

St. Christopher's

# e-Traveler



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## From the Rector



**The Rev.  
Randy W. Johnson**

**Rector**

I write this day from Kansas City as the clouds hang heavy and the cold rain falls. While it is dreary outside, the warmth and joy of spending time with our kids and “grands” supplants the cold darkness of nature.

We have cooked and eaten the turkey and fixings, and have enjoyed the open invitation our daughter and son-in-law offered to several friends and coworkers to join us. We are truly blessed at this time to gather together in the spirit of gratefulness and thank God for the abundance we experience.

Now we try to keep the “grands”, (six of them age 2 to 10 years), entertained these wet, frigid days. So we fall back to the old reliable...classic Disney films. These films are wonderful tales about good vs. evil, caring for others rather than ignoring their needs, love overcoming hate. We love the telling and re-telling of these beloved animated stories. But at the end of each one we read the same two words, **“The End.”** *That's it...movie over...end of story.*

I cannot help but compare this with a similar experience we are moving towards today. We are moving now into the dark, cold time of the calendar year, anticipating the sharing of the nearly unfathomable story of Advent.

Throughout my life it has been my good fortune to experience the story of Jesus' birth with the turning of every year. The number of the years of my advancing age is also the number of times I've traveled to tiny Bethlehem to witness the coming

of our Lord Jesus.

And because the story has been more than *told* to me; and because it has *surrounded* me like the winter weather; and because it *comprehends* me as a mother does her child; the birth of Christ has shaped me.

And because my response to this story has been more than an act of mind, more than a study or in-depth research; because the story invites my entering in and my personal participation; because I have experienced the nativity of Christ with deep awe and intensity; the Gospel story is the lens through which I interpret the world's story. It is God's narrative in which I see all things and relate to them and to know them.

Author Walter Wangerin, Jr., speaks eloquently to this reality, stating, "In every sense of the phrase: I find myself in Jesus. As I enter his story, I enter him. As his life embraces mine, he embraces me, and I am his."

At every Sunday worship service during the season of Advent, people are involved in ever unfolding episodes of the coming promise, leading to the Holy Birth and Hallelujahs! I pray that each of you intimately experience together in community these weeks of waiting and holy anticipation, as we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ child...as promised of old.

*And by the way...* here is a spoiler alert for all of us. This story doesn't end with a scrolling of credits and the words, "*The End.*" This holy story ends with the great exclamation, "***This is only the beginning!***"

May we all share in the joy and delight of the choir of angels, "*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!*"

Peace and all good. Randy+

*Randy+*

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## Music Notes



**Karla Cole**

**Director of Music Ministries**

It's time to start talking about Lessons and Carols, though as I write, it's not even Thanksgiving yet. Planning for Christmas has been part of my mental baggage

since July, and now in our rehearsals, we're seeing all that planning come together. I usually find a theme and design the service around that – not that you need a theme, what with the formal order of the service from Kings College and the Christmas story, for Pete's sake. But I always enjoy a challenge, and I find that the imposition of a theme helps keep me from choosing every carol that I like and stuffing it into the service. I have been to carol services where the overwhelming wealth of carols presented actually becomes too much. Enough is as good as a feast!

This year, the theme is loosely wrapped around the idea of the Bells of Christmas. Our handbell choir has grown in size and musicianship in recent years, and I just wanted to celebrate that. We're bringing them downstairs – but don't let them see you looking at them, they're used to playing upstairs where they can imagine that you're not there! And we've found all sorts of carols that celebrate bells ringing joyfully, or texts that mention bells ringing, or just a little bell part to spice up a piece of music. It will be a bit of a "Where's Waldo" as you see if you can find the rationale for every song and carol. Most all of them do have a tintinnabular connection of some sort.

Bells have been a part of Christian worship almost from the beginning. The early missionaries went round ringing little bells to call people to join them for prayer, and eventually bells became quite common in churches. St. Dunstan, who was the Archbishop of Canterbury in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century, had large bells hung in all the churches under his sway and even wrote specific rules for their use. In the Middle Ages, bells were thought to have supernatural powers and could ward off enemies or even ring themselves, as they were rumored to have done in Canterbury cathedral when Thomas-a-Becket was murdered in 1170. Over time, people experimented with a wheel mechanism to facilitate the ringing of the big church bells, but each bell still required a person to pull the rope. Across Europe, there were so many churches and so many bells to be rung that people were actually paid to ring them and the cost of bell ringers was often a significant proportion of the cost of maintaining the parish. (Shhh, don't tell our bell ringers about that. All they get now is the very occasional gluten-free cupcake and a lot of grief from me.)

