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## Hello, St. Christopher's Community!

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### Do You Hear What I Hear? *by Fr. Randy+*

By now, most of you are aware that I have taken a few days off immediately following Christmas—no, not to get away on a vacation or break from church or work—but, because I had to deal with a health issue that routinely afflicts “*us old guys.*” The human body is a marvelous machine—much like the multiple integrated systems that operate in our homes. Well, sometimes maintenance needs to be done in the male plumbing department and that is what has been done. I am amazed at the healing gifts and talents of our medical practitioners, and am forever grateful that I have the privilege to access such compassionate care.

I had my surgical procedure at St. John’s Hospital and was admitted overnight, (New Year’s Eve night through New Year’s Day) for observation and initial recovery. I was once more reminded of a saying my dad shared from his multiple hospital stays while he was having significant cardiac issues, “*A hospital is not the place you want to be when you’re sick.*” It was a tongue-in-cheek statement, but at its core and essence, it is true. Communicable diseases and spreading infections, close and intimate contact with others—both patients and concerned visitors—who may be harboring any number of health conditions, patients with compromised or weakened systems to ward off such opportunistic “*bugs.*”

And then, there is the constant 24/7 announcements and alarms squawking over the PA system, or beeping and buzzing of monitoring devices that seem to go off with no rhyme or reason—needing to be reset by care staff. The bed alarms that go off when a neighboring patient tries to flee or do a “*free-style*” visit to their bathroom. The Code Blue and Code Red notifications for emergency crash teams to intervene in a life-saving event. Adjacent patient rooms with their TV volume turned up to the max. The Behavioral Response Teams called again and again into the emergency room area to de-escalate a mental health crisis. Doctors, nurses, and other care team specialists running

and racing to provide critical services and resources to so many persons in need of their professional care. Noise was everywhere and infiltrated my every thought and wish for peace.

A young nursing aide tapped softly on my door, introduced herself, and announced she need to take my vitals once again and check my IV lines. I had lines and tubes poking me in every part of my body. We giggled a bit when she saw me struggle to find the pointy ends of the cables and tubes she needed to check. She said, *"You look pretty good for being just four hours out of the recovery room. Are you up for a walk?"* "Ahhh, sure," I responded. She helped me get my hospital gown properly situated, grabbed my collection bag and IV pole on wheels, and away we went down the corridor.

It was enlightening to see all of the people present on this med/surg floor. Patients and their families—all ages and ethnicities—speaking different languages—all of them focused upon the needs and care of their loved ones. You could sense the thick aura of tension and concern and attentiveness to one another. Fear and uncertainty of their loved one's health weighed heavily in their faces. I walked alongside this young nurse's aide and asked her about her work and life. She loved helping people and was studying to become an RN. She has three teen-age children who are doing well in school, and they had recently moved to a stable community with strong schools—she was grateful and positive and enthusiastic for her place in this healing center.

As we walked past the nurse's station, the radio was still playing Christmas songs—*"Do you hear what I hear?"* by Bing Crosby. I initially thought it was a rather ironic song to be playing in this whirlwind of constant noise and busy human activity. We continued walking and talking out of earshot of the Christmas carol, and my ears immediately picked up on a noise that was very much out of place—it was a familiar yet quiet, tinkly, bell-tone phrasing over the hospital PA system—it was the Brahms' baby lullaby. My walking partner smiled broadly and said, *"Another new light shines in the world—another baby is born."* It plays over the entire hospital complex to joyfully announce the birth of a new child. In that very moment, the chaotic pace of the hospital floor radically changed—all was quiet and peaceful—if only for a few moments. I lay alone in my hospital bed overnight on New Year's Day—hearing this Brahms' baby lullaby play several more times. New light shining in the world—a new life like no other—another child is born.

The Bing Crosby Christmas carol, *"Do you hear what I hear"* was most appropriate for me, as I had been focused upon the uncertainty, the fear, crises, chaos and concern that was immediately surrounding me. This was the world into which the Christ Child was born two-thousand years ago as now—come to earth to bring peace and good will to all persons. *Emmanuel—God with us!*

*"Do you see what I see?"*

*"Do you hear what I hear?"*

*"Do you know what I know?"*

*"Listen to what I say; Pray for peace people everywhere."*

*"The Child, the Child sleeping in the night; He will bring us goodness and light."*

May the peace and light and love of the newborn Christ Child live in your hearts, evermore. Randy+



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## ANNUAL MEETING of the PARISH JANUARY 19th



The **Annual Meeting of the Parish** will be held on **Sunday, January 19th**, following **ONE service at 9:30 AM**. The meeting will begin at approximately **11:00 AM**. This is the time when we re-cap all that has happened in the last year, review the completed Budget for 2024, and present the new 2025 Budget. We also elect new members to leadership on the Vestry.

If you are a Committee or Group Chairperson or just "leader" or "coordinator," and you'd like to write a report about what your group has been doing, we would love to have it! The **deadline** to submit reports for the Annual Report document is **January 15th**.

We do not, as of this e-Blast, have a full slate of candidates for election to the Vestry (2 are needed). If you would be interested in serving in this capacity, or would like more information, please check in with the church office, or see one of the Wardens. Whether you have been on Vestry before or not, you are welcome!

