

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity

Announcements

20 September 2026

Welcome! This morning, the Rev. Chris Humphrey presides and preaches. Our musician is Sally Page.

Blessing of the Animals will follow our worship service on October 4 this year. Plan to bring your animal friends with you to church that day.

Spotlight on Hymnody: “Strengthen for service, Lord” (#312) is another hymn text authored by Ephrem the Syrian, who died in the year 373. Obviously, it has been translated into English, as few of us can read Syriac, right? In 1859, John Mason Neale made his own prose translation of the text, which began: “Strengthen, O Lord, the hands which are stretched out to receive the Holy Things: vouchsafe that they may daily bring forth fruit to thy divinity; that they may be worthy of all things which they have sung to thy praise within the sanctuary, and may ever laud thee. Grant, moreover, my Lord, that the ears which have heard the voice of thy songs, may never hear the voice of clamor and dispute. Grant also that the eyes which have seen thy great love, may also behold thy blessed hope; that the tongues which have sung the Sanctus may speak the truth.” That’s quite a prayer!

Who Knew? Not that anyone’s leaving (except seasonal members, who we expect back!), but this is worth a read: “If you belong to a church long enough, eventually it will disappoint you. Someone will make a decision you disagree with. A ministry you love will change. A song you dislike will be sung. Someone will overlook you. The pastor will disappoint you. People you trusted will hurt you. But not every disappointment is evidence that we need another church. Sometimes disappointment is where discipleship begins. Because covenant community forces us to confront something consumer culture allows us to avoid: People are difficult. Including us. If I leave every community when it becomes uncomfortable, I may protect myself from difficult people. I may also protect myself from becoming the kind of person who knows how to forgive, endure, reconcile, and love. Sometimes the church that disappoints you is also the church through which God exposes something in you. Not every discomfort is a sign to leave. Some discomforts are invitations to grow.” Let’s pray we will continue to become a stronger covenant community!

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The Rev. Dr. J. Barrington Bates, *Priest-in-Charge*

Here’s an unofficial summary of the meeting of our parish governing board on September 10, when the Vestry:

- Learned that the Bishop Whittemore Fund may offer us 80% funding for the proposed stair lift; they meet in October
- Decided to alternate the Eucharist with Morning Prayer from January through March, when no supply clergy are available
- Wondered why our lay officiants at Morning Prayer do not wear cassock and surplice
- Heard a brief report on the Small Church Project in which we are participating; there is one more activity in this process
- Learned that we passed our parish audit review with flying colors and no recommendations
- Offered thanks to Jill and especially Charlie for preparing for that review
- Discussed a possible resolution stating our opposition to Line 5 (the oil & gas pipeline across the Straits of Mackinac)—for possible adoption at the next meeting
- Discussed letting our garden go fallow for a season next year
- Discussed two resolutions—on finance and audit—for possible adoption at the next meeting
- Appointed Ginny and Charlie McCord as our delegates to Diocesan Convention, when we will elect a new bishop
- Authorized transmitting \$15,000 to our endowment fund at the Charlevoix County Community Foundation; this will make the fund permanent
- Learned that the endowment fund will generate approximately \$1,188 in income annually—or we could reinvest this amount to allow the fund to grow
- Heard that infrared heaters for our two lavatories have arrived and will be installed before the heating season begins
- Learned that we have finally been able to update our “MAP” account at the Church Pension Group; this is one of several places people can search for us online—and it had wrong information
- Discussed meeting only on even-numbered months next year (which will require an amendment to our parish bylaws)
- Heard that we are doing slightly better than projections with our 2026 finances
- Expressed gratitude to all who helped with the recent carpet cleaning—especially Joanne and Jim, who put all the furniture back in place