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the wheel mechanism had been developed sufficiently as to allow the ringers to more easily control their bells and a method called *change ringing* evolved, some with simple mathematical patterns and others with longer, more complex series of notes where the bells never sounded in the same order twice. But we humans like to organize the sounds we hear, and some of the repeating bell patterns became familiar enough so as to seem rather melodic; and we know some of them even now from the nursery rhyme, "Oranges and lemons say the bells of St. Clement's". That nursery rhyme does go on through quite a number of verses and you can google it up for yourself when you're feeling nostalgic.

Meanwhile, our ringers were pulling heavy ropes and madly memorizing and practicing their patterns in a cold stone building... and annoying the neighbors. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, smaller bells with leather handles were being made so that bell ringers could retire to the pub to practice. It was much warmer and the neighbors there were likely in a happier state and could tolerate the ringing. Eventually, the bells were rung in melodies and harmony and a new art form was born; the cold, dank belfry merely a memory. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a set of these handbells came to the United States and by the 1970s, churches big and

small were glomming on to this as a new way to make music in the church. It isn't exactly easy, playing in a handbell choir. You do have to be able to count. And it helps if you can hear the whole product as well as ferret out your little part in it. But when it all comes together, it's magic. And at Christmas, it's especially magical and beautiful. Do join us on **December 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm** for a little musical magic and some mulled wine, spiced cider and Christmas treats. You'll be glad you did.

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So if you've read this far, I'm hoping that you might be a music fan and I've got a proposition for you. Next year, I'm going to read a new book, **Year of Wonder: Classical Music for Every Day** by Clemency Burton-Hill and I'm inviting everyone to read it along with me. The book is \$14.48 with free shipping on Amazon just now. It has a page for each day of the year featuring a piece of music with commentary about the piece or the composer, etc. All the music is available on Spotify or YouTube and most of the pieces are under 10 minutes (many well under 10 minutes), with some in the 15-30 minute range. There are selections from popular music, movies and musicals as well as classical music. Many of the pieces fall on the composer's birthday or the anniversary of their death (yes, we celebrate those, too) and there is often a cultural or historical component to it. Your daily commitment may be as little as 5 minutes many days, or as much as 45 minutes on just a few days.

Interested? Order up your copy of the book and let me know that you're interested. You'll need a computer with a sound card and speakers, internet service and an email address. We can start simply with an email chain for our own thoughts and commentary along the way, and then maybe get together as time allows. I think it will prove to be a fun and informative year of listening together.

Karla Cole

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## Footprints DECEMBER 2019 - News from Children's Ministries



**Marion Hunner**

**Children's Ministries  
Director**



**Sunday, December 1<sup>ST</sup>** – Children's Chapel! For children age 3 and up as well as interested adults. Meet in the Christ Child Chapel at 10:25am. We devote our time to three main components of the Liturgy of the Word: **Singing, Scripture, and Prayer**. Today we will also discuss Advent as the "waiting time." We will join the congregation at the Peace.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the annual **Christmas Card**

**Contest.** **Gracie McLoughlin's** picture will appear on the front of St. Christopher's Christmas card, which will be mailed soon. Our Christmas bulletins will be adorned with the artwork of **Ellery Bowman**.

**Suggested Advent prayers and activities for home** - during this very busy season, I hope that families will be able to find some quiet time to prepare their homes and hearts for the coming of Jesus. Traditions that you begin when they are young can last a lifetime. There are several Advent resources on St. Christopher's website under Resources/Family - please take a look. If you would like a set of purple and pink Advent candles (tapers) for your Advent wreath at home, please let me know – I have a limited number of these available.

**Lessons and Carols** – All are welcome to this lovely service of music and scripture at 4 pm on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. It lasts about 1 hour, and there is a beautiful reception that follows the service. This year's theme is BELLS! All of the songs are either about bells or have bells in them.

**Family Christmas Eve Service:**

In addition to our 5:00 pm Choral Eucharist, we have a special family service at 3:00 pm. This service will only be about 45 minutes long, and all are welcome. Children will be asked to bring forward the elements of the crèche as the nativity story unfolds, and everyone will have a star to contribute.

