, we will ask the parish to evaluate the experiment and see what you think of it. We will provide you

with detailed information, including programs and room numbers, in the next issue of Close Call. For now, you need to know that, as of March 1st, the times will be:

8:00-Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00-9:30 Youth choir rehearsal
9:30-10:20 Children's Sunday school, Rite 13, Adult Sunday school
9:45-Parish Choir rehearsal
10:30-Children's Chapel
10:30-Holy Eucharist, Rite II, followed by coffee hour

I am aware that this is asking 10:00 worshipers to change their Sunday morning routine. On the other hand, it means you'll get a bit of extra time to sleep in and eat breakfast, so maybe that won't be too bad. I hope that this will give us more opportunity to come together as a parish, to learn, to deepen relationships with one another, to support the formation of our children, and to build relationships between the 8:00 and 10:00 communities. If it doesn't work for many of you, we will return things to the way they were.

I thank you in advance for your patience, and for keeping an open mind!

GREEN GREENING

—Sally Edwards

We had a great time December 14 after the 10:00 a.m. service. Jennifer Garrison, Jesse Traquair, Betsy and Jonathan Thomas, Molly Newling, Robin Stevenson, Marie Thomas, Robin Hess, and Pete Cornell decorated sanctuary windowsills with three huge piles of greens donated by Simonson Farms, Cranbury.

Fred Montana had already hung artificial garland from the gallery; we hung artificial wreaths from the pillars and chancel walls. We've used the same artificial "greens" for nearly ten years. The fresh greens are gleaned from branches the tree farm would otherwise discard in the woods.

CHRISTMAS THANKS

—Deborah+

Many, Many thanks to all those who made our Advent and Christmas wonderful!

A church is a community, and rarely do so many hands come together at one time as they do at the major holy days! There are separate thanks elsewhere, but...thanks to Mark Trautman and the members of all our choirs, who made our worship sing. Thanks to Sally Edwards and all the liturgical ministers who enhanced the beauty of our worship. Thanks to Margaret Brown-Stansbury, Renata Koumendouros, and the children who enacted the pageant and brought the Christmas story to life. Thanks to Sally Edwards for donating our immense Christmas tree, and to her, Eric Sanders, Silvia Muller, the members of the Altar Guild, and all who arranged flowers, donated or draped greens, trimmed candles, decorated windows, and made our space festive and fragrant.

Thanks to Julia and Mark who rearranged their schedules to work on the bulletins, and to all the volunteers who folded them for hours. Thanks to all the volunteers who work in the Food Pantry; you helped spread the joy of Thanksgiving and Christmas to our neighbors and friends. And many, many thanks to Brian Breen, who

works tirelessly behind the scenes to maintain this church with a good nature and willing hands.

Above all, thanks to our Lord and Savior who has redeemed us by his love and gathered us together in this place; to whom the the glory. Amen.

COME PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY ON THE EVE OF THE INAUGURATION

Each week, during the Prayers of the People, we ask God to guide the leaders of our nation and bless our people, but an inauguration is a special time, a hinge at which transformation seems possible. At **7 p.m. on Monday, January 19th** (the night before the Inauguration), we will hold a special service of prayers for our nation. We will pray for the outgoing and incoming leaders of our nation, and will use the laws God gave to his people Israel for the ordering of their nation to focus our prayers for peace, for justice, for compassion, for the poor, for industry and agriculture, for harmony between nations, etc. I hope that you will join us.

DINE TO DONATE COUPONS

Dine at Perkins Restaurant and 10 percent of your bill will be donated to Christ Church. Coupons are located on the table at the back of Church; please take some for yourself, family, and friends.

CELL PHONES AND PRINTER CARTIDGES

Bring your used inkjet printer cartridges and unwanted cell phones to back of the church to benefit Christ Church youth.

Youth Opportunities

CHURCH SCHOOL RESUMES

Church School for all ages resumes on January 11th. If you and your children and/or teenagers are new here, you are welcome to enroll them! Call the church office for details.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Diocese of New Jersey is now accepting applications for the 2009 Van Duzer Scholarships. These are awarded annually to recent high school students entering their first year of study at an accredited college or university. Applicants are assessed on five criteria: church involvement, financial need, community involvement, academic performance, and an essay. If you wish to apply, call Deborah in the church office to obtain an application. *Deadline is March 1, 2009.*

ST. CECILIA CHOIR

—*Mark Trautman*

This ensemble for middle and high school students allows young musicians to continue to develop and explore their creativity by singing a variety of music ranging from medieval to contemporary works. If interested, please contact the Director of Music, Mark Trautman.

YOUTH CHOIR

—*Renata Koumendouros*

This choir provides children in the second to eighth grades with fun and a supportive environment to learn to read and sing choral music. Repertoire ranges from children's anthems to spirituals to classical music. The choir provides music for the 10 a.m. service on the second Sunday of each month, and for special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, and our black heritage celebration. Rehearsals run each Sunday from 9:00-9:40 a.m. in the Children's Chapel. For more information, contact Renata Koumendouros in the Parish Office.

