



Hello, St. Christopher's Community!

The Pearl of Great Price *by Fr. Randy+*

This past week, we celebrated All Saints' Day and All Souls Day—special feast days set aside to remember and honor all the saints who have lived righteous and holy lives in accordance with Christian teachings. We also celebrate the saints that have directly impacted our own lives each and every day. During worship, persons were invited to tie a ribbon onto a memorial latticework at the front of the nave. I was deeply moved by the number of colorful ribbons affixed in memory of loved ones who have touched our lives in glorious ways.

Our parish library holds a collection of books that focus upon the lives of the saints. I took time to pull a couple of the books off the shelf and page through the stories of several notable saints. The one which immediately caught my attention was St. Margaret of Scotland—*the Pearl of Great Price*. You see, pearls are very beautiful. Their beauty has something to do with their unique luster. The light reflects and refracts from the translucent layers—layer upon layer of mother of pearl. The luster becomes finer as the layers become thinner and more numerous. They are precious.

On November 16, we celebrate the feast day of Margaret, a 12th century queen of Scotland, who was acknowledged by the whole country as strong, pure, of noble character, a doer of charitable works, and a deeply holy woman. She was a woman of profound prayer, and worked tirelessly for the welfare of orphans and the poor. She became the mother of three Scottish kings and an ecclesiastical reformer of the church.

Many people wrote about her, and made much of the appropriateness of her name, for in both Greek and Latin, the name Margaret—*Margarata*—means pearl. There's a lovely passage written at her death by Turgot, the 12th century bishop of St. Andrews:

"In this virtuous woman, the fairness indicated by her name was surpassed by the exceeding beauty of her soul. She was called Margaret, that is a "pearl," and in the sight of God she was esteemed a lovely pearl by reason of her faith

and good works. She was a pearl to her husband and children, to me, to all of us, even to Christ. And because she was Christ's she is all the more ours, now that she has left us, and is taken to the Lord."

I believe each one of us know someone whose life is so beautiful, a holy person, that in a way, they seem to radiate light from within—perhaps in the way that a beautiful pearl does—reflecting and refracting the light of Christ to the world.

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." (Matt 13:44-46)

It is good we remember in prayer all those who have been like pearls to us—those who have lit up our own lives, and have helped and guided and inspired us along the way—and to give thanks to God for them.

The glory of the pearl of great price is also, above all, a story about seeking. Jesus himself turns to his disciples and to us and asks, *"What are you looking for?"* We may have collected lots of pearls in our lives—lots of shining accomplishments and dazzling acquisitions. But perhaps we have also glimpsed another pearl—one that shines with a luster that is so much more beautiful than all others. But this pearl comes with a great price. We may need to let go of some of our favorite pearls, in order to acquire this one. But this one is so beautiful. What might you need to let go?

In our prayer, we may just also catch sight of an even deeper mystery. That the one you are seeking is also seeking you. That in his eyes, *you* are a pearl of great price, for whom he is prepared to give all. *Randy+*



2023 Memorial List

Here is the list of those we remembered on All Saints' Sunday. My apologies for not getting it inserted in the bulletins as planned.-Ruth

Barbara Kent
Eve Mahr
Delores Marsh
Betty Lee Gooderl Seprodi
Charles Dwight Townes
Delbert Allen Allmendinger
Eugene T. Hughes
Carol Line Haskin
Katherine Line
Ben Desmond

Pamela O'Meara
Christine Peterson
Betty Carr
Jessie Hansen
Brad McCanna
Danny Brown
Jan Gibson Talbot
John Kohlhaas
Charlie Hough
Jerry Soukal
Cynthia Malone
Bob Norlander
Glenna Shold
Cyrilla Portner
Patty Rundahl
Kathy van Guilder
Alan Joles
Galen Ammermann

Be an Organ Donor!

Our new Rodgers Organ has been completely installed in our church nave, and already is raising its beautiful voice in worship and praise! The initial funding of the purchase of our new organ was made possible through the generous memorial gifts and donations made to St. Christopher's over the past several years.