**Holiday Sunday School Schedule**

We will miss two weeks of Sunday School for the holidays this year: December 22<sup>nd</sup>, and December 29<sup>th</sup>.

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## Youth News



**Chad O'Leary**

**Youth Ministries  
Director**

### Gifts of Hope

This month, our youth are asking our community to partner with them in supporting Messiah Episcopal Church in Wounded Knee, South Dakota. This summer, the Rev. Harold Eagle Bull, pastor of that parish, and members of his community met and walked with us at the Wounded Knee massacre site. We heard about the story of the Lakota people who had settled at Pine Ridge, but also heard just as much about the present as we did about the past. They are working for social change on many fronts, from combating racist policies/laws to finding creative new ways to bring industry and jobs to their isolated reservation. However, in speaking with us, Fr. Harold spoke of how difficult it can be to continue this work during the Christmas season. Most years, he shared, their discretionary funds at the church are used up in order to help families stay warm and make simple ends meet -- and that becomes a source of anxiety and

distraction from their justice initiatives. St. Christopher's youth would like to be part of a solution, so that our new friends are able to remain focused on their quest for social change throughout the winter. Thank you, in advance, for your open ears and hearts as we share more about this initiative in the weeks ahead.

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Much Peace on the Journey,  
Chad O'Leary

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## Green Team

It's hard to believe but Advent, followed closely by Christmas, is approaching quickly. For this holiday season let's put our focus on preserving God's creation and "think green" as we shop for that perfect gift. Consider the following:

- Experiences versus items
- Check out consignment shops for gently used items
- Homemade gifts
- Go to your local coop for environmentally friendly personal care products
- Shop locally
- Shop from environmentally friendly companies (top companies are Patagonia, Maggie's Organics, Timberland)
- Puzzles from St. Christopher's library!!
- Don't forget using homemade fabric giftbags in place of wrapping paper

A good resource to check out is: **The Better World Shopping Guide** by Ellis Jones

## *Merry Christmas*

The Green Team

\*\* We will be collecting broken strings of Christmas tree lights for recycling, there will be a marked box in the lower narthex

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## Talent Table

There will be a talent table on Sunday, December 8th after both services. Please consider bringing baked goods, craft items, etc. to the parish hall on that Sunday (drop them off whenever you arrive at church). If you aren't a baker, come purchase some delicious baked goods! All the proceeds will go to Mission Opportunity. If you have any questions contact Karen Hartman, Ann DePolis-Jones, or Jean Crow.

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## Pulse of the Parish

The Pulse of the Parish is a brief update to keep everyone informed of the actions

taken by the Vestry at their meeting on Monday, November 18th, 2019.

- The meeting opened with scripture and prayer.
- The monthly financial reports were reviewed. October 2019 income and expenses are generally staying within the budget.
- Safe Churches: Recommended information and updates will be presented by Fr. Randy at the Adult Education time at 9:30 am.
- Stewardship Drive: The Power of Yes. So far, 70 pledges totaling about \$211,000 have come in. This is approximately where we were at this point last year. A call list of parishioners who have not yet pledged, was passed to the vestry. If you have not yet pledged, please send or call in your pledge as soon as possible.
- Silent Auction: Another great success. Dinner raised about \$700 and the raffle made \$850 for the Mission Opportunities fund. Thank you to all who participated.
- Adult Education: classes/discussions/events have been scheduled for the 9:30 am. Check the scheduled topics on the church website.
- Shout Outs: Thank You to Cindy Lee, Cynthia Verhey, Don & Julie Shiek, Cheryl & Bruce Warkentien and all those involved in organizing and carrying out the Silent Auction and dinner. Also to Ann Trapnell and crew for organizing and publishing the St. Christopher's Cookbook. A big THANK YOU! to all of you for all the hard work.

Please be aware that the minutes of the November meeting will not be available to read online or in the library until after they have been approved at the Vestry's December meeting. Vestry members will be available after the service for any questions you may have.