MUSIC AT CHRIST CHURCH

SUNDAY VESPERS SERIES
Free concerts at 6:30 following 6 o'clock Vespers

January 4
Riyehee Hong, organist

January 11
Todd Marsh, piano

January 18
Nick Cutroneo, classical guitar

January 25
Special Choral Concert:
Makhelat Hamercaz, the Jewish Choir of Central New Jersey
Hazzan Sheldon Levin and Cantor Anna West Ott, directors

Adult Education Opportunities

RECOVERING YOUR SELF IN CHRIST

—The Rev. Dr. Deborah Meister

January 18, 2009:

Jesus and the Good Life. What does Jesus teach us about holy living? What does Jesus look for in his followers? What virtues are supposed to distinguish us as disciples? Dr. Virginia Wiles, Professor of New Testament, New Brunswick Theological Seminary, will teach this class.

April 19:

Half-day mini-retreat! **Jesus the Peace-Maker**, will be led by Janet Chisholm, who coordinates peace-maker training workshops for the Kirkridge Center, and is a nationally-recognized leader in faith-based peace-making and justice-seeking. She is a popular writer on active non-violence, and has worked with church groups, veterans of the Iraq War, and prisoners. This class is designed to give you a taste of her three-day basic training, which helps participants learn to build a culture of non-violence, justice, peace, and reconciliation. If you wish to come, please e-mail Julia at admin@christchurchnewbrunswick.org, and indicate whether you will need food. Cost: \$7.50 for lunch, or bring your own.

PREPARING FOR PENTECOST: LAY RETREAT WITH BISHOP COUNCELL

Leader: The Right Reverend George E. Councill, Eleventh Bishop of Diocese of New Jersey

Back by popular demand—a lay retreat with Bishop Councill. This retreat will be a time of prayer, reflection and renewal as we

prepare to enter the season of Pentecost. We will explore, in prayer and discussion, Pentecost Sunday, the Holy Spirit, and how, during Pentecost, to bring God closer to you. The retreat will include a celebration of the Eucharist.

When: Friday through Saturday, May 29-30; begins Friday, check-in 3:30 PM, first session at 4 PM and ends Saturday at 4 PM

Cost: \$85 per person overnight, \$40 commuter, meals included.

Where: Stella Maris Retreat Center, 981 Ocean Avenue, Elberon, New Jersey 07740 (near Long Branch), Phone 732.229.0216.

Register by Friday, May 15. Space for overnight attendees is limited to 20. Check payable to the Diocese of New Jersey must be received by this date.

Registration: Email preferred to spaige@newjersey.anglican.org. Or fax registration form to 609 394-9546, mail form, or phone Sarah Paige, 609.394.5281, ext. 10.

Contact Constance White, 215.321.0722, or connielouwhite@msn.com

ABSALOM JONES CELEBRATION

The Diocesan Black Caucus and the Union of Black Episcopalians invite you to a celebration of the life of Absalom Jones, the first black priest in the Episcopal Church, on **Sunday, February 15 at 3:00 p.m.**, at Trinity Cathedral in Trenton.

Born into slavery in 1746, Jones taught himself to read and earned money to buy freedom, first for his wife and then for himself. In 1794, he and other black leaders began to build a church, which became St. Thomas' in Philadelphia. They joined to Episcopal Church, requiring that they retain their autonomy to organize themselves and that Jones be licensed as a lay reader, and, if qualified, as a priest. Jones was ordained deacon in 1795 and priest in 1802. Under his guidance, St. Thomas' grew to more than 500 members and became a focal point for preaching against slavery.

LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Call Sally Edwards (609-395-1467) and Julia Utz (732-545-6262) when you have made a substitution.

Please note the deadline for names changes in the Sunday Leaflets is noon on Wednesdays. **Intercessors**, please be in church and pick up the Intercessor three-ring binder before the Prelude starts. If you're later than that, we have to get a substitute from the congregation.

