

The Rainbow



January 2026

Episcopal Church Men

The Episcopal Church Men at Christ Episcopal Church have hosted pancake dinners on Shrove Tuesday each year for over three decades with help from members of the Church. This year, that dinner will be held on February 17, 2026. The pancake dinner is a great opportunity for fellowship, both in the preparation of the food and in sharing the meal with members and visitors.



Tickets will be distributed to the church men, who are asked to sell them or to buy them and give them away to family, friends and business associates.

The proceeds of the ticket sales for those dinners represent the primary funding source for the many charitable and worthwhile causes supported by the ECM. In years past, those causes have included the Bluefield Daily Telegraph Little Jimmy Fund, the Mercer County Fellowship Home, the Bluefield Union Mission, the Wade Center, the Food Pantry and Kerosene Fund, and maintenance of the Church including replacement of exterior doors and replacement of equipment in the Church kitchen.



The ECM hosts monthly dinner meetings on the third Wednesday of most months. The next meeting is on March 18, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Rowley Hall. All men of the Church are invited to attend.



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE VESTRY OF CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH-BLUEFIELD

A regular meeting of the Vestry was held on December 17, 2025. Present were Father Paul Barker, Darla Olson, Art Mead, David Kersey, Mimi Merritt, Ted Lewis, Becky Beckett, Bill Denney and Don Kersey. Dee Puckett was absent.

Father Barker called the meeting to order, declared the presence of a quorum and opened with a prayer.

Mimi Merritt presented a devotional-a reading and reflection on the Christmas carol, "In the Bleak Mid-Winter", originally composed as a poem by Christina Rossetti in 1872.

The first order of business was a review of the minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2025. Upon motion of Bill Denney and second of Darla Olson, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer Don Kersey provided a written summary of his financial observations for the month, along with the balance sheet and income statement. Pledged income is behind budget, but we have received deposits in the last several days which have made us stable through year end. Accordingly, we do not need the St. Lucy withdrawal approved at the November meeting. Upon motion of Mimi Merritt and second of Becky Beckett, it was unanimously agreed to cancel that request to WesBanco. The stewardship campaign has produced pledges to date of \$92,500, with 7 new pledging units. Upon motion of Bill Denney and second of Art Mead, the treasurer's report was approved.

Becky Beckett gave the Senior Warden report. Emma requests that committee reports for the Annual Meeting be submitted to her by no later than January 4, 2026. Mary Catherine Williams is helping with Junior Warden tasks, while Dee Puckett is out. We need to come to a conclusion about security issues and need to follow up with Lt. Copenhaver with the Bluefield Police Department for another security review and schedule one that more Vestry members can attend. The Bishop has had a family circumstance which has required him to postpone his visit on December 21. The Letter of Agreement for Rev. Barker has gone through the final revision and was presented to the vestry for adoption. Upon motion of Ted Lewis and second of Mimi Merritt the vestry unanimously approved the Letter of Agreement and authorized Becky Beckett to execute. Father Paul also executed it and the agreement will be sent to the Bishop for execution.

Darla Olson gave the parish life report. The luncheon for the Bishop's visit on December 21 has been postponed. Thanks were expressed to the Becketts and the Justices for hosting the Canterbury Club dinner on December 7. An elevated coffee hour will be held for visiting priest, Betsy Walker on January 11, 2026.

Bill Denney reported on Evangelism/Outreach. One hundred three food bags were distributed at the November food pantry. This month's food pantry is tomorrow. Jim Pulse will cook breakfast. Grant's gift certificates will be distributed, along with food bags.

Mimi Merritt gave the Communication report. Susanne Pulse continues to serve as "production manager" for the Rainbow and is doing a great job. There have been discussions about limiting the larger scale newsletters to once a quarter. There is a lot of work involved in that production and much of the church events are now covered in Father Paul's weekly newsletter. A decision will be made next year.

Father Paul gave the Education report. The last CEC 101 class was provided by Zoom, due to weather. We currently have 5 confirmation candidates, 8 for receiving and 1 for reaffirmation. Elizabeth Clement continues her excellent work with our children's Sunday School.

Father Paul gave the Worship/Rector's report. On the Sunday that in person services were cancelled, due to weather, Father Paul held morning prayer live stream and 14 people attended and there were 125 views later. There will be Sunday School this Sunday. The Christ Church 101 class is well attended, and we have both confirmation and reception candidates. He expressed thanks to the Altar Guild for their hard work and adapting to last-minute changes. Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 p.m. Bill Denney will preside at a 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer service on Christmas day. David and Terry will be out of town for March 15 and 22, 2026 and the Mainlands will provide music for those Sundays. Emma will be on vacation December 23-25; Father Paul will be on vacation December 28-January 2; and the Diocesan office will be on sabbatical December 25-January 5. The church office will be closed December 25, 31 and January 1.

