

# Annual Report to the Parish 2020

Meeting on January 24, 2021

Meeting via ZOOM



Meet Christ  
Be Christ

**St. Christopher's Episcopal Church**  
2300 Hamline Ave. N, Roseville, MN 55113

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# St. Christopher's Episcopal Church Statistics

(As of December 31, 2020)

Baptisms	0	Confirmations	0
Marriages	2	Young People	0
Funerals	9	Adults	0
		Received	0

**Members in Good Standing as of January 1, 2020 ~~284~~**

Added to the Parish

By Confirmation	0
Received	0
By Letter of Transfer	0
New Members	9

**Active Families in the Parish:**  
Total December 31, 2020    73

Dropped from Parish

By Death	12
By Letter of Transfer	0
Adult Children of current Mbrs to Inactive	3
Moved to Inactive Status	3

**Active Individuals in the Parish:**  
Total December 31, 2019    72

**Active Households in the Parish:**  
December 31, 2020    145

**Total Members in Good Standing as of December 31, 2020**

**275**

Total of Members in Good Standing who are under age 16: 16

## Standing Notices

**Communion:** Any guest who desires to receive Holy Communion may do so.

**Baptism:** The Sacrament of Baptism is normally only administered to infants, children, and adults who themselves (or whose parents) intend to become active participants in this local congregation. Traditional times for Baptism are: Easter Eve, Pentecost, St. Christopher's Feast (July 25), All Saints, and the first Sunday of Epiphany. Baptisms can be arranged for other Sundays by conversation with the Rector.

**Burial:** The liturgical service of the "burial of the dead" is available to members of any Christian denomination.

**Marriage:** The Sacrament of Christian Marriage must be arranged at least 90 days prior to the date, and requires at least three counseling sessions.

**Membership:** Those desiring to become communicant members of St. Christopher's should consult with the rector. An Inquirer's class is held as needed.

**Sick:** If you are going into the hospital or wish one of the clergy to visit, please call the church office at 651-633-4589. In case of after-hours pastoral emergencies, please call 651-633-4598.

## The 2020 Vestry of St. Christopher's

<b>Kathy Ackerman, Sr. Warden</b>	(Retiring)	Term Expires January 2021
<b>Mike Sirany, Jr. Warden</b>	(Retiring)	Term Expires January 2021
<b>Barb Hovey</b>	(Retiring)	Term Expires January 2021
<b>Tom Linder</b>	(Retiring)	Term Expires January 2021
<b>Lisa Spiro</b>	(Retiring)	Term Expires January 2021
<b>Erin Bowman</b>		Term Expires January 2022
<b>Josh Kattelman</b>		Term Expires January 2022
<b>Al Reedstrom</b>		Term Expires January 2022
<b>Ann DePaolis-Jones</b>		Term Expires January 2023
<b>Alexander Kun</b>		Term Expires January 2023
<b>Jeanna McLoughlin</b>		Term Expires January 2023

**Allison Jensen, Clerk\***

**Suzanne Hitchcock, Treasurer\* (Retiring)**

*\*Non-voting officers*

## Diocesan Convention Delegates

Term ends January 2023

**Delegates:** Karen Hartman, Josh Kattelman, Debbie McLoughlin

**Alternates:** Sue Triebenbach, Christopher Bowman

## St. Christopher's Staff

**The Rev. Randy W. Johnson, Rector**

**Karla Cole, Director of Music Ministries**

**Marion Hunner, Director of Children's Ministries**

**Chad O'Leary, Director of Youth Ministries**

**Ruth Thillen, Parish Administrator**

**2020 Annual Meeting**  
**Sunday, January 24, 2021**  
**AGENDA**

11:00 AM (approximate):

Opening Prayers	Father Randy Johnson
Video	Marion Hunner, Karla Cole
Election of a Clerk	Kathy Ackerman
Vincent Anderson Awards	Kathy Ackerman
St. Christopher's Award	Kathy Ackerman
Acknowledgement of Staff	Father Randy Johnson
Acknowledgement of Vestry	Kathy Ackerman
Approve Minutes of 2019 Meeting	Kathy Ackerman
Elections	Kathy Ackerman
Wardens	
Vestry	
2020 Financial Report	Finance Committee
2021 Budget	Finance Committee
Senior Warden's Report	Kathy Ackerman
Junior Warden's Report	Mike Sirany
Rector's Report	Father Randy Johnson
New Senior Warden's Remarks	Mike Sirany
Other Business	Mike Sirany
Adjourn	Mike Sirany

**Prayer for the Annual Parish Meeting**

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*BCP p. 818*

# Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting

## Sunday, January 19, 2020

Senior Warden Joel Norton called the meeting to order at 11:17 a.m. Fr. Randy offered an opening prayer. Together, we read the Prayer for the Annual Meeting, on p. 5 of the Annual Report to the Parish 2019.

Election of a clerk—Allison Jensen was nominated. Bruce Warkentien moved; seconded by Erin Bowman.

### **Awards**

***Vincent Anderson Award***—this award takes the long-term view, people who have had long service here at the church. Scott and Jean Crow received the award jointly: Scott for work with ECMN, warden & vestry, capital campaign, and more; Jean—vestry service, warden, Green Team, nursery, reader, lector and more.

***St. Christopher's Award*** goes to Mark Brilowski—he's working today. Carries out much of our church maintenance, particularly on furnaces; has signed off with his license, which is a big responsibility; "we have heat because of him"; lights in the Sanctuary and outdoors. We appreciate all of his service.