		January 4	January 11	January 18	January 25	February 1
1/4—Epiphany		Epiphany Sunday				
Isaiah 60:1-6		Bruce Rydell	Joan Borden	Jose Castillo	Peter Clarke	Rod Neaveill
Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14		Andrea Rydell	Patricia Warren	Meegan Adames	Sheila Cooper	Ruth Neaveill
Ephesians 3:1-12		Syll Pratt	Sheila Cooper	Rod Neaveill	Bruce Rydel	Joan Borden
Matthew 2:1-12		Evangeline Guy	Elfrida Gooding	Evangeline Guy	Sheila Cooper	Evangeline Guy
1/11—Epiphany 1B		Margaret DeMatteo	Debra Lowe	Margaret DeMatteo	Elfrida Gooding	Debra Lowe
Genesis 1:1-5						
Psalms 29						
Acts 19:1-7						
Mark 1:4-11						
1/18—Epiphany 2B		Epiphany Sunday	Teaching Sunday			
1 Samuel 3:1-10(11-20)		Andrea Cunnell	Sally Edwards	Chris Davies	Penny Gordon	Artie Phills
Psalms 139:1-5, 12-17		Tom Brown	C LaPorte-Burns	C Calvimontes	Ijeoma Egekeze	Donald Edwards
1 Corinthians 6:12-20		Chris Brennan	H LaPorte-Burns	David Burns	John Egekeze	Kelly-Jane Cotter
John 1:43-51		Mary Nelson	Molly Newling	David Heinlein	Rod Neaveill	Mary Nelson
1/25—Epiphany 3B		Mel Garber	Laurel Evans	Kenreic VanLoo	Chris Davies	Molly Newling
Jonah 3:1-5, 10		Martha Golfphin	Joseph Ambrosio	Marva VanLoo	Thelma Fergusson	Peggy Smith
Psalms 62: 6-14		Molly Newling	Matthew Ambrosio	Josh Armstrong	Mel Garber	Kenreic VanLoo
1 Corinthians 7: 29-31		Peggy Smith	Patrick Ambrosio	Wendy Benjamin	Martha Golfphin	Marva VanLoo
Mark 1:14-20		Carol Erickson	Carole Gibson	Annette Johnson	Betsy Thomas	Robin Brown
2/1—Epiphany 4B						
Deuteronomy 18:15-20						
Psalms 111						
1 Corinthians 8:1-13		Sam Kuldinow	Ijeoma Egekeze	Alexandra Harbour	Kerrie VanLoo	Graig Fergusson
Mark 1:21-28		Kabir Golfphin	Emma Chant	Akean Benjamin	Adam Hess	Oluchi Egekeze
		C LaPorte-Burns	Astlinn Stansbury	Kendall Beckles	Chioma Egekeze	Bryan Herasme

Eucharistic Minister **Lector** **Psalmist** **Intercessor** **Chalice Bearer** **Usher** **Greeter** **Server** **Crucifer** **Torchbearer**

Sundays

8:00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist
9:00 a.m.—Men's Ministry
(second Sunday of the month)
10:00 a.m.—Choral Eucharist
followed by refreshments,
fellowship

Mondays through Fridays

7:30 a.m.—“Open” AA meeting
for men and women in the Auditorium.

Mondays

9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.—Boaz Open
Clinic

7:00 p.m.—Boaz Board (*third
Monday of the month*)

7:15 p.m. *Lyme Disease Support
Group (first and third Mondays of
the month)*

7:30 p.m.—Narcotics Anonymous

7:30 p.m.—Vestry (*second Monday
of the month*)

Tuesdays

9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.—Boaz Open
Clinic

Wednesdays

12:15 p.m.—Holy Eucharist in the
Sanctuary

6:00 p.m.—Food Pantry (*last three
Wednesdays of the month*)

7:00 p.m.—AA Meeting

7:00 p.m.—WomenSpirit

7:30 p.m.—Property Committee
(*first Wednesday of the month*)

Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.—Boaz Open
Clinic

8:00 p.m.—Parish Choir
Rehearsal

Friday

9:00 a.m.—Food Pantry (*last two
Fridays of the month*)

Saturdays

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.—Boaz Open
Clinic

10:30 a.m.—Food Pantry (*last two
Saturdays of the month*)

Christ Church

5 Paterson Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Telephone 732.545.6262
FAX 732.545.6264

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Meister,
Rector

(mobile 732.570.3767)

rector@christchurchnewbrunswick.org

The Rev. Deacon Peter Cornell,
Deacon

deacon@christchurchnewbrunswick.org

The Rev. Gregory Bezilla,

Rutgers Chaplain

(mobile 609.240.1554)

bezilla@rci.rutgers.edu

Mark Trautman,

Director of Music

music@christchurchnewbrunswick.org

Renata Koumendouros,

Youth Choir Director

rkoumendouros@hotmail.com

Julia Utz,

Parish Administrator

admin@christchurchnewbrunswick.org

Brian Breen,

Sexton

Christ Church Web Page:

www.christchurchnewbrunswick.org

Parish Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday:

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Friday:

9:00 a.m. – noon

Close Call deadline is:

Friday, January 16, for
February 2009 Issue

Carol Erickson, Editor

732.777.1877

closecall@

christchurchnewbrunswick.org

Christ Church Vestry

If you wish to become involved in any
of our ministries, please contact
the Vestry committee chairs.

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Meister,
Presider

Paul Ambros
Rector's Warden

Nancy Walworth
People's Warden

Zida Abbott
732.545.0748

Children's Formation

Wendy Benjamin
732.698.9330

Children's Formation
Special Events and Fundraising

Christopher Brennan
732.317.1927

Music

Peter Clarke
732.560.9626

Marketing and Communications

Donald Edwards
609.395.1467

Finance, Personnel, Strategic Planning

Jonathan Gloster
732.951.2356
Property

Andrea Hawkins
908.709.4319

Special Events and Fundraising

Annette Johnson
732.568.1152

Newcomers and Hospitality

Hansford Kilkenny
732.545.1611
Outreach

Penelope Lattimer
732.843.3031
Stewardship

Meegan Adames
732.843.4822
Youth Formation, Outreach

Richard Travers
732.613.9556
Newcomers and Hospitality, Property