New Business-The church has received a \$22,000 gift from the 1912 Foundation, with a directive that the vestry may decide how to allocate the gift between the food pantry and the general fund. After a brief discussion, upon motion of David Kersey and second of Don Kersey, the vestry unanimously decided to allocate \$2,000 to the food pantry and \$20,000 to the general fund.

There being no old business, Father Paul adjourned the meeting with a closing prayer. The next meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Respectfully submitted,
David M. Kersey, Recorder



MONTHLY MINISTRY REPORT

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

FOOD PANTRY

October 16, 2025

Bags Given: 80 bags were distributed

Jim Pulse and crew served breakfast was served. Volunteers who helped were Nancy and Chuck Stark, Betty Nash, Charlie Blevins, Jim Pulse, Jerry Wood, Todd Taylor, Patricia and Peter Taylor, Barbara and Bob Eichel, and Bill Denny.

November 20, 2025

Number of bags distributed: 93 plus \$20 Gift Certificates to Grants Supermarket: 50 given away

Jim Pulse and crew served breakfast. Clothing was also given away.

Volunteer Crew: Betty Nash, Charlie Blevins, Jim Pulse, Todd Taylor, Bill Denny, Kathleen Price, Patricia and Peter Taylor, Barbara and Bob Eichel, Nancy and Chuck Stark, and Linda Gillespie

December 18, 2025

Number of bags distributed: 82 bags

\$20 Gift Certificates to Grants Supermarket: 50 given away

Jim Pulse and crew served breakfast. Clothing was also given away.

Volunteer Crew: Betty Nash, Charlie Blevins, Jim Pulse, Bill Denny, Jerry Wood, Todd Taylor, Barbara and Bob Eichel, Nancy and Chuck Stark, Linda Gillespie, Jim Pulse, Jerry Wood and Nancy Stark prepared and served breakfast.

UNION MISSION

October 8, 2025

A total of 102 meals were prepared, packaged, and served. Church volunteers served 84 people, and the mission staff distributed 18 more meals by closing of the day. The menu was spaghetti, salad, a roll, dessert, and a soft drink and one sub sandwich. Volunteers who helped were Sheila

Brooks, Elizabeth Clement, Bob and Barbara Eichel, Art Mead. and Shirley Ofsa of Christ Episcopal Church, Bluefield, WV; and Betty Watson of Bluefield, VA.

October 22, 2025

A total of 191 meals were prepared, packaged, and served. Church volunteers served 172 people and the mission staff distributed another 19 meals by the closing of the day. The menu was BBQ on a bun, cole slaw, baked beans, dessert, and a soft drink. Sub sandwiches were served for the last 19 meals. Volunteers who helped were Sheila Brooks, Elizabeth Clement, Art Mead, Shirley Ofsa, Patty Richardson, and Peter Richardson of Christ Episcopal Church in Bluefield, WV; Betty Watson of Bluefield, VA; and Charles Helmandollar, Senior Warden of Christ Episcopal Church, Pocahontas, VA.

Meals at the Union Mission were served only once in November and once in December. The dates are as follows: Wednesday, November 12, and Wednesday, December 10, both at 4:00 PM.

November 12, 2025

A total of 194 meals were prepared, packaged and served. Church volunteers served over 170 people; Mission staff distributed the remaining meals by closing. The menu was baked ziti, a roll, salad, dessert and a soft drink. (Ziti ran out at about 130 meals, so a shift was made to sub sandwiches and other items from the cooler.) Volunteers were Sheila Brooks, Art Mead, Shirley Ofsa, Patty and Peter Richardson from Christ Church, Bluefield; James Fisher, a former member of St. Mary's in Bluefield, VA and Betty Watson of Bluefield, VA.

FELLOWSHIP HOME

October

A dinner of pork roast, carrots, salad, sour dough bread, and dessert was delivered to the men at the Fellowship Home on Thursday, October 23. Those who helped provide food for this outreach were Debbie and Judge Faber, Chris and Jim Justice, Nancy and Chuck Stark, Roger and Keisha Harman, Linda Gillespie, and Linda Ammar.

CHRISTMAS SNACK BASKETS



Snack baskets for the Fellowship Home were delivered on Monday, December 22. As always, the men were very appreciative. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the outreach event.



One day, a man went to visit a church. He got there early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near the driver got out and said, "I always park there! You took my place!" The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After Sunday School, the visitor went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place!"

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ	2	3
5 The Second Sunday After Christmas Day 10:00 Holy Eucharist	5	6 The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ	7	8	9	10
11 The First Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	12	13	14 4:00 Union Mission	15 9:00 Food Pantry	16	17
18 The Second Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist Annual Meeting	19 The Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle	20 10:30 DOK	21 5:00 Vestry 6:00 Men's Dinner	22	23	24
25 The Third Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	26 The Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle	27	28 3:30 Union Mission	29	30	31

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
200 DUHRING STREET
BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA 24701

To our friends and family:



January 2026

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