### **Acknowledgment of staff**

Fr. Randy: Came to St. Christopher's in the early part of March—"remember when you walked into the school and didn't know anything?" He needed to lean heavily on the staff when he started—"I cannot tell you how fortunate we are to have a team like this at St. Christopher's that works well together, willing to pick up and do anything at any time." Janet MacNally, who has done so much to connect us to the community outside our church walls, is cruising right now on a well-earned time away. Mary Rowe—the epitome of pastoral care. Karla Cole—talented musician, scholar, an absolute blessing. Marion Hunner—she gets those littles going

every time; gets at eye level with them. Chad O'Leary—"you're killer, man" in marshaling busy youth and their families and keeping their antennas on straight. Ruth Thillen—"just dynamite in that office." Pastoral care—being there, showing up and loving each and every one. Thank you all for walking with me.

### **Acknowledgment of Vestry members**

Joel asked them all to stand: Mark Brilowski, Karen Hartman and Chris Huntley are retiring today. Thanks to the retiring members and to everyone on Vestry. Fr. Randy presented gifts to retiring Vestry members present. Joel Norton acknowledged Sue Triebenbach as well, a very loyal servant as clerk.

### **Approval of 2018 annual meeting minutes**

Joel asked people to look over last year's meeting minutes. "Is this the 2019 annual meeting today?" Chris Bowman asked. "Yes, it is," Joel said, even though we now are in 2020, we are meeting about 2019. Chris Bowman moved to approve the minutes; Erin Bowman seconded. Approved unanimously.

### **Elections**

Kathy Ackerman, has been our Junior Warden, is advancing to Senior Warden; Michael Sirany has been nominated for Junior Warden. Chris Bowman moved to approve the new wardens; Erin Bowman seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

New Vestry members were nominated:

Ann DePaolis-Jones  
Alexander Kun  
Jeanna McLoughlin

Lyn Lawyer moved to approve the slate; Erin Bowman seconded; new Vestry members approved by unanimous vote.

For our Diocesan Convention Delegates, to serve Jan. 2020-2023, three people were nominated

Karen Hartman

Josh Kattelman

Debbie McLoughlin

Alternates nominated are: Sue Triebenbach and Chris Bowman.

Motion to approve offered by Scott Crow; seconded by Erin Bowman; approved by unanimous vote.

### **Stewardship and Budget Narrative**

Parish Administrator Ruth Thillen presented the budget from 2019 and proposed budget for 2020.

Those members of the Finance Committee present came up to stand with Ruth: Darlene Cross, Bruce Warkentien, Mary Pendergrass, Bill Hanna and Cindy Lee. Kathy Ackerman also pitched in.

In 2019 income fell somewhat short of budget: Unlike last year, this year did not make it to 100 percent paid pledges but other revenues came in higher than expected. The Chinese Day Care, for instance, increased their payments as their enrollment rebounded. On the budgeted expenses, the parish saved money because Fr. Randy Johnson didn't start until March, only ¾ time in 2019—and, the church had allocated funds for potential moving of a new rector that did not need to be used.

Bruce Warkentien, chair of Finance Committee noted: Our 2020 budget reflects \$28,921 from surplus funds saved during the last 5 years; we are giving the staff 2.5% raises; first year of full-time salary and benefits for our Rector; fully funding budget requests from Children, Youth & Music Ministries. ***If we had not used money from our surplus, would have a deficit of \$28,921.*** We need to grow our church.

For details, please see the Annual Report to the Parish 2019.

**Senior Warden's report**—For details of Joel Norton's report on a big year of transition, please see the Annual Report to the Parish 2019. On a personal note, Joel said: "I have had a wonderful time." Sometimes it has been stressful but he has had the opportunity to meet people in new ways I have not met them before."

**Junior Warden report**—Kathy Ackerman pointed out that her Junior Warden report is on pp. 12 & 13 of the Annual Report to the Parish 2019. She thanked Joel and Fr. Randy and expressed gratitude for her three guys: Husband Ross, son Ben and dog Lucky.

**Fr. Randy Johnson's Rector's Report**—he expanded on the remarks in the Annual Report to the Parish 2019. "Thank you for allowing me to be part of your family . . . from the start Kim and I were welcomed and treated like family. . . And look at my outfit: You have simplified my clothes regimen! Thank you!"

He offered thanks to all the ministry groups: "God's presence is here; the Holy Spirit is with us." He called on the parish to walk the Way of Love in their lives. "Say Yes" is huge—if you haven't done something before, try it. . . You might just like it. There is such joy in this place."

Offered an award for Patrick Hunner (not present due to illness) for his dedicated service on the Bishop's Search Committee. "Everyone is talking about how great he is," Fr. Randy said. "And you all had a hand in that."

As the new Senior Warden, Kathy offered brief remarks. "It's a big responsibility you've given me. I will work my darnedest to honor your faith in me." Her contact

information is: Cell 612-222-0430;  
[Katjones37@yahoo.com](mailto:Katjones37@yahoo.com)

Email is the fastest but can leave a voicemail—and she will get back to you.

Evangelism—share and invite. In his sermon today, Fr. Randy asked us to do this on a personal level and we also need to do it on a corporate level.

We need to bring more members in and we need more sources of revenues. Look forward to hearing your ideas.

**Delegates to Bishop’s Election on Jan. 25, 2020** are Kathy Ackerman, Allison Jensen and Jeff Jensen. Please feel free to share your opinions with them.

