



# Vestry Nominations:

## 2026 Candidate Profiles

# Amie Sweeney, Senior Warden

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'm delighted to introduce the Christ Church Vestry Class of 2029. On the following pages you will find information on the five CCGP members who have been called to serve on the Vestry. The nominating committee is grateful to each of these outstanding individuals for agreeing to put their names forward and serve.

**Becca Anderson** — A lifelong Episcopalian, Becca will be an outstanding Vestry member because she brings a deep love for Christ Church, proven leadership experience, and a collaborative, empathetic approach to service. A lifelong Episcopalian and member of Christ Church since 2017, she is already deeply engaged in parish life as a Eucharistic Minister, Nominating Committee member, and former Vestry member, giving her both continuity and institutional knowledge.

**Deb Champion** — Deb's professional background as a nonprofit executive, along with advocacy for seniors and youth, equips her with practical leadership skills and a deep commitment to justice and service. Grounded, attentive, and deeply invested in Christ Church's people and mission, she brings a listening heart, collaborative spirit, and hopeful vision to help Christ Church continue growing as a welcoming, outward-facing beacon of God's love.

**Jim Kastner** — Jim's hands-on service with Rebuilding Together in eastside Detroit and the Full Circle Foundation reflects a lived commitment to serving others. With experience in leadership across faith communities, a humble and attentive listening style, and a desire to seek God's will for the whole church, he is eager to contribute to the "big picture" of parish life and to help Christ Church deepen its relationships, expand its outreach to underserved communities, and explore new ways of serving both locally and globally.

**Brendan Walsh** — Brendan combines deep, long-standing roots at Christ Church with seasoned leadership, thoughtful discernment, and a genuine love for the parish's worship and community life. First drawn to Christ Church in 1987 through the Choir of Men & Boys, and rejoining in 2012, he brings both historical perspective and



current engagement, serving today as Chair of the Investment Committee, Eucharistic Minister, usher, and middle school atrium leader, with prior Vestry experience as well

**Cheryl Wesen** — Cheryl values the church as a place where people truly know and support one another. Her extensive service beyond the parish, including board leadership with The Helm, ongoing volunteer tutoring at Carstens, mentoring surgical residents, and foundation work at St. John Hospital, reflects her belief that purpose comes from "mattering" and staying meaningfully connected. With a strong sense of community, a deep appreciation for the needs and gifts of older adults, and a hopeful vision for expanding outreach, youth formation, and community partnerships, she offers thoughtful, compassionate leadership grounded in relationships, experience, and a genuine desire to help Christ Church continue to grow in love and service.

At our annual meeting on Sunday, January 25, the parish will affirm the slate of five nominees to serve a three-year term on the Vestry. Active members of Christ Church who are at least 16 years of age are eligible to vote.

I hope you will invest the time to learn about the nominees. Your participation in this part of our common life is greatly valued.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Amie Sweeney".

Amie Sweeney  
Senior Warden

# The Purpose of the Annual Meeting

- » To elect five persons to serve on the Vestry of Christ Church for a term of three years and until their successors are elected and qualified.
- » To receive reports on the finances, mission, and ministry of Christ Church.
- » To act upon other matters appropriate to and concerning the life of the parish.

## Voting Requirements—Who is eligible to vote?

Any adult (16 years or older) communicant who has been a Communicant in Good Standing in this parish for not less than six (6) months shall be eligible to vote at all Parish Meetings [Bylaws 2.2).

## Who is a Communicant in Good Standing?

A Communicant in Good Standing is any baptized member who, during the preceding year, has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God. [Bylaws 2.1.4]

## Voting Instructions

Voting for membership of the Vestry shall be by voice, by show of hands, or by written or electronic ballot, or other means as the Wardens of the Vestry may direct.