We are now inviting friends and family members of St. Christopher's to become an "Organ Donor"—an opportunity to contribute towards the remaining portion of the new organ cost. Gifts of any amount towards the organ purchase will be gratefully received. We have already received several contributions to the Organ Donor fund, and we will be celebrating a dedication service of the new organ later this fall. Thank you for prayerfully considering becoming an Organ Donor at St. Christopher's!

On the Road...

Please Remember to get your 2024 pledge in this weekend! The Finance Committee meets on Monday the 13th, and we'd like to have all pledges in. Thank you!

Please remember, if you are using the automatic withdrawal system and you don't need to make a change, we still need your pledge form to confirm your ongoing commitment. Thanks!

Music Up Next

There are a couple of noteworthy things coming up this Sunday. First, the Handbell Choir is coming! We always enjoy hearing them and appreciate their hours of dedicated practice. The main difficulty with handbell music is that each player covers a few (or a bunch of) notes and if that person isn't there, the part

is missing. And as they learn their parts, they become sort of dependant upon hearing other people's parts in order to fit theirs in. So the dynamics of a handbell choir are very community oriented!

Also, the parish choir brings an interesting offertory anthem on Sunday. Local Episcopal musician/composer, Monte Mason has set a tune from the **Baptist Harmony**, with hollow-sounding early American harmonies and vigorous, stompy rhythms. The text is the gospel for the day -- the tale of the bridesmaids and the oil for their lamps, or the lack thereof. The piece is in a certain style of singing that isn't often heard these days, "fa-so-la" singing. In 17th and 18th century America, folks would gather for fun to sing - shocking, I know. But there weren't as many distractions in those days and the agrarian lifestyle gave them some free time in the fall and winter, and singing was a sociable pastime. There are still groups of these fa-so-la singers who gather, a bit like Civil War re-enactors, to sing these hymns. And if you've been reading my writings over the years, you already know the many physical and emotional benefits of singing with others. Pretty smart, those singers!

Free Concert Coming!

The Schola Cantorum of Eau Claire is a group of 12 a capella singers who will fill our sanctuary with glorious Renaissance music on Friday night, November 17th at 7pm. Their director, a native of Hong Kong, Dr. Jerry Hui is the Director of Choral Studies at UW-Stout and an active soloist and composer. The program, "*Amica Mea: Music of William Byrd and His Friends*" will commemorate 400 years since Byrd's death. Hear his moving Mass for Four Voices and a number of motets. Also featured are music by Thomas Tallis, Byrd's teacher and business partner; Thomas Weelkes and Thomas Morley, both Byrd's students. No tickets needed — just come! Free will donations accepted. It promises to be a brilliant evening for lovers of Anglican choral music!

Last Call for Photos!

A Change! Matt will be taking photos **this** Sunday, November 12th, after both services (but NOT on the 19th). If you haven't gotten your photo taken yet, it's time to "get 'er done." He doesn't bite! There will only be one more opportunity, a make-up date on December 3rd. Say cheese!

What do YOU do during Advent?

By Marion Hunner, Children's Ministries Director

Do you have special Advent traditions? Do you light an Advent wreath? How often? Is there a prayer or ritual around lighting the wreath? Do you have special activities or decorations for Advent? Join me in the Parish Hall at 9:15 on **Sunday, November 26** to share Advent traditions with your Faith Family. I will have some resources available. If you would like to provide your idea ahead of time, I would be happy to make any handouts that would be helpful or share your ideas if you are unable to join us. Maybe you'll hear a new tradition that you will try this year!



Upcoming Lectionary Readings

November 12: Pentecost 24, Proper 27

Wisdom 6:12-16, Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13.

November 19: Pentecost 25, Proper 28

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8(9-11)12; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11;
Matthew 25:14-30.

In Case You Missed It

In case you missed it, here is the text of Angela Robinson's talk on October 22nd. (*We had some technical difficulties, so this one is running late.*)

When I lived in Kokomo, IN, as a Presbyterian, I had a dear friend with whom I would go for spiritual retreats to the Kordes Enrichment Center, run by Benedictine Nuns, in southern IN on the KY border. On one of our trips, she asked me if I would stay a Presbyterian. There was much turmoil in the church in the early 2000s. I hadn't really thought about it, having grown up with a Dutch Reformed tradition. She looked at me and said, "I can see you becoming more orthodox." I cannot remember my response, but I was a committed Presbyterian at the time.