**As the meeting was coming to an end, long-term member Jill Miel asked to speak.** When she and her husband Ernie visited churches as a young couple with two of their three children, they came to St. Christopher’s. They found “there was more life here than other places.” . . . When Fr. Gary Pelemeier came back to celebrate St. Christopher’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, he stayed with Ernie and Jill and noted there were two Episcopal churches started that year and, he said: “I don’t know what the difference is.” Jill says St. Christopher’s has always been special for her and her family. She’s lost one of her children and then lost her husband but through it all has had this church to support her. “Every once in a while, a little blip” in life: “What is the difference? The love of God and the love of each other” in this place and community. She closed with: “Thank you.”

12:18 p.m. Motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded; approved by voice vote and by people getting up from their chairs to clear and clean.

Submitted by clerk Allison Jensen

## Rector’s Annual Report

*“It was the best of times, it was the worst of time, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way...”*

These are the famous opening lines penned by Charles Dickens in his seminal novel on the French Revolution. When I read and re-read them, and try to process Dickens’ words, I attempt to place myself squarely in this pivotal point in world history. It is not much of a stretch to read these lines with a new degree of thoughtfulness and intention as we review the happenings of this past year and look towards the future, not only as members of the faith family of St. Christopher’s, but also as members of the Human Family.

The year 2020 is one that began with great hope, promise, and momentum. Little did we know that we would soon be held hostage to a worldwide pandemic in the form of a microscopic COVID-19 virus. This tiny organism brought the world as we know it to its knees--impacting nearly all that we normally do—causing illness and death, social upheaval, economic disaster, and a deep fear in our hearts. It forced us to seek ways to stay connected and engaged in God’s work within our faith community and question how we do ministry outside of our walls.

What we discovered about ourselves was intriguing—that rather than becoming focused upon what we have lost and endured--we discovered a new sense of community resiliency as we adapted to the changes placed upon our lives. We reconfigured how we do worship, such as



video sharing, electronic musical presentations, outdoor in-person worship gatherings, drive-through blessings and holy Eucharist, and connecting with each other via virtual platforms. With an abundant caution and focus on health and safety, we incorporated COVID-19 health best practices into all we do at St. Christopher's. We recently received approval from ECMN to begin Phase 1.5 of our Re-Gathering Plan to allow gathering of small groups sharing our parish spaces. When infection rates fall to approved levels within the county and state, we are prepared to once again meet inside our building for worship and social purposes in accordance with ECMN guidelines. We anticipate this occurring sometime mid-2021, when vaccination rates meet approved levels, better ensuring the health of us all.

During this time of trial, we fully lived into the watchword of St. Christopher's—*Meet Christ, Be Christ*. While we lament things lost, we truly celebrate things gained. We welcomed The Right Reverend Craig Loya as the tenth bishop of Minnesota. He is truly a leader with deep spiritual presence and a loving pastoral heart, ready to move all of us in ECMN into the next decade. We have together learned new ways to be the church in our community and neighborhood. We have had a time of quietness in which we have re-engaged intentional prayer and the basic building blocks of spiritual practices-- what it truly is to be a follower of Jesus. St. Christopher's elected and appointed leadership have been exceptionally strong stewards of our time and treasure. Our parish staff have worked tirelessly in support of our many ministries. I am immensely humbled and honored by all that is done by the good people of St. Christopher's each and every day.

Where do we go from here? I was not issued a crystal ball from seminary, but I believe we can with confidence anticipate the COVID-19 vaccines to be widely distributed by mid-2021. This will alleviate much of the concern

regarding congregational gathering at churches and in schools/workplaces. Programs, activities, and pastoral care should return to more familiar patterns. New initiatives incorporated into our common lives at St. Christopher's during the pandemic period will be further refined and implemented. In the meantime, we will continue to seek out and provide new opportunities for us to be the church and live fully into our Baptismal Covenant—serving God and others in his love.

I am excited to experience what God has in store for us in 2021. Let's together embrace the adventure and be free to imagine how the Holy Spirit will guide us in the year to come!

Peace and all things good.

**Randy+**

## Music Ministries

In years past, my Music Ministries report has been full of what was done, what was accomplished and how pleased I was with the growing musicianship and the ever-strengthening bonds of community amongst those of us that make music at St. Christopher's. Sadly, not this year.

The choir did present a beautiful evensong at the end of February. And we were busily working on Lent and Easter music when one Wednesday night, March 11<sup>th</sup>, during rehearsal, the NBA announced that they were suspending play for the rest of the season. We didn't quite realize it then, but everything about the way we worship at St. Christopher's was going to change. In less than two weeks, the Bishop closed all the churches. Church choirs were found to be super-spreaders and singing was forbidden. Churches who already had a video program, or had tech-savvy people on staff or in their congregations were miles ahead of us. They

seemingly shifted seamlessly to operating a virtual church. We had to invent a new wheel. In my case, it was countless webinars and Zoom meetings and articles about software I'd never heard of, and bugs and fixes, and latency. Each time I carefully wrote down a new term and googled it, only to find out that the software was \$900 and notoriously difficult to use, or humiliatingly, Google's simplified explanations made no sense to me. It's been a challenging year.