# 2026 Christ Church Calendar

The Eve of the Feast of the Epiphany	January 4
Annual Meeting and Vestry Elections	January 25
Candlemas	February 1
Shrove Tuesday	February 17
Ash Wednesday	February 18
The First Sunday of Lent	February 22
Palm Sunday	March 28
Palm Sunday Concert	March 28
Tenebrae	April 1
Maundy Thursday	April 2
Good Friday Services	April 3
The Great Vigil of Easter	April 4
Easter Day	April 5
Easter Lessons & Carols	April 19
Chorale Concert	May 2
The Feast of the Ascension	May 14
Pentecost	May 24
Confirmation Celebration	June 14
The Feast of the Configuration	August 2
Fall Homecoming Festival	September 13
The Blessing of Animals	October 4
All Saint's Sunday	November 1
All Souls' Requiem	November 1
The Feast of Christ the King	November 22
First Sunday of Advent	November 29
Gifts and Greens Weekend	December 11
Parish Christmas Party	December 11
Chorale Christmas Concert	December 13
Christmas Lessons and Carols	December 20
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25

# Ms. Becca Anderson

**How long have you been a member at Christ Church and in what ways have you been involved in parish life, in the diocese, or other churches?**

I've been a lifelong member of the Episcopal Church. We've attended Christ Church Grosse Pointe since we moved to Grosse Pointe Park in 2017. I serve as a Eucharistic Minister, on the Nominating Committee, and I'm a former Vestry member.



**Where do you experience God's love (grace, blessing, etc.) in your life and our community?** I experience God's love in our inclusive and authentic church community. The friendships are

consistent and welcoming. I am grateful for my faith as a steadying foundation during this era of rapid change, bridging between the things I can see and understand and what I can't ascertain.

**Describe other outside volunteer activities in which you've participated:** My main

volunteer activities right now are in my workplace, serving as a mentor and a mentoring circle leader. I also volunteer at my children's school.

**Family:** My husband, Dave, and I have been married for 20 years, and we have two children, Libby and Lee, who both attend Grosse Pointe South. We have two golden retrievers, Polly and Frank, and a cat, Hermione.

**What insights and strengths do you bring to our community?**

I have decades of experience leading and contributing to high-performing teams with positive cultures in the automotive industry, and I enjoy being part of the solution. I believe that the collective intelligence of a team is stronger than individual contributions. I have an Executive MBA from University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. I try to lead with empathy, inclusion, and intellectual humility and curiosity. I love being a Mom of teenagers, and I'm excited about how the To Excel in

Love vision is coming to life at Christ Church. I've also lived in different parts of the country, and I know what it's like to be 'new' in a church community.

**Why did you accept the nomination, what are you looking forward to most?** I was honored to be asked to serve on Vestry again, and I'm looking forward to being a part of a strong leadership team and feeling more connected in our church community.

**What do you celebrate about the life and ministry of Christ Church?** I celebrate how the To Excel in Love vision is coming to life at Christ Church. It's great to see our youth and family programs growing.

**What opportunities do you see for Christ Church?** I believe Christ Church is uniquely positioned with its strong traditions and its openness to inclusion. Both together can provide stability during a time of high change and transformation in the world.

**"I am grateful for my faith as a steady-  
ing foundation during this era of rapid  
change."**

# Ms. Deborah Champion



**How long have you been a member at Christ Church and in what ways have you been involved in parish life, in the diocese, or other churches?** I joined Christ Church when our family moved to Grosse Pointe in 2001, and for over two decades this parish has been my spiritual home. In my early years, I helped start a Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) chapter, taught Sunday school, supported Tuesday night

youth programming, and served with Vacation Bible School. In 2007, I became a Eucharistic Minister, and in 2009, a Verger. I've been chief Verger since 2012. I served one term on the Vestry—during the challenging years of the pandemic—and have also served as a wedding coordinator and a member of Daughters of the King. Most recently, I've joined the Flower Guild.

**Where do you experience God's love in your life and our community?**

I experience God's love everywhere—in creation, in people, and in the spaces between us. I see it in the beauty and balance of the natural world, which feels like a constant reminder that we are held by something larger than ourselves.

I also encounter God's love through people—through compassion, shared burdens, generosity, and moments of genuine connection. In our community, I see God's grace in how we show up for one another, especially when life is hard.

God's love comes to me not in grand gestures, but in everyday moments of presence, kindness, humor, and care.

**Describe other outside volunteer activities in which you've participated:** Over the past decade, my volunteer efforts have been almost entirely focused on Christ Church. Earlier in my life, I was also deeply involved in volunteering in my children's schools and sports teams.