I left the automotive industry in IN during the 2007 economic meltdown, to join the medical device community, and arrived in Minnesota in August just after the 35W bridge collapse. While crossing from WI into MN, I was dialing around in the public radio space to find the local channel and the first voice I heard was Cathy Wurzer welcoming me to MN Public Radio.

Because of the economic situation, I could not sell my house in IN, so all my belongings remained behind while I slept on a foam mattress on the floor of a one-bedroom apartment in Little Canada. In late winter of 2008, I received a postcard with a picture of Easter eggs in the dying process with the caption, "Most people know Easter has something to do with dyeing." A clever pun indeed. The card was an invitation to St John in the Wilderness' Holy week. I mused to myself -- ha, I felt like I was in the wilderness, let me go see these other people in the wilderness and so I went. Not on Easter Sunday, but the next Sunday. St John in the Wilderness has an interesting configuration in that the parking lot entrance causes one to enter the church from the chancel side and all entrants are visible, no sneaking in from that entrance. I arrived late a was terrified, in tears, and about to retreat when an older gentleman bowed, pointed at the congregation, and said, "They are waiting for you." I went, sat next to a woman named Angie Gordon and I stayed.

I became an active participant in the life of the church and a committed Episcopalian as God worked on my heart to open my eyes. While working with the Finance Ministry at St John's I met our counterparts at St Christopher's. Many changes at St John in the Wilderness caused me to seek spiritual nourishment elsewhere. Having enjoyed the company of the St. Christopher's parishioners, I though I might give it a try. I came for spiritual nourishment and stayed for the music.

Determined not to get over committed, I said I'd sing with the choir for Lessons

and Carols -- and never left.

Many of you may know that Fr. Randy and Rev. Marilyn have a history with St. John in the Wilderness, it also intersected with mine.

Rev. Marilyn came to me with a proposal for the ECMN Faithful Innovations project. It was a perfect opportunity to help see where God is showing up. Three of us remain who committed to the training, which includes Becky Lucas, and Marion Hunner.

As your

Faithful innovation team, we have helped St. Christopher's parishioners reflect on the question of where they see God showing up in scripture, in their community, and in their experience of church. The exercises we conducted with the congregation helped us see how St. C's might shine the love of Christ on our neighbors.

We have come to you with our learnings so that we can discern together how God is directing us to move forward as a parish and has helped me experience clear vision as a member of St. C's. The focus of Faithful Innovation is to create an environment where we can work toward becoming a spiritual community that listens to scriptures, each other, and our neighbors: to be curious as a community about what God is up to; to experiment with new ways of being and joining the Holy Spirit to work in our church and community; to notice, learn, reflect, and discover new ways of being church together.

There were three focus areas that presented themselves:

- Education
- Greetings and Welcome
- Celebrating Each Other

It is our prayer that we are a permission giving congregation and look forward to where the parish might engage in these areas with their gifts, time, and talent. Mostly I'm looking forward to more listening sessions where we hear each other's stories.

St. Christopher's First Event Fair

WE NEED YOU!

Help us build and strengthen our St. Christopher's Community through Fellowship and Fun! Raise \$\$ for the Mission Opportunities Fund which helps support ministries in the parish and important outreach. Please consider donating a fun event to St. Christopher's First **Event Fair**. Think outside the box! What are your favorite hobbies, foods, and pass times? Offer a karaoke night or guitar lesson(s), lead a hike or bird watching outing, take a group golfing, share a meal with others, teach a cooking class, lead a knitting lesson, offer game night or a day on a lake, or throw a dance party! The options are endless! Fill out the [donation form](#) (or find it on our website at the bottom of the Publications page) and send it to Ann (mnrtrappers@gmail.com) or Kim (kimmersue58@hotmail.com). Event donations are due by **November 15th!** The St. Christopher's Event Fair will occur December 10th through 17th, with specific event sign-up