In the end, with the assistance of our wonderful section leaders and several instrumentalists, I was able to create a *HymnSing*, or two if you count the one that "dropped" last week. Also, there were some forays into an iPhone app that lets you collaborate and make music videos remotely. Tom Linder has a CD project of music from 2019 underway. And Karen Hanna has turned her creative energies toward masks for the choir to use when we finally have permission to gather again – masks that give you room to open your mouth and won't collapse against your face every time you breathe. She made one for me especially out of some keyboard fabric that she had in her stash. I find it so much more comfortable than the ones I made myself, that I wore it to do my grocery shopping last week! Many thanks, Karen!

Perhaps the most gratifying, and most successful video effort was a *Virtual Lessons and Carols*. Many thanks to all who helped with the music-making and reading the lessons! I certainly learned a lot in the process and I'm planning several more virtual events this spring. The Lessons and Carols service is the highlight of the choir's season each year and over the past few years, the reception has become a big party for the parish. In that spirit, we planned *Once in Royal COVID's City: a Socially-distanced Caroling Event*. We had bonfires going, and cookies and warming drinks while we sang Christmas carols, and snickered our way through some that had been rewritten for

2020. Our daughter and former choir section leader, Geneva, and a friend of hers adjusted some clever lyrics, poking gentle fun at this mess we're in. Many thanks also to everyone who baked and assisted with the event. Much merriment was made that day!

I can only hope that at this point next year, I will have better, more exciting news to share in my annual report. As vaccinations become more wide-spread and the Bishop allows us to assemble a few more people, we'll be able to expand our little troop of virtual musicians to include the choir members who wish to mask up and sing together at 10' intervals around the church. In the meantime, we are most grateful for the parish's support of our section leaders and of our music ministry as we reinvent ourselves and pray for relief from the worst of the COVID effects.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Karla Cole**  
Director of Music

## Children's Ministries

2020 – what a year!

We began the year with an Epiphany Presentation that included most of the children at St. Christopher's, as well as youth narrators and some willing parents. This has become a wonderful tradition as well as a great community building event.

**Children's Chapel:** On the first Sunday of each month, we offered Children's Chapel during the first ½ of the liturgy at 10:30. During this time we would sing, pray, and listen & respond to a Gospel reading. Many thanks to Becky Lucas, Jennifer Wright, and Patrick Hunner for helping with this program. Unfortunately, we met in February and March, and then this was done for the year. However, it did get replaced with in

person, masked, socially distant family worship once a month beginning in September. Fr. Randy and I are having fun figuring out how to keep people moving as it gets colder outside!

**Alleluias:** We continued our tradition of decorating Alleluias, and we got them put away into their box just in the nick of time. They are still under the altar.

**Recognizing High School Graduates:** We began tying fleece blankets for our graduating seniors in February, but we were unable to finish them as a group. We are very thankful to the Bowman and Crow families, Karen Hanna, Jill Eischens and Madeline Drake for tying blankets for our 6 high school graduates: Joe Brilowski, Patrick Hunner, Cora Lacher, Julia Lacher, Jessica Norton, and Bobby Trapnell. They all appreciated their blankets!

**Sunday School:** Shortly after we ceased meeting in person in March, the children and I began meeting weekly on Zoom to explore faith themed stories from our children's library. We took a break in August and then began our new program year with full Sunday School lessons on Zoom – which we also have available on St. Christopher's website. I cannot begin to express how grateful I am to Carol Duff and Jean Darnell for working with me to plan and provide these lessons. In the fall we dove into several stories on the life of Moses. During Advent we explored the calendar of the church year and Advent traditions.

**Do Not Be Afraid: A Virtual Christmas Pageant:** November and December were extremely exciting as we all worked on the Virtual Christmas Pageant. One of the unexpected gifts of this program for me was the opportunity to have individual Zoom calls with each of our families before the holidays. The pageant stretched me out of my comfort zone and helped me to develop new skills. It also reminded me that at St.

Christopher's, I never have to do anything alone. We have so many thoughtful, talented people who are willing to work with me to provide meaningful opportunities for our children and families. I am incredibly grateful for our community!

Respectfully Submitted by  
**Marion Hunner**, Children's Ministries  
Director

## Youth Ministries

What a tough year this has been for the world of youth ministry -- not just here at St. Christopher's but everywhere! Like every ministry, we are about walking a journey together. And while a gut reaction might say, "Well, their generation is used to digital connection" -- our students are on Zoom most of the day for school and so an additional online gathering at the end of the day is a tough commitment to make and can hardly seem life-giving. And, like all other age groups, nothing can replace a face-to-face human experience. So, like most realms of our lives right now: we wait!

So what is on the horizon for youth ministry at St. Christopher's? Our focus will be liturgical participation, experiential/project-based ministry, and inter-parish collaboration.

I have never been part of a parish where the vast majority of our young people are so involved in the summit of our expressed faith: the liturgy. We will continue to find ways for our young people to participate in these ministries once we are allowed to gather once more.

Our youth ministry program at St. Christopher's has always functioned best (at least in my tenure here) when working toward a common experience or on a common project. Examples of this would be our several pilgrimages and support of other

key intergenerational ministries within our faith community. These types of experiences will continue as interest allows. This spring we are undertaking a very large "side-by-side" project to connect our entire community during Lent. We are inviting people from all corners of our faith community to help contribute prayers that will be shared on our website on a daily basis during Lent with each day also having a corresponding food/toiletry item that can be put into a container at home for eventual donation to Keystone. The hope is that at Easter we can do a large collection of these items.