**Family:** I have two children, Bradley (28) and Scott (25), and a stepson, Mickey (38).

**What insights and strengths do you bring to our community?** I bring a deep commitment to building and sustaining faith-filled, welcoming spaces where people feel seen, valued, and supported. I have learned that strong communities are built not just through structure, but even more through relationships, trust, and care. Beyond the church, my work as a nonprofit executive and my advocacy for seniors and youth have shaped my understanding of service, leadership, and justice. I bring a listening heart, a collaborative spirit, and a practical understanding of how to turn compassion into action.

**Why did you accept the nomination, what are you looking forward to most?** I accepted the nomination because I deeply value the work of the vestry and the role it plays in guiding the spiritual and practical life of our parish. Christ Church has shaped my life in profound ways, and I would be honored to give back through thoughtful leadership, listening, and service.

**What do you celebrate about the life and ministry of Christ Church?** I celebrate the relationships, the fellowship, the welcoming spirit, the extraordinary music, and the beauty and peace of our worship space. I treasure how closely connected our community is, and I love watching our congregation grow and diversify. I am

especially grateful for the increasing impact we are having on our neighbors in Detroit. That outward-facing love is God's work in motion.

**What opportunities do you see for Christ Church?** My greatest hope is to help our church continue to grow as a true beacon of God's love—rooted in faith, responsive to real needs, champions of human dignity, and open to all. Our successful capital campaign has positioned us to dream boldly about how we serve today's and tomorrow's generations. I see opportunities for Christ Church to expand its impact through deeper relationships, meaningful outreach, and ministries that nourish both the spirit and the world around us.

**How long have you been a member at Christ Church and**

**"I treasure how closely connected our community is, and I love watching our congregation grow and diversify"**



# Mr. James Kastner



## **in what ways have you been involved in parish life, in the diocese, or other churches?**

My wife Kathleen and I joined Christ Church Grosse Pointe almost 7 years ago. I have previously served on the Vestry. I am a reader and a High School Sunday formation co-leader. I've served on the Buildings and Grounds committee and been a volunteer for the Christmas Tree lot.

**forward to most?** I sense God challenging me to be more involved in influencing others in our faith towards deeper authentic relationships sharing how God is growing us in our faith. I'm looking forward to the "big picture" of each ministry of CCGP.

**What do you celebrate about the life and ministry of Christ Church?** I celebrate the professional and personal leadership of CCGP and staff.

**What opportunities do you see for Christ Church?** Further commitment to serve the underserved in the Detroit neighborhoods. I'd like to see us explore possible international experiences through other charitable organizations overseas.

**Where do you experience God's love in your life and our community?** I experience God's love in interactions with individuals who express God's love and blessing towards me and my family. Christ Church's high quality worship and music services draw me toward a closer walk with God.

**Describe other outside volunteer activities in which you've participated:** I have thrived in playing a role in planning and executing several "Rebuilding Together" projects ministering to eastside Detroit families.

I have volunteered with the "Full Circle Foundation" garden project building raised garden beds and chicken coops

**"I wish to be a humble, loving and God fearing good listener, able to seek God's will for our faith community."**

**Family:** My wife, Kathleen, and I have four sons, Michael, 42; Daniel, 39; Andrew, 36 and Christopher is 33. They all have J as a middle initial so I call them MJ, DJ, AJ and CJ.

**What insights and strengths do you bring to our community?** I have served in leadership roles in previous faith communities and understand the dynamics of a diverse body of believers.

I wish to be a humble, loving, and God fearing good listener able to seek God's will for our faith community.

**Why did you accept the nomination, what are you looking**

# Mr. Brendan Walsh



**How long have you been a member at Christ Church and in what ways have you been involved in parish life, in the diocese, or other churches?** I first joined Christ Church in 1987 when I became a member of the Men & Boys Choir and was a parishioner until moving to Washington, DC in 2001. I rejoined the church in 2012 when my family and I moved back to Grosse Pointe.

I currently serve as Chair of the Investment Committee, a Eucharistic Minister, an usher, and an atrium leader for middle school students. In the past, I served on the Vestry, and have served in roles such as reader and lector.

