



Fall 2026



Christ & St. Luke's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

At-a-Glance Calendar

September 2026

Sunday, September 13 — Homecoming Sunday with special coffee hour and refreshments after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. services. Children's formation resumes.

Wednesday, September 16, 5:00 p.m. — 6:00 p.m. Bible Study starts (page 13).

Sunday, September 20 — Ministry Fair (page 8).

Friday, September 25, 12:00 p.m. — Midday Music concert (page 6).

Friday, September 25, 4:00 p.m. — Rector's Book Group (page 13).

Sunday, September 27 — Adult formation restarts (pages 9 and 10).

Monday, September 28, 7:30 p.m. — A special concert in memory of Dr. Allen Shaffer (page 6).

October 2026

Saturday, Oct 3, 5:30 p.m. — Blessing of the Animals (page 11).

Sunday, October 4 — Creation Sunday, Episcopal 101 begins (page 14), **Choral Evensong at 5:30 p.m.** (page 6).

Sunday, October 4 — Stewardship Season and Harvest for Hope food drive begin (page 5).

Thursdays, October 8, 15, 29, 5:30 p.m. — Take a Dip Into Baptism (page 14).

Friday, October 16, 12:00 p.m. — Midday Music concert (page 6).

Sunday, October 18 — Feast of Title

Thursday–Sunday, October 22–25 — Vergers Guild Conference (page 12).

Friday, October 23, 7:30 p.m. — Dorothy Papadakos plays *The Phantom of the Opera* (page 7).

Friday, October 30, 4:00 p.m. — Rector's Book Group (page 13).

November 2026

Sunday, November 1 — All Saints' Day service with Baptisms at the 10:15 a.m. service.

Sunday, November 1, 5:30 p.m. — All Souls' Requiem, and Harvest for Hope food drive concludes.

Sunday, November 8 — Ingathering Sunday, pledges due.

Sunday, November 15 — Bishop's annual visitation with confirmations.

Thursday, November 26, 10:15 a.m. — Thanksgiving Eucharist

Sunday, November 29, 5:30 p.m. — Advent Lessons and Carols



Fr. Noah Van Niel

When it comes to largescale cultural trends or events, I often tend to be a little late on the uptake. Maybe this is a form of subconscious skepticism of yet another fad that surely can't be worth all the attention it is receiving. But more likely I am just out of the loop of what is cool. Usually by the time I start doing the latest "it" thing it's well after most people have moved on. The case in point this summer was the blockbuster motion picture, *The Odyssey*. I only just saw it—almost two months after it was released and long after it had run through an exhaustive period of public commentary. I will spare you my review (there have been enough of those written already) but one of the things I found myself reflecting on was the fact that this story is still so compelling even after thousands of years. It's an important reminder that stories are perhaps the longest and greatest legacies of human civilizations. Before writing, before money, before most everything, there were stories. Stories are how we make sense of the world and our place in it. How we articulate what we believe, how we share things that are important, and how we communicate our hopes and dreams. Stories are like society's safety deposit boxes for all that we hold dear and want to ensure is passed on. Our predilection for narrative is essential to our self-understandings and conceptions as individuals, communities, even as nation-states. The stories we tell to ourselves and about ourselves shape our identity, both revealing and constructing who we are and who we want to be.



The west-facing windows of the church

Because of this, stories play a central role in our life of faith. The Bible is full of stories. Jesus used stories like parables to teach his most important lessons. Jared and I often use stories to illustrate the point of our sermons. We are surrounded by stories at Church because stories stick with us. They are how we communicate things about ourselves or about God that are important for us to know and hold onto.

At the same time, each of us have our own stories. Stories made up of our own life experiences and encounters with God which we have tried to arrange in some sort of order so as to explain, or make meaning, or articulate why things are the way they are; why we are the way we are.

One of the most important things a church community can do is help us find how our particular story, fits within the larger story of God's relationship with the world. As we make these connections, the hope is that our story expands, changes, evolves into a story that is fuller, truer, and more powerful in shaping who we are and want to be.