Over the next year, we will also be seeking greater collaboration with other Episcopal youth groups in the metro area because, in reality, we are in a situation where reaching critical mass for any particular event is difficult. Several of our high school students spread their wings and moved on to their post-secondary adventures, and we are only now beginning to grow as another group transitions from children's to youth ministries. To honor the time and talent of each of our young people, it is important to me that planned events are able to be carried forward even if one or two individuals are unable to make it.

While 2020 has been a very difficult year and the early part of this year may be much of the same, I look forward with hope toward the spring and summer when the key element of youth ministry -- human to human interaction -- can resume in a real and meaningful way. In the words of Julian of Norwich (and this is my personal mantra that I say many times each day): "All shall be well."

**Chad O'Leary,**  
Director of Youth Ministry

## The Senior Warden's Report

*No one really knows how to deal with the unexpected. How do you rehearse the unknown? – Wayne Shorter*

In this one short quote, jazz saxophonist and composer Wayne Shorter distilled every single aspect of my year as Senior Warden.

During our vestry retreat in late January/early February (sorry, can't remember the date as it was another lifetime ago), we were gearing up for a year of aggressively seeking out growth opportunities and expanding our reach and visibility in the Twin Cities. We kicked around a lot of options and were preparing to refine those options into a cohesive plan that the Vestry, Wardens and Rector believed would be embraced by the faith community in general.

We all know what happened next. March came and so did COVID-19 to Minnesota. That epidemic that seemed like a scary possibility became a horrifyingly real pandemic. We closed the doors to the church. The Vestry and Finance Committee learned how to Zoom their meetings. The Chinese day care – the second largest source of income outside pledges – shut its doors, and has remained closed to this day.

In light of all this, I began praying – hard, for solutions. And, unsurprisingly, the Holy Spirit came through, saying, "rely on your people."

And darned if the Holy Spirit wasn't correct. I've been thanked for keeping the church together, but I really didn't. You all did. You took care of each other. I know of at least two informal calling trees that passed on information and kept everyone's spirits up. Zoom groups sprang up informally to allow friends to keep in touch.

We began taping services and posting them on YouTube. Randy, Karla and readers make that weekly ministry vibrant and interesting. I have been honored to be a part of those tapings, and they are rich; and, if you haven't checked it out, please do so. More on the videographer later.

You also gave me the gift of voting in a Junior Warden who was tireless in his commitment to the church and to its people. Mike gave his best every single day of the week, and he will continue to do that every single day of the week as Senior Warden.

The Vestry and Finance Committee hung in there and worked hard to find solutions to what seemed to be intractable problems like communications, paying for repairs and keeping our budget under control.

Then there's Father Randy. If there was ever any other individual who was best prepared to lead St. Christopher's through the pandemic, I don't know who it would have been – and, no, I'm not talking about his work with the state emergency preparedness agencies. You all know that he's never without a smile on his face and a joke at the ready. But underneath all that sunshine is pure steel. When I had to ask him to take a pay cut in July, he didn't blink or hesitate. It was done and I didn't need to worry about it any further. (Of course, I did, and still do.) That sunshine and steel are what makes him the right man in the right position at the right time. He never fails to remind us that he loves all of us, and he never fails to give his very best.

Last, but not least, are "my guys." Ross and Ben have put up with Zoom meetings, crankiness when I didn't have the bandwidth to deal with stuff at home, and generally loving me. Ross gets another big hug and shout-out for being willing to give up his early Thursday evenings. He could have been watching politics on TV, but instead he goes to the church and tapes the services,

edits them when necessary and posts them on YouTube. He now is taking on the job of being on Vestry, and I can't express how much love and pride I have in him.

It wasn't the year I wanted to have as Senior Warden. But I am profoundly grateful to have been your Senior Warden during this tumultuous time. I just hope I lived up to your trust in me.

Kathy Ackerman, Sr. Warden.

## **The Junior Warden's Report**

It has been a privilege to serve St. Christopher's as Jr. Warden, and I want to thank our Sr. Warden, finance chair, vestry, finance team and staff for working tirelessly this year to keep our community active and vital during this challenging year!

In spite of the pandemic closures, our building has been well-cared for, both inside and outside. A lot of volunteer hours by many parishioners were put into improvements and care for the exterior and grounds: weeding, planting, tree-trimming and removal, the giving garden, painting, and outdoor light fixture repair, which represents a significant effort to keep our campus appearance attractive and inviting. The poor quality parking lot repair from the sewer project was redone, with financing covered in large part by our Sr. Warden's negotiations to secure funding from the past contractor, and two generous donations from parishioners. The necessary repairs of crack filling were also completed; with re-sealing and striping to be completed in the spring of 2021.

Interior work included re-surfacing of the parish hall floor, updating names on the wall plaques, elevator work (still in progress), treatment of the choir loft insect problem, and general maintenance issues that are required whether or not the building is being used

regularly. Many parishioners are involved in the care of our facility, demonstrating the strength of our commitment to St. Christopher's.

Additional campus usage during the pandemic included: two food collection drives (and we are again a monthly food distribution site for Keystone), two outside Eucharistic services per week, weekly recording and posting of on-line services for our Sunday worship, and a polling place for both the primary and presidential elections. Our entire staff has been active all year in continuing to deliver quality ministry services to our parish, in spite of the limitations imposed by the pandemic. And our outdoor "socially distanced caroling event" was well attended, with some fun and unique versions of traditional Christmas carols!