**Where do you experience God's love in your life and our community?** I experience God's love and grace in many aspects of my life. Within Christ Church, I feel it while attending services, particularly through our glorious music program, and through the privilege of sharing in the Eucharistic life of the church as a Eucharistic Minister.

Outside the church walls, I experience God's presence in nature, in one-on-one conversations with friends and loved ones, and most deeply in my relationships with my wife and children.

**Describe other outside volunteer activities in which you've participated:** I currently serve on the board of The Exodus Road, a nonprofit dedicated to combating global human trafficking through intervention, training, education, and aftercare services. I also serve on the Finance Committee at the Detroit Athletic Club and volunteer in various capacities with the Million Dollar Round Table.

Previously, I served on the board of the Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education, where I participated on the grants, governance, and events committees.

**Family:** I have been married to my wife, Kelly, for 18 years. We have three children, Elizabeth (17), Bennett (15), and Charlotte (13), all of whom are active in the choir program.

**What insights and strengths do you bring to our community?** I bring prior vestry experience along with extensive board and committee leadership experience. I pride myself on offering a balanced, even-keeled approach to complex or difficult conversations and strive to consider multiple perspectives before decisions are made.

**Why did you accept the nomination, what are you looking forward to most?** It felt like the timing was right and Father

Drew asked! I am very excited about where Christ Church is today, the energy within our community, and the opportunity to build upon the strong foundation laid by previous vestries. I look forward to serving alongside a committed group of parishioners, deepening my faith, and contributing to the continued growth of our parish.

**"I am excited about where Christ Church is today, the energy within our community and the opportunity to build on the strong foundation laid by previous vestries."**

**What do you celebrate about the life and ministry of Christ Church?** The music program is foremost among the many things I celebrate. It is what first brought me to Christ Church, and joining the choir was a pivotal moment in my life. It brings me great joy to now see my three children participating in the same program and singing in the choir.

**What opportunities do you see for Christ Church?** I am very excited about the opportunities presented by our new school and the impact Christ Church can continue to have both within Grosse Pointe and in the city of Detroit. I also see meaningful opportunities for parish growth through a combination of personal outreach by our members and intentional communication and marketing, both through traditional channels and social media.



# Dr. Cheryl Wesen



**How long have you been a member at Christ Church and in what ways have you been involved in parish life, in the diocese, or other churches?** My husband, RK, and I moved here from San Antonio with our three sons, Karl, Lee and Lyle, in 1993. We visited Christ Church shortly after we arrived and decided to become members. The boys went to St. Luke's Episcopal school in San Antonio, so we were looking

for something similar. I joined a general surgery practice, then went on to start the breast program at St. John Hospital. There weren't a lot of female surgeons in the area, and that has changed now which is lovely. I have served on the Vestry and in the past several years I've been active in Altar Guild and served as a Eucharistic Minister. I've been more active since I retired from clinical practice.

Prior to Christ Church, we attended Hope United Church of Christ where we were also active in the life of the church.

## **Where do you experience**

**God's love in your life and our community?** In relationships, family, friends, church, is where I feel God's love. Also in the beauty of our community and where we live. Over the years I've developed very close relationships with several people who are here in the church. I became involved in a Bible study with Julie Dempse when she was here as a priest. Peggy Maycock, Mary Herring and some others were involved on a regular basis.

**Describe other outside volunteer activities in which you've participated:** I am on the board at the Helm, and I am actively involved at Carstens. I tutor the same child for an hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and I like being able to pick up where I left off with them and continue to work with them. I am involved in the St. John Foundation Board and continue to actively teach general surgery residents and mentor residents at St. Johns. I recently read an article that said what's important in retirement is mattering. Whether it matters that you take care of your grandkids or you go to Carstens or teach and

mentor surgical residents, what people lose when they retire is mattering. I've never heard it expressed that way. It's all wrapped up in community and relationships and all that, but really that you're doing something that matters

**Family:** My husband RK, and I have three adult sons. Karl is a banker, he lives with his wife and two children in London, Lee is a urologist and lives with his wife and two children in Minneapolis. Lyle is a design engineer in Amsterdam.

