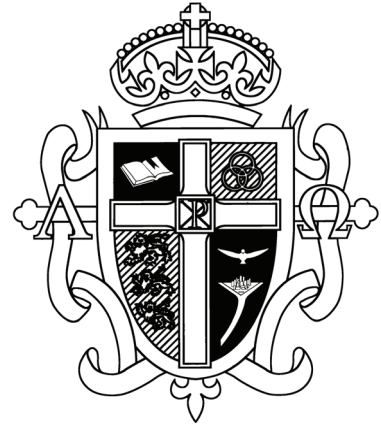


**CHRIST CHURCH AT GROVE FARM**  
*As a caring and growing  
Christian Community,  
our mission is to make disciples who  
share Christ with their world.*



**INTRODUCTION**

Christ Church at Grove Farm is a vibrant, 15-year old non-denominational church located in the suburbs of Pittsburgh. Its founders came from the Episcopal/Anglican tradition of worship and theology, which is reflected in the blended worship style of the church's sanctuary services.

As a strongly committed congregation of more than 2,000 members and regular visitors, the Church places high value on biblical preaching and teaching. Although we are family-oriented, we welcome and provide ministry opportunities for people of all ages, and are dedicated to leading our members into a deeper personal relationship with Christ.

**OUR CORE VALUES**

As a Christ-Centered church, we value:

- Reliance on the authority of Scripture in our lives
- Reverent and joyful worship in an Anglican tradition
- Reaching people for Christ
- A warm, caring, welcoming family
- Courageously standing for truth

**OUR HISTORY**



Founded in 1995, the first Christ Church service was held in the ballroom of the Sewickley Country Inn on July 23 of that year, with 200 founding members in attendance. Most of the founders came from St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Sewickley and worshiped as part of the Anglican Communion in theology and worship style, although not in agreement with the direction being taken by the Episcopal Church of the USA. The Episcopal Bishop of Pittsburgh provided Rev. Cal Gardner as an interim pastor until Christ Church – at that time called the New Church of Sewickley - was able to call its own pastor.

In October 1995, Christ Church called Rev. Dr. John Guest to be Rector and Senior Pastor. An Anglican Priest originally from the UK who had at one time been the Rector of St. Stephens, Dr. Guest had stepped down from parish ministry in 1987 in order to concentrate on national and international evangelism. When he agreed to take the position at Christ Church, the founders felt they were welcoming back an old friend. Also in October, the church agreed to purchase property at Grove Farm, hence the name Christ Church at Grove Farm (CCGF). The 46-acre site included a two-acre lake, a farmhouse, barn, and several other buildings.



By June 1996, the church had raised \$1.9 million in gifts and pledges, and began construction of the original sanctuary, dedicated in July 1997. CCGF now had a permanent place to worship and could operate seven days a week. Additional staff members were hired and attendance more than doubled.

Since that time, the church has continued to grow in membership, ministry, and buildings. A new, larger sanctuary building was dedicated on April 30, 2006. On July 23, 2010, CCGF celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Several months later, after over 50 years of ordained ministry, Dr. Guest announced his intention to step down as Rector at the end of the year. Parish Council felt it was now time to conduct a search to find the best person to lead the church into the future.

## OUR MEMBERSHIP

The founding members of Christ Church valued the liturgical worship of the Anglican Communion and the theology of the 39 Articles of Religion. As the church grew, it began to attract people from many different backgrounds whose affiliation mirrored the demographic of the Pittsburgh area; mainly Roman Catholics, Presbyterians,

Methodists, Baptists and Episcopalians. We began to see more un-churched people after the launch of our alternative “Third” Service in April 2009.



We are now experiencing a steady growth in membership. Members are asked to participate in a four-part spiritual maturity program that we call “Home Run Christians”, and are required to complete the First Base of that program before becoming members.

[Appendix A](#)

## WORSHIP STYLE

With the recent launch of the Third Services, Christ Church now provides two distinct worship styles. Our Sanctuary services are a blend of traditional and contemporary styles where music is presented by an instrumental ensemble, a robed choir and clergy and a liturgical style of worship. The music repertoire is a blend of well-known hymns and contemporary praise songs sung by the choir and a praise team. Sanctuary services are held at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. every Sunday, with Communion once a month. Sanctuary seating consists of pews with kneelers and ushers are dressed in suits and ties.