Finally, as I thank everyone who has contributed so generously from their time, talent, and resources in keeping St. Christopher's an active and cohesive worship community within ECMN, I give a special note of thanks to Ruth Thillen, our parish administrator. Her dedicated service to our community is to be commended.

It is with hope and expectation for the continuation of a strong sense of community at St. Christopher's that I know we can meet the unexpected and difficult challenges we may face in 2021.

Mike Sirany

## Team Reports

### Altar Guild

Despite the challenges of COVID restrictions, the Altar Guild marched on. We have continued to tend to the altar each Sunday and Wednesday. The holidays looked and felt different this year, with no gathering to decorate the Sanctuary. Currently, we have 11 members and are always welcoming to those who would like to serve St. Christopher's in this way.

--Karen Hartman

### Finance Chair Report

As we can all attest to, 2020 was a difficult year. The Finance Committee has continued to meet on the second Monday of each month via ZOOM. Ruth Thillen has done a wonderful job of making sure everyone on the team has up-to-date financials for every meeting, and has a written report of the previous month's activities. It was a pleasure working with a team where everyone fully participated and respected the others comments.

Members of this great team are: Father Randy Johnson; Parish Administrator Ruth Thillen; Senior Warden Kathy Ackerman; Junior Warden Michael Sirany; Treasurer Suzanne Hitchcock; Bill Hanna; Mary Pendergrass; Al Reedstrom; Julie Shiek; Tom Linder; Cindy Lee; Secretary Wendy Brilowski; and myself. These parishioners, as well as our Vestry, deserve a big THANK YOU from our St. Christopher's community.

All actions taken by the finance committee are only recommendations to the Vestry. The Vestry then finalizes those recommendations with a yea or a nay vote.

At this time, I would also like to welcome our new team members for 2021; Jean Crow as Treasurer, and Chris Mayr as Junior Warden. Thank you to everyone in our parish community for your ongoing support of St. Christopher's and for your financial PLEDGES.

-Bruce Warkentien

## Green Team

### Green Team 2020 Annual Report

Composting, Caring for Creation, and, most importantly, the Giving Garden were our projects for this year. Early in 2020, the Green Team embarked on a program to encourage composting at home and at church. As part of a message celebrating 50 years of Earth Day, Erica and Jessica Norton produced an educational video about compost. Also, following Bruce Warkentien's suggestion, we helped label recycling bins to keep out liquids and offered a March Traveler article on why this change was needed.

On March 5, the Green Team prepared soup and breads for the first meeting of our East Metro parishes Lenten series, Caring for God's Creation. We were able to offer one adult forum on the topic before St. Christopher's building closed due to COVID. We carried out a road clean-up in the summer.

The Giving Garden produced 750 pounds of vegetables and herbs for our hungry neighbors served by a program at the high school and the Keystone Food Shelf. For planting, we figured out ways to stagger times so that everyone was safe. Jeff Jensen took a key role in overseeing the garden and the team's consistent watering and weeding helped us bring in an abundant harvest.

Thank you to Sally Brown, Jean Crow, Jane Suilman, Ann DePaolis-Jones & Larry Jones,

Karen & Bill Hanna, Becky Lucas, Joel & Leslie Norton, Karen Hartman, Steve Hartman, Kevin Hartman, Joan Nicol-Hoium, Jeff & Allison Jensen, Jeffrey & Presley Jensen — and all who took part!

—Allison Jensen, for the Green Team

## Endowment Fund Report

Our Endowment Fund is invested in the Pooled Investment Fund (PIF) of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota.

At the beginning of 2020, the Fund balance was \$289,270.87.

We took a draw of 5% (of the average balance over 5 years, which is recommended by the ECMN Trustees), for a total of \$16,965.00 over four quarterly draws.

We added \$70,000 to the fund, which are payments on the 2019 Capital Campaign Fund. We had gains in all but one quarter, with a net total of \$64,520.26,

The Fund ended the year with \$365,183.16. The difference between start and finish of the year is \$75,912.29.

## Memorial Books

Our Memorial Books for 2020 saw many parish deaths for this year. Unfortunately, we were not able to have any funerals to honor our loved ones after February, due to COVID-19. We look forward to returning to normal soon.

Funds from multiple memorials were used to purchase our outdoor sound system this year. Memorial Book number Six will be started this year, and updated in the future.

-Karen Hanna

# MISSION OPPORTUNITY GRANTS 2020

St. Christopher's Mission efforts are all funded from a dedicated account; the money raised through specific fundraising efforts through the year. Our dedicated account for Mission Opportunity Grants had the following activity this year:

Beginning Balance	\$10,755.41
Ending Balance	\$10,213.28

## Income Received:

2019 Auction Events (additional)	
(BINGO, Corn Feed, etc.)	\$ 559.00
Cookbooks	<u>\$ 100.00</u>
Total Income	\$ 659.00

## Expenditures:

In House Feeding Ministry	\$ 600.00
Garden	\$ 200.00
Cookbooks (to 996 Library)	\$ 310.15
Hearts & Hands Grant (\$200)	<u>\$ 90.98</u>
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,201.13



## Vestry Candidate Biographies



### **Candidate for Senior Warden: Mike Sirany**

I have attended St. Christopher's since 2004 and consider St. Christopher's my spiritual home, regularly attending the Sunday and Wednesday Eucharist services. I have become increasingly involved in the life of our parish, presenting adult forums, helping out where needed around campus, and serving for three years on the Vestry starting in 2016. I was on the discernment and selection team for our Rector (Randy), and have been involved with ECMN on the Commission on Ministry, as an instructor in the School for Formation, and am the lead for the Episcopal spiritual director's group in MN. And of course, I was your Jr. Warden for 2020!