**What insights and strengths do you bring to our community?** A sense of community, valuing that. I think that my relationship with the Helm gives me an appreciation for the opportunities for our older community and some of the challenges they face and how we can help them. Working with the Helm has been a very powerful, wonderful opportunity to see what's available in our community. And I'm excited for adult day center opening in the Spring.

**"I love the fact that we are expanding and enriching opportunities for our youth. That's been a wish of mine for a long time."**

**Why did you accept the nomination, what are you looking forward to most?** I enjoyed my previous time on the Vestry and see it as an opportunity to be more involved, get to know more people. I enjoy being involved, mattering. I

look forward to being innovative and creative in what we can offer and how we can help our congregation, our community.

**What do you celebrate about the life and ministry of Christ Church?** Relationships, community. I love the fact that we are expanding and enriching opportunities for our youth. That's been a wish of mine for a long time and it's wonderful to see it growing and developing with the help and enthusiasm of Lisa Brown and the support of Mtr. Maureen.

## **What opportunities do you see for Christ Church?**

I'm excited about the increased emphasis on outreach and relationships with our surrounding community – Crossroads, Carstens, etc.



# Christ Church Grosse Pointe

The Sweeny Memorial Lecture Fund In Christian Ethics and Theology presents:

# Jim Wallis

Theologian, Writer, Teacher and Political Activist



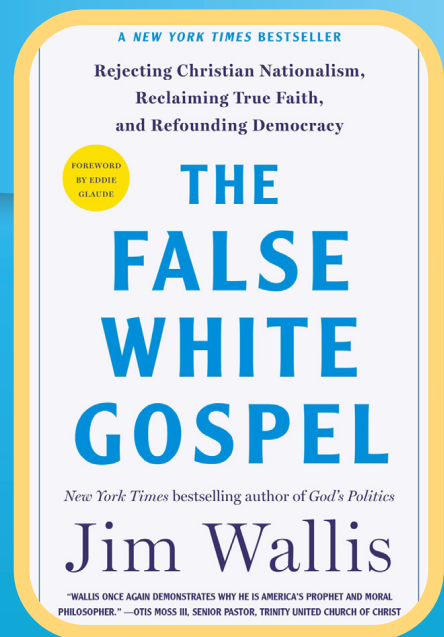
Jim Wallis is a writer, teacher, preacher and justice advocate who believes the gospel of Jesus must be transformed from its cultural and political captivities, and always be “good news” to the poor and oppressed. He is a New York Times bestselling author, public theologian, renowned preacher and commentator on ethics and public life.

He is the inaugural holder of the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Chair in Faith and Justice at the McCourt School of Public Policy and the founding Director of the Georgetown University Center on Faith and Justice. In 2022, Washingtonian magazine named Wallis one of the 500 most influential people shaping policy in DC.

Raised in a Midwestern evangelical family, as a teenager Wallis questioned the racial segregation in his church and community, which led him to the Black churches and neighborhoods of inner-city Detroit. He spent his student years involved in the civil rights and antiwar movements at Michigan State University.

He is the founder of Sojourners, and is the author of 12 books, including America’s Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to America; God’s Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn’t Get It; The Great Awakening; The Call to Conversion; and Christ in Crisis: Reclaiming Jesus in a Time of Fear, Hate, and Violence; and host of the popular podcast The Soul of the Nation.

He served on President Obama’s White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships and has taught faith and public life courses at Harvard and Georgetown University. He also serves as a Research Fellow at the Georgetown University Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs. Wallis has previously taught at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and was awarded an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Georgetown University in 2007 when he gave the college commencement address.



**February 20–22**  
Christ Church Grosse Pointe

**Friday, February 20**  
**7:30 pm**

Faith in Action: Resilience Justice and the Call to Non-Cooperation

**Saturday, February 21**  
**10:00 am**

**Workshop:** A Conversation with Jim Wallis

**11:30 am**

**Workshop:** Poll Chaplain Training: Protecting Voter Rights in the 2026 Midterm Elections with Rev. Dr. Steve Bland Jr. and Dr. James W. Perkinson

**Sunday, February 22**  
**9:00 am**

Mr. Wallis preaches at the Eucharist

**10:15 am – Rector’s Forum**

Free and open to the public.