So, this program year, we are going to focus on stories: **God's Story, Our Story.** We are going to deepen our understanding of scripture; explore how stories shape us (for good or ill); learn to question stories in order to gain deeper understanding or revise them; see what it takes to write new stories or enrich old ones; and seek out stories we haven't heard or which haven't been told. We think this focus will make the coming year one of the most intellectually enriching and spiritually expanding seasons we have had together. And it is our hope that such a year will help us write an even better next chapter in our story here as a family of faith.



Stewardship Season & Fall Food Drive

Sunday, October 4 — Sunday, November 1 (for the food drive)
Sunday, October 4 — Sunday, November 8 (for the pledge drive)

Pledging during stewardship season is a powerful way to declare, **"this is my church and I am a part of it."** This year, our **Stewardship Season** runs alongside our vital **Harvest for Hope Food Drive**, a powerful ecumenical coalition co-led with our friends at Second Cavalry Baptist Church. Last year at Christ & St. Luke's alone, we donated more than 3,000 lbs of food to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore to address record-high food insecurity in Hampton Roads.

Our stewardship goal remains maximum participation from our parish. Every financial pledge directly sustains our traditional worship and ministries. Running these campaigns simultaneously reminds us that our faith requires both inward commitment to our church home and outward, tangible action to care for our neighbors. Please prayerfully consider making a financial pledge to the church. Simultaneously, please bring non-perishable food donations for the Harvest for Hope bins at the back of the church as we join hands with our sister churches to transform our city. **The food drive will conclude November 1, and pledges are due back by Ingathering Sunday on November 8.**

Sacred Music In A Sacred Space



Kevin Kwan
Director of Music

*"And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new,
new song, 'twill be the old, old story that I
have loved so long."*

This past summer I had the opportunity to attend a conference with 350 of my fellow church musicians where we sang these words from the classic hymn "I love to tell the story."

This fall, as we tell God's story, and thus our story, we reflect on the kinds of stories we have to tell. At Christ & St. Luke's, music has always been an important part of that story. Music has the power to inspire, to evangelize, to reach beyond walls. Sacred Music in a Sacred Space tells our story and we invite you to come and hear for yourself.



The Christ & St. Luke's choir

Fall Music Events

Midday Music I

Friday, September 25,
12:00 p.m.

The United States Air Force
Langley Winds woodwind
quintet

Norfolk Chamber Consort

Monday, September 28,
7:30 p.m.

A special concert in
memory of Dr. Allen Shaffer.

Choral Evensong

Sunday, October 4,
5:30 p.m.

Midday Music II

Friday, October 16, 12:00 p.m.

Violist Dr. Daniel Howard,
violinist Haley Schricker, and
pianist Kevin Kwan

Choral Evensong for the Annual Vergers Conference

Thursday, October 22,
6:00 p.m.

Requiem for All Souls' Sunday

November 1, 5:30 p.m.

Stephen Coxe and Friends

Friday, November 20, 7:30
p.m.

Composer and pianist Dr.
Stephen Coxe gathers his
friends for an incredible
evening of music making.
Performers include violinist
Jonathan Richards, soprano
Anna Feucht, organist Kevin
Kwan, the Camerata
Choristers, and students
from the Governor's School
for the Arts.



Dorothy Papadakos: The Phantom of the Opera

Dorothy Papadakos at Christ & St. Luke's
accompanying *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 2025

Friday, October 23, 7:30 p.m.

Audience favorite Dorothy Papadakos returns for a fifth year to improvise an immersive soundtrack to the 1929 classic silent movie *The Phantom of the Opera* featuring Lon Chaney. Come and enjoy the music and the movie projected on the big screen! We plan to offer an "overflow" screen in the chapel for latecomers, but please arrive early if you'd like to secure a good seat.



Annual Ministry Fair — Find Your Calling!