I also use St. Christopher's (as do 3 other spiritual directors) as a meeting place for spiritual direction. (It has been my hope that in the future, St. Christopher's might be recognized throughout the ECMN as a place to meet for spiritual direction.)

I am passionate about inclusiveness and maintaining a safe environment that respectfully balances the needs of individuals and the needs of the community. I am passionate about being a community that demonstrates the heart of our Christian faith and values (God is LOVE, as revealed through Jesus) through action, which includes speaking the truth openly but with love. And I am passionate about wanting the broader community to know what we have to offer as Episcopalian Christians!

I love our church, and love the community that makes St. Christopher's such a vibrant part of the greater ECMN. I want to see us continue to thrive. I am also very aware of declining membership nationwide in so many church communities, including ours, as well as the unique challenges the pandemic has presented. I believe with all my heart that St. Christopher's has so much to offer and deeply desire that we become better known for the gifts we bring to the surrounding community. I recognize the incredible wealth of wisdom, experience, and gifts within our community, and I am deeply honored to be considered as a candidate for Sr. Warden. If confirmed, I will continue to learn and grow as I do my best to serve St. Christopher's with humility, honesty, and integrity, listening to the wisdom of all who form a part of our parish community.



## **Candidate for Junior Warden: Chris Mayr**

### ***How did you come to be a parishioner at St. Christopher's and when?***

After attending Saturday night Mass at St. Odelia's (I'm Catholic) and Sunday Service at Immanuel Lutheran (Ruth is Lutheran) for a few years, one of our sons said "I want to go to Dad's church" and the other said "I want to go to Mom's church." That was when we sat down as a family and decided we needed to find "our" church. We visited with Fr. Ed Leidel in August of 1994 joined and were involved in the parish for 20 years. After a spiritual "sabbatical" the last five years we returned to the parish in the fall of 2019.

### ***How has St. Christopher's shaped your relationship with God and his community?***

*"God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments. Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about."*

St. John Henry Newman

Through the various parish activities I have been involved in over the years, my relationship with God and his St. Christopher's community is one expressed through this prayer, -- one of service to St. Christopher's.

### ***About what are you passionate here at St. Christopher's?***

**Bringing joy to others through service!**

## Candidates for Vestry:



**Ross Ackerman**

### ***How did you come to be a parishioner at St. Christopher's and when?***

Kathy and I joined St Kits in 1998. Kathy was a cradle Episcopalian and I have some roots on my dad's side in the Episcopal church.

### ***How has St. Christopher's shaped your relationship with God and his community?***

I think that in my 20 years of attendance at St Christopher's, my faith journey has been shaped in multiple ways. Certainly the services, liturgy have been uplifting, but what has really shaped my experiences has been relationships and the community. Our motto *Meet Christ, Be Christ* typifies this. It is so hard to encapsulate over 20 years of community experiences: our kids were involved in Children's' Ministries, Youth Ministries and Adult Forum, Silent auction, hay rides, community dinners, State Fair parking, Feed My Starving Children, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Being a numbers guy, I've had stints on the Finance committee, Green team; of late I've been filming our weekly virtual services for online viewing.

### ***About what are you passionate here at St. Christopher's?***

I'm very passionate about living out Christ's word in action within a community that shares these basic values of love and service. Service and love are really what stands out in my experience of St. Christopher's. I was asked to join the Vestry and hope to be a vital part of helping to serve the St. Christopher's community. The last ten months have been challenging with a global pandemic but St. Christopher's has really found a way to persevere as a community. I hope to play a part in our transition back to in-person community, hopefully later this year after we've all had the opportunity to be vaccinated.



**Pat Ahern**

***How did you come to be a parishioner at St. Christopher's and when?***

I have attended St Christopher's for a little over 4 years, and have been a member for a little over 3 years. I joined in September, 2016 on an invitation to join the choir and during that time I experienced a spiritual renewal and decided to become an Episcopalian. I was received in the Episcopal church in Spring of 2018. My wife Connie, 2 boys Garrett (14) and Henry (11) can also be seen regularly with me in the congregation

***How has St. Christopher's shaped your relationship with God and his community?***

Since joining St Christopher's I have felt a deep connection to the parish and have developed many personal relationships. I enjoy singing in the choir, ringing in the bell choir and sharing my trumpet playing, even virtually during this pandemic. As a former music major in college and graduate school, I am thankful for the opportunity to perform in this great space. I have always felt that my relationship with God is experienced through personal relationships and strong community along with a good sense of morality, humanity, and grounded faith. St Christopher's is a nice small community where it is easy to recognize and get to know each other and feel God's presence. God to me is also having a good sense of morality where our faith drives us to care for humanity on this planet and in this time. St Christopher's and the Episcopal Church respects humanity in the now, and cares for people now, and that aligns with my faith and helps strengthen it. We do believe in Heaven but God gave us the freedom to live this life he gave us to the fullest before it's time to join him.