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## Hearts and Hands January 16

The Hearts and Hands group will meet on Thursday, January 16 at 10:30 in the Parish Hall. We will be making fleece blankets for *My Very Own Bed*, as it didn't work as planned in November. If you are interested in shopping for items to go with our fleece blankets, we are collecting twin sheets, twin mattress pads, pillows and covers and stuffed animals. Please drop items off at church this week. Come join us to help with our project and for coffee and conversation. Questions call Sally Brown 651-483-8232.

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## St. Christopher's Crossings Book Group

Greetings and Blessings! There was consensus; we are the St. Christopher's Crossings Book Group.

We will be meeting on **January 23rd, 2025** in the Gathering Room at 6:00 PM. It is a hybrid meeting.

For the meeting link, please contact:

- Angela Robinson, [angela.robinson.elohim@gmail.com](mailto:angela.robinson.elohim@gmail.com)
- Rev. Marilyn

We are reading ***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*** by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

For those of you who might be struggling to finish the book, we are dividing the book into two parts.

**Part 1: 23-Jan-25:** Discuss sections ***Planting Sweetgrass*** through ***Picking Sweetgrass***.

**Part 2: 27-Mar-25:** Discuss sections ***Braiding Sweetgrass*** to the end.

### February Book

In honor of **Black History Month**, we are reading ***James*** by **Percival Everett**. Please join us on **February 27, 2025** for a hybrid meeting to discuss this book.

### January/March Book

**[Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants](#)** by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

*As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In Braiding Sweetgrass, Kimmerer brings these lenses of knowledge together to show that the awakening of a wider ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings are we capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learning to give our own gifts in return.*

### February Book

**[James](#)** by Percival Everett.

*A brilliant, action-packed reimagining of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn , both harrowing and ferociously funny, told from the enslaved Jim's point of view.*

*When the enslaved Jim overhears that he is about to be sold to a man in New Orleans, separated from his wife and daughter forever, he decides to hide on nearby Jackson Island until he can formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck Finn has faked his own death to escape his violent father, recently returned to town. As all readers of American literature know, thus begins the dangerous and transcendent journey by raft down the Mississippi River toward the elusive and too-often-unreliable promise of the Free States and beyond.*

*While many narrative set pieces of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn remain in place (floods and storms, stumbling across both unexpected death and unexpected treasure in the myriad stopping points along the river's banks, encountering the scam artists posing as the Duke and Dauphin...), Jim's agency, intelligence and compassion are shown in a radically new light.*

**There are copies of [Braiding Sweetgrass](#) in the Church Office**, if you need one. Ann Trapnell checked out a "Book Club in a Bag" from the Ramsey County Library. The bag, along with a sign up sheet, (so we know who takes

them!) in the office at church. They're available to anyone, as long as they sign them out and **return them to the church office by Feb 15!**

There are copies of these books spread out among the library systems. Also try: [Half Price Books](#), [Alibris](#), or anywhere you can get an inexpensive copy because the library copy is unavailable.

### **Are you interested in joining us?**

**Contact Angela Robinson**, [angela.robinson.elohim@gmail.com](mailto:angela.robinson.elohim@gmail.com)

or Rev. Marilyn, so we can send the details of the meeting information for those who wish to join online.

Also, we look forward to hearing from you about any suggestions you may have as to specific books or genres.

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## **We Get By with A Little Help from Our Friends**

I am here again to ask all of you to volunteer for a week of snow shoveling for the church!

Shoveling weeks are Monday-to-Sunday (because no one wants to wake up to snow on Sunday and not remember that it's the START of your week). \*\*When you sign up, please mark your calendar so you remember which week you "took." Thanks!

Anything over **1.5** inches is covered by our plowing service *when they plow*, BUT, we do need help sometimes mid-day to keep things safe before they arrive. Sand and salt are in (or near) the entries. Call the office if you have questions!

*THANK YOU* to each and every person and family who has signed up to help, even though nature has not granted us much snow, yet!

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## **Prayer List Requests**

Have you noticed a "Prayer Requests" button on our website? This is a very short form to add a name to our prayer list! Requests will be monitored Monday through Friday and added to the list published on Fridays. You may, of course, still call the office to add or remove a name from the list. AND, you can use this QR Code to go right to the website!



## **Upcoming Lectionary Readings**

**January 12: 1st Sunday after Epiphany, Year C**

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

**January 19: 2nd Sunday after Epiphany, Year C (9:30 AM!)**

Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11.

## Sunday Ministries January 12

### 8:00 AM

Lectors - John L, Bill S

Intercessor - Tom M

LEM - Mary P

Usher - Bruce W

Altar Guild - Robert W

Coffee Host: Cindy & Pete L

### 10:30 AM

Nursery: Becky L, Rich P

Lectors - Jean C, Ella S

Intercessor - Lyn L

LEM - Lyn L, Jean C

Crucifer - Angela R

Ushers - Ella S & Ross A

Altar Guild - Jean Hammer

Coffee Hosts - Kathy & Ross A

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### Are you receiving this email forwarded by a friend?

You can now sign up to receive the weekly Parish Mail and monthly *e-Traveler* in your own inbox. A sign-up form is now on the main page at our website. Just go to [www.stchristophers-mn.org](http://www.stchristophers-mn.org).

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*Thank you for keeping your pledge up to date.*

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

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