## DECEMBER Calendar Highlights!

### **Sunday 1 – Advent 1**

**8 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Children's Chapel**

### **Wednesday 4**

**12:15 PM Holy Eucharist – Chapel**

**3 PM Staff Meeting – Office**

**6 PM Bell Choir – Balcony**

**7:15 PM Parish Choir – Music Room**

**Saturday 7**

**1 PM** John Thompson Visitation – Chapel

**2 PM** John Thompson Funeral – Church

Reception Follows – Parish Hall

**Sunday 8 – Advent 2**

**8 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist with Baptism**

**Monday 9**

**5:30 PM** Finance Committee – Parish Hall

**Wednesday 11**

**12:15 PM Holy Eucharist** – Chapel

**3 PM** Staff Meeting – Office

**6 PM** Bell Choir – Balcony

**6:30 PM** Youth Christmas Gathering – Youth Room

**7:15 PM** Parish Choir – Music Room

**Thursday 12**

**1:00-2:30 PM** Knitting – Library

**Friday 13**

**1:30 – 3:30 PM** Keystone Mobile Food Shelf – West Lot

**Sunday 15 – Advent 3**

**8 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

**4 PM A Service of Lessons and Carols**

Festive Reception follows

**Monday 16**

**6:45 PM** Vestry – Parish Hall

**Wednesday 18**

**12:15 PM Holy Eucharist** – Chapel

**3 PM** Staff Meeting – Office

**6 PM** Bell Choir – Balcony

**7:15 PM Parish Choir** – Music Room

**Thursday 19**

**10:30 AM-Noon** Hearts and Hands – Parish Hall

**7:00 PM Blue Christmas** – Chapel

**Saturday 21**

**5 PM** Lindwright/Cocchiarella Wedding

Reception Follows – Parish Hall

**Sunday 22 – Advent 4**

**8 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

Altar Guild decorates for Christmas

**Tuesday 24 – Christmas Eve**

*Office Closed*

**3 PM Children's Christmas Eucharist**

**5 PM Choral Holy Eucharist**

**Wednesday 25 – Christmas Day**

*Office Closed*

**10 AM Holy Eucharist**

**Thursday 26**

*Office May Be Closed*

**5:30 PM Community Dinner – Parish Hall**

**Sunday 29 – Christmas 1**

**8 AM Holy Eucharist**

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

**Monday 30**

***e-Traveler Deadline!***

Please note: These are the parish events occurring this month. Please remember that many outside groups use our building daily. If you need to use a building space, please check with the office to see that your time, date and space are available.

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## Last Words



I hope you have enjoyed the December ***e-Traveler!***

We're rolling into the "Hurry, hurry!" season out there in the world, while we have the "Wait, listen, be faithful" season in the church. These Advent Sundays do help me slow down and listen to what the Spirit is asking me for as we await that momentous birth. (Maybe it is to exercise a little patience, myself!)

While you're shopping, and listening... please remember to turn in your 2020 pledge cards (with many thanks for those already in!); to catch up on your 2019 pledge if necessary; and pray for the Nominating committee as they find those persons who will be new Wardens and Vestry members next year.

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas!

Ruth Thillen  
Parish Administrator

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**St. Christopher's Episcopal Church**

**VESTRY:**

Joel Norton, Sr. Warden; Kathy Ackerman, Jr. Warden  
Sue Triebenbach, Clerk; Suzanne Hitchcock, Treasurer

Erin Bowman; Mark Brilowski; Karen Hartman; Barbara Hovey; Chris Huntley;  
Josh Kattelman; Tom Linder; Al Reedstrom; Lisa Spiro

**STAFF:**

Ruth Thillen, Parish Administrator  
Chad O'Leary, Youth Ministries Director  
Marion Hunner, Children's Ministries Director  
Karla S. Cole, Director of Music Ministries  
Rev. Mary Rowe, Assisting Priest  
Rev. Janet MacNally, Deacon  
Rev. Randy W. Johnson, Rector

**Our Regular Schedule****Sunday: 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist**

9:00 AM Fellowship

9:30-10:20 AM Children's Education-Room 107  
(*NO First Sunday*)

9:30-10:15 AM Youth Education-Youth Room

9:30-10:15 AM Adult Education-Parish Hall

**10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

10:30 AM Children's Chapel (*First Sunday ONLY*)

11:30 AM Fellowship

**Wednesday:** 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist in the Chapel

**Office Hours:**

Monday - Friday 9 AM - 4 PM

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church | 2300 Hamline Ave. N., Roseville, MN 55113  
651-633-4589 | Fax 651-633-7361 | [www.stchristophers-mn.org](http://www.stchristophers-mn.org)

STAY CONNECTED