***About what are you passionate here at St. Christopher's?***

As a member of the vestry I hope to learn and grow more in my faith through service. I'm of course passionate about the music program since I'm a participant. I'm also enjoying the youth programs. As my boys become of age to join the youth program, I'm hoping it continues and that they will want to join. It will be our duty as a vestry to navigate the challenging environment the pandemic has brought and be stewards to get us through as strong, if not stronger. I care deeply about this parish since it was there for me when my faith needed it and wish to give back. I also intend to introduce St Christopher's to Isaiah, a faith based social justice organization that fights for racial, gender, and economic equality. There are many aspects of this organization that align with our mission and values and we could join our voices to the thousands of voices fighting for social justice in Minnesota.



**Leslie Norton**

***How did you come to be a parishioner at St. Christopher's and when?***

My family has been active members at St. Christopher's since 2010. During this time I have participated in many aspects of parish life. I have enjoyed the morning adult forum and coffee hour gatherings, ringing bells in the Hand Bell choir, and playing the Orff instruments in church. I have also participated in many of the in-home gatherings for dinners and zoom meetings this year. I am a passionate gardener and enjoy working in the Giving Garden. It has been a way for me to give back to the community through the Keystone food shelf. The act of gardening and physically helping others in need plus serving meals at the Community dinners has allowed me to serve others in Christ.

***How has St. Christopher's shaped your relationship with God and his community?***

I grew up in the Methodist church. Then I graduated from Gustavus Adolphus in St. Peter, Minnesota, and met Joel there. I then graduated from Medical School (UofM) and have been active in serving others in the field of Family Medicine. Early in our marriage, Joel and I became active with teaching the youth and going on youth mission trips to Native American reservations in New Mexico. Later we became active members of a large contemporary, nondenominational church for 16 years. As our family grew, we decided to attend church closer to home. St. Christopher's was a good fit because of its youth program and strong faith community that was welcoming to all.

I am active in the Green Team which has completed recycling projects, energy efficient lighting and the solar panel array. We supported the youth at St. Christopher's in many ways including attending three of the youth trips including Boundary Waters, trips to Glacier and Banff and learning about Bishop Whipple and the many issues facing the Native Americans. I enjoy learning new things through these trips and through the adult education classes.

***About what are you passionate here at St. Christopher's?***

I feel passionate about supporting others and serving God's people. I look forward to your consideration to serve on the vestry at St. Christopher's. Thank you.

# STEWARDSHIP and BUDGET NARRATIVE

## Stewardship:

Our Stewardship campaign this year was low-key, speaking about Faith-Filled Generosity. We hoped for a 3% increase from each pledging unit (household), for a total of \$328,750. We did not reach that. Here's the raw data:

For **2020**, we received 116 pledges totaling \$319,176. 93% of these pledges have been received.

For **2021**, we have received 98 pledges totaling \$294,917.

## Statistics:

46 Pledges remain Even	
35 Pledges Raised for	+\$16,981
17 Pledges Lower/lost for	-\$22,330
5 New Pledges for	+\$8,000
NET Change	+\$2,651

15 pledges remain outstanding, for a total of \$28,170. We hope that some of those will come in.

## Budget:

### IS OUR PRESENT FINANCIAL SITUATION SUSTAINABLE BEYOND 2021?

- The simple answer is NO, not without a dramatic increase in income or dramatic cuts to programs and staff. The following information is not meant to alarm or scare you but to give you some indication of our financial outlook into the future.
- If we did not use our surplus funds from the previous 5 years to balance our 2021 budget, we would show a deficit of \$32,570.00.
- We have \$56,618.00 in surplus of which \$4,578.00 will be used to cover our loss for 2020.
- And an additional \$32,570.00 will be used to balance the 2021 budget leaving \$19,470.00 for the future.
- Even with the deficit at \$32,570.00, Father Randy will only be paid half time for the first 7 months of 2021, and Full time for the remaining 5 months.
- Our pledges for 2021 are down 7.6% or \$24,209.00 from our 2020 pledged amounts.
- There are NO raises for staff in the 2021 budget.
- In 2021 we are fully funding Children, Youth, and Music ministries
- If we bring Father Randy to full time in 2022 our deficit for 2022 is projected at a minus \$65,000.00.
  - Prior to our Discovery, Discernment and Search process for a new Rector, our parish family overwhelmingly expressed they wanted a "full time" Rector and would support that financially. This has not been realized.

The Finance Team and the Vestry feel very good by the fact we only needed to use \$4,578.00 from surplus for 2020 in light of the difficult year that was thrown on all of us. The main issue for the 2020 budget was the loss of the building income we sustained, especially by the Chinese Day Care

(\$28,324.00) and other outside groups (\$11,400.00). That is a loss of almost \$40,000.00. Expenses were held to 81.5% of 2020 budget.

One thing that cannot be overlooked is our extremely successful Capital Campaign, which by the end of 2021 all pledges should be received. We thank you for your generous support of the Capital Campaign. These Capital Campaign monies are deposited into our investment account (formerly called an endowment) and are reserved for major building improvements and are not to be used for general operating expenses.

We believe this 2021 budget created by the Finance Team and approved by the Vestry is fiscally responsible. The Finance Team and Vestry have chosen to spend only a portion of our surplus funds, allowing for some adjustment in future budgets, and a cushion in case of an unexpected need.

At this time, at the direction of the ECMN, following Minnesota State guidelines, we are not yet allowing outside groups to meet in the building, although we hope to gradually begin doing so by March 1<sup>st</sup>. This would include Spiritual Directors, Music Lessons and the return of the Chinese Day Care. Meanwhile, the loss of these building use fees mean we are keeping our budget on a very short leash.

Sincerely,  
Finance Committee  
Bruce Warkentien, Chair