Third Service is held in Wilson Hall (our original sanctuary, named in memory of Rev. Donald Wilson), which has been redesigned to create a casual atmosphere with café seating, booths and chairs. This alternative service is also held at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. and provides a high-energy music and a media-driven experience. Clergy are casually dressed. The service is markedly visual, making full use of video as backgrounds to praise music and illustrations to sermons.

The Lakeside Café is an important part of our Sunday experience. The café is open for coffee at 8:00 a.m. and begins to serve breakfast and lunch dishes at 10:15 a.m. The centrally located café seating serves as a bridge between the Sanctuary and Third Service, and is a social center where people meet and mingle and friendships are formed. Proceeds from the café benefit the Urban Impact Foundation (one our Partners in Mission – [Appendix B](#))

## OUR STAFF

Christ Church has 34 full time and part-time staff. [Appendix C](#)

## MINISTRIES

Christ Church provides a wide variety of ministry opportunities. [Appendix D](#). The church also operates with several local and national Ministry Partners.

## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

With the completion of our new buildings in 2006, the church expanded its Children's Ministry. We have a full-time Children's Ministry Director responsible for two other Children's Ministry employees and a committed group of volunteers. During the Sunday morning experience and at other times of the week, we provide a secure and safe environment for infants and children. [Appendix E](#)





## STUDENT MINISTRY

Christ Church has three full-time employees responsible for ministering to Youth from 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, with programs on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday evenings ([Appendix F](#)) and a number of other opportunities to utilize the expansive media and social area throughout the week.

## MISSIONS

Christ Church is serious and intentional about missions and has recently completed a ten-year commitment to Uganda, East Africa. In February 2011, CCGF set a vision before the congregation ([Appendix G](#)) and the response has been very positive. We expect to be fully engaged in all areas of mission in Summer of 2011.



## FINANCES

The Christ Church campus has primarily been funded through a series of capital campaigns. These capital campaigns have permitted us to purchase, construct, and equip our facilities with minimal reliance on long term debt. As of 6/30/2010, Christ Church had compiled gross fixed assets totaling \$10.8 million and had \$1.04 million in bank debt. As of 2/1/2011 continued capital campaign gifts reduced our bank debt to \$654,000.

Our capital campaign history:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Campaign</u>	<u>Pledges</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
1996	It's Time to Build	\$1,900,000	Land purchase / sanctuary construction
1999	Lighting the Way	\$ 750,000	Capital improvements / debt reduction
2004	Building a Legacy	\$5,200,000	Construct new sanctuary and classrooms
2007	Sharing a Legacy	\$1,700,000	Debt reduction
2010	Securing a Legacy	TBD	Create an endowment fund

### Annual Budget

For our fiscal year ended June 30, 2010, unrestricted tithes and offerings totaled \$2.52 million, while our operating expenses totaled \$2.54 million. Our missions and outreach expenses, which are funded by designated giving, totaled \$1.16 million in 2010. The budget for the fiscal year ended 6/30/2011 projects unrestricted tithes and offerings of \$2.57 million and operating expenses of \$2.53 million.

## **FACILITIES**

Our facilities are used throughout the week by our ministries, as well as, Community Bible Study and Bible Study Fellowship classes. [APPENDIX H](#)

## **ATTENDANCE**

Christ Church at Grove Farm has a membership of 1,577 (as April 1, 2011) and regular visitors of 597. In 2009 the average attendance at the Sunday morning worship services was 1,231. In 2010 the average attendance increased to 1,342 – an increase of 9.1%. Our Sunday morning worship also includes programs for preschool and elementary age children, middle school students, high school students, and Adult Education.

## **GOVERNING STRUCTURE**

Christ Church is governed by an elected Parish Council of 12 members, each of whom serves for a period of three years. Included in the Council are a Senior Warden, a Worship Warden, and a Ministry Warden.



Christ Church's theology is based on the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Communion.

[Appendix J](#)

Christ Church faces many of the common challenges of growing churches in the US. Parish Council, church leaders, and staff are active in their pursuit of identifying Christ Church's unique challenges based on situational, regional, and topical issues.

Outside consultant facilitators were recently engaged as part of a strategic planning process to identify, detail, and develop tactical plans to continually improve.