September 20, after the 10:15 a.m. service.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet passionate parishioners who would love for you to serve alongside them in their ministries. Whether you are looking to deepen your spiritual life, connect with others, or put your faith into tangible action, there is a place for you. We invite you to wander the tables, ask questions, and find where God is calling you to serve. You can volunteer with our Thursday Lunch Ministry to serve restaurant-quality meals and help restore dignity to our marginalized neighbors, or join our Caring for Creation team to participate in local environmental stewardship. Stop by the tables for Pub Club, Seasoned Spirits, Women of Wisdom, or our Queer Theology Discussion Group. You can also help preserve and celebrate our parish's deep Norfolk history by joining the Archive Guild. Or perhaps you're interested in our Flower Guild? Find out more about joining our world-class choirs, or serving as an acolyte. Perhaps you'd like to support our pastoral care work? This is not even an exhaustive list! See you there!



The Theology of Narrative

Adult Formation

Sundays, September 27—October 25 from 9:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Epistemology is a term used to describe the theory of knowledge – how do we know what we know? Central to Christian theology is the understanding that Jesus is our epistemology in relation to God.

Jesus Christ, through his teachings and actions, reveals the nature of God and helps us to understand God's unconditional love for the world. If we look closely at those teachings, we'll see that Jesus' way of revealing God's goodness is often through story – parables, allegories, metaphors. Jesus doesn't just tell us that God is good, he reveals it through narrative. This notion is the basis of a branch of theology called Narrative Theology, which looks at how narrative is used as part of the broader process of revelation of the nature of God.

This fall, in keeping with our theme of **God's Story, Our Story**, we'll study how narrative can be used as a process of revelation, both in the Bible and in our lives. How do stories form us? What voices are we listening to? How can narrative distract us from truth, or reveal truth? Over five weeks in our Adult Forum, starting September 27, we'll spend time examining Narrative Theology, applying that theology to biblical interpretation, and looking at some of the narratives in our local, national, and global contexts that help to reveal where God might be showing us something new and true. This forum series will be facilitated by the clergy.

Exploring the Parables

The Parable of the Sower
From The Saint John's Bible



Adult Formation

Sundays, November 1, November 8, November 22 from 9:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

When Jesus had something truly important to impart to his followers, he consistently turned to parables. These were small, fictional narratives rooted in first-century daily life, featuring farmers, lost coins, mustard seeds, and wayward sons, yet they had massive lessons packed into them. Parables were brilliantly designed to subvert human expectations, challenge the status quo, and reveal the surprising nature of God's Kingdom.

Because these teachings are so remarkably rich and layered, we are going to spend our Adult Formation time this November dwelling deeply on some of Jesus' most famous parables. We will chew on them together through open, thoughtful discussion. By examining their historical context and asking honest questions, we will find the marrow of meaning hidden therein.



The Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, October 3, 5:30 p.m.

Join us for the annual Blessing of the Animals. This beloved service celebrates the furry, feathered, stuffed, and scaly companions who enrich our lives. Bring your pet for a service and personal blessing inspired by St. Francis, who was well known for his love of nature. This service takes place in the driveway off Stockley Gardens and Boissevain Ave. If your pet does not travel well, or does not play nicely with others, you are welcome to bring a photo to be blessed instead. Stuffed animals are welcome, too!





Vergers Guild Conference

Carolyn Moneymaker,
one of our fantastic team of vergers at
Christ & St. Luke's

Christ & St. Luke's is excited to host the 2026 Annual Conference of the Vergers Guild of The Episcopal Church (VGEC) from **October 22-25**. Vergers are a distinct lay ministry tasked with helping to facilitate worship. Their ministry dates back to the middle ages where they were seen as protectors of the procession into a church service. Their name comes from the stick they carry - called the verge - which was sometimes needed to clear the way for the procession that followed. Nowadays, the verge is thankfully ceremonial, but the Vergers themselves are no less significant to our worship experience. At Christ & St. Luke's we are blessed to have a robust team of Vergers that help attend to the many aspects of our worship service. Being a Verger is more than just carrying a big stick and managing the many volunteers that serve during a worship service, it's a spiritual practice for those who choose to serve in this role. The CSL Planning Committee has been working hard for well over two years now to plan this conference, and looks to welcoming VGEC Members from across the Episcopal Church to Norfolk. On Sunday, Oct. 25, the VGEC Conference will be with us for worship, and will join in a special procession celebrating their ministry. Be on the lookout for ways you can help support this important conference.

