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Hello, St. Christopher's Community! *It's FAIR TIME!*

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### **Cook's Surprise** *by Fr. Randy+*

I put on my eyeglasses and leaned forward to read the microprint in the calendar date boxes—taped to the fridge was our upcoming month's school hot lunch calendar. I carefully studied the menu for each day of the week, healthy meals skillfully and lovingly made from scratch by our beloved lunch ladies of Nelson Elementary School. My nose would wrinkle up as I dutifully drew a dark "X" over the days I did not choose to eat hot lunch. I would on those days request mom to make my "go to" sandwich choice—yellow mustard and dill pickle slices on white bread! *Delicious! Elvis has nothing on me!*



Then I would take out the bright red pencil and circle the special days of the monthly menu—the days designated as "Cook's Surprise!" Many of my classmates steered clear of eating hot lunch on these special days, fearing that the lunch ladies were just clearing out the leftovers and "yucky stuff" that was hiding in the hinterlands of enormous kitchen freezers. But, I knew better. The lunch ladies had the fabulous gift of making the most splendid meal from the most unremarkable foods on those days. I went through the lunch line, was greeted by name and with a warm smile, and was provided with a surprise meal beyond my greatest expectations.

I recently spoke with a lovely woman about her personal experience living in New York while attending university. She and her best friend both loved Chinese food, and they very frequently shared a meal after classes at a small, family-owned restaurant near their apartment. After many, many meals

selected from the extensive menu, they had tried every single item on the bill of fare. It was then that the server told them it might be good to allow the chef to use his own imagination to concoct an “*off-menu*” meal. She was assured they would be most pleasantly surprised. They agreed and were presented with a flavor explosion that they had never imagined before! Now, each subsequent time they ate at this restaurant, they allowed the chef to do his will in creating something new and exciting to eat. *Surprise, indeed!*

And, maybe that is the way we should approach living our lives each and every day as followers of Jesus. Rather than navigating through this world independently and selfishly deciding to follow *our* will alone, we should take the risk of allowing God “*to get behind the wheel of our life,*” and intentionally enjoy the extravagant beauty of creation fill our hearts, our minds, and our souls.

Jesus has shown us the way we should live into this provision and acceptance of God’s amazing gifts for us through the saying of The Lord’s Prayer:

*“Pray, then, in this way:*

*Our Father in heaven,*

*may your name be revered as holy.*

*May your kingdom come.*

*May your will be done*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us today our daily bread.*

*And forgive us our debts,*

*as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*And do not bring us to the time of trial,*

*but rescue us from the evil one.” (Matt 6:9-13)*

*“May your will be done,”* is the operative phrase for me this day. Just as I experienced as a young lad with the Nelson School lunch ladies’ “*Cook’s Surprise,*” and my new friend’s New York experience of letting the talented Chinese chef imaginatively prepare exotic cuisine with amazing taste!

Don’t just settle for your own short-sighted direction and determinations and desires. Don’t be satisfied by your own choice of a yellow mustard and dill pickle slice sandwich on bland white bread. Live large. *Let go, and Let God.* “*May your will be done.*” And, be prepared for the surprise of your life! Cheers!  
*Randy+*

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## Music Up Next

If you were gone last week, you missed the roll out of a demo Rodgers digital organ that we will have in our sanctuary for a few weeks. Not exactly a techie person, I am trying mightily to figure out how some of the features work, so that you can hear them. In fact, if you’d like to stay after church for a little bit this week, I’ll give you a quick “compare and contrast” between it and the old organ. It won’t be completely fair, as the little pipe organ hasn’t been tuned since Easter 2022, and the Rodgers is always in tune. Also, the speaker situation is far from ideal, as they are just sitting back there at waist level. But I think I can give you a pretty fair comparison of a few individual stops, and can

show you some of the distinct differences between the two. You can wander up to the chancel, or move about the nave and hear them from different points. I will make it quick so you don't get cheated out of your cookie at coffee hour, but will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Also, mark your calendars for **September 3rd**. I'm taking a Sunday off, and Tom McNellis is coming with his banjo. He used to be the tenor section leader in our choir, but left us as his bluegrass band, Skunk Hollow, began to take off. (It's hard to play a Saturday night gig and get up early for church the next day.) Skunk Hollow is playing at Sociable Cider Werks **tomorrow night (Friday 8/25) at 7pm** and again on the **last Friday in September, the 29th**.

While you've got your calendars out, here's a date that's a little further off - **Karla and Friends, October 1st at 3pm** Those of you that know me, know that I almost never take the musical beaten path when I can do it a different way, so it's a classical program, but not typical. St. Mary's Recorder Trio, Pat Ahern, Cheryl Bailey, Barb Hovey, Connie Weingartz and Carol Gilkey will all join me for music that is just a lot of fun. I hope you'll plan to come!

Karla Cole

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## It's State Fair Time!

Dates are **August 24 to September 4**.

If you need to visit the church during Fair time (except on Sunday morning), please park on the highway side of the building in the grass. Do not park in regular parking areas and **DO NOT** park in ANY handicap parking spots.

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## Hallelujah!

### We need to staff the nursery on Sunday mornings!

We have a family who is interested in transferring from another Episcopal church to St. Christopher's, as they have recently moved. They have a 2-year-old, and they're hoping to be able to utilize the nursery on Sunday mornings. This is a great time to re-establish a nursery team at St. Christopher's, as we have not had one since Covid. Please let Marion know if you would like to help with this ministry. Our hope is to have enough people so that everyone can serve about once per month beginning with Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

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## Together at 9:30!

*Please note* that we have changed to a **single service at 9:30 AM** for the Summer. We will continue with one service THROUGH Start-Up Sunday on September 10th, and return to two services on September 17th.



## Fall Adult Formation

This fall, Bishop Loya has asked each faith community to study the Gospel of Luke at roughly the same time, and we plan to do just that for our Adult Formation hour on Sunday mornings. (9:15-10:15). We'll be using the recommended book (Interpretation Bible Series: Luke) and will begin on September 17, the week after our Start-Up Sunday.

Books will be provided; contact Marilyn+ to pick one up, and start your reading. We plan to cover one chapter a week. More information will follow.

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## It's Time for a New Directory!

The good news: There will be no one trying to sell you giant retouched photos!  
The challenge: We need your help to make it happen!

Matt Cole has agreed to photograph each family unit for a new, do-it-ourselves directory. He will set up a photo booth and take pictures after services on several Sundays, but sadly, NOT including Start-Up Sunday, September 10. So, put on your prettiest smile and get yourself to church!

Or, simply send a recent photo to Ruth in the office and we'll be glad to add it.

We also need some volunteers to help herd people on Sundays for photos, to update information, and to help put the directory together. Look for more information in weekly news, and email Marilyn ([HERE](#)) to help.

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## Upcoming Lectionary Readings

### August 27: Pentecost 13, Proper 16

Isaiah 51:1-6; Psalm 138; Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20.

### September 3: Pentecost 14, Proper 17

Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

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

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

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