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Lower Lloyd Hall, starting September 16

Join us on Wednesday evenings as we gather to deepen our understanding of the scriptures, engage in fellowship, and do the good work of studying the Word of God. At Christ & St. Luke's, we believe God is endlessly knowable and that faith does not require us to leave our critical thinking at the door.

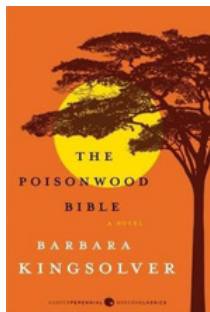
Together, we will unpack these sacred, ancient texts, discerning their meaning for our daily lives and our call to be an active community.

Whether you are a lifelong student of scripture, a curious seeker, or opening the Bible for the very first time, this Bible Study is for you. Come, step into a supportive weekly rhythm of study, connection, and spiritual growth. Led by Fr. Noah and Kelly Storrs. Childcare will be provided.

The Rector's Book Group

Friday, September 25 and Friday, October 30 at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room

In September, we'll discuss Marilynne Robinson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Gilead*. Written as an imagined letter sent in 1956 from an elderly Congregationalist pastor to his young son, this luminous novel reflects on his family's abolitionist past, generational conflicts, and the central character's own mortality. It is a profound meditation on grace, redemption, and the return of a prodigal son.



In October, we'll turn to Barbara Kingsolver's Pulitzer Prize finalist, *The Poisonwood Bible*. This powerful story follows an intense Southern Baptist missionary who moves his family from Georgia to the Belgian Congo in 1959. Narrated by his wife and four daughters, the novel explores cultural imperialism, religious dogmatism, and female resilience amidst post-colonial political turmoil.

Come, join the conversation, as we explore how these stories intersect with our story and God's story.

Deepen Your Roots, Grow in Your Faith



Confirmation during the Bishop's Visit

One of our favorite things to do is to teach about our faith! If you are new to an Episcopal Community, and even if you're not, there's so much to learn about what we believe, what we do, and why we do it.

Each year we have several learning opportunities to examine the basics of our faith. There are two such opportunities this Fall, in the form of our *Episcopal 101* and *Take a Dip Into Baptism* classes.

Contact Fr. Jared Grant to express an interest at:
jared.grant@christandstlukes.org.

Episcopal 101

Sundays, October 4 to November 8 — 12:00 p.m.—1:00 p.m.

This 6-week course is designed as an introduction to life in an Episcopal community. We'll look at some of the central aspects of our faith - like liturgy, prayer, music, biblical interpretation, and sacraments - and contextualize these ideas and practices within our own parish community. It's a perfect class for anyone who is new to our church or for anyone who wants to deepen their understanding of our tradition. *Episcopal 101* also serves as the required preparation class for those seeking Confirmation/Reception, which is the formal process of joining The Episcopal Church and Christ & St. Luke's. This class is facilitated by Fr. Jared. Email jared.grant@christandstlukes.org to register.

Take A Dip Into Baptism

Thursdays, October 8th, 15th, 29th - 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Baptism is a celebration of God's love for the whole world, as well as an acknowledgment of our own role in living into God's love. In keeping with longstanding church tradition, it is customary for baptismal candidates to spend time in discernment and preparation for this important rite. At Christ & St. Luke's, we keep this tradition with our **Take A Dip Into Baptism** class designed for baptismal candidates and their families. This small-group style class examines the historical, liturgical, and practical implications of Baptism, and is designed to be accessible for all ages. Childcare is available for those 3 and under. The class is facilitated by Kathy Hanna and Fr. Jared. Email kathy.hanna@christandstlukes.org to register.





Christ & St. Luke's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

560 West Olney Road, Norfolk, VA 23507 | ChristandStLukes.org
Services on Sundays at 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. and on Thursdays at 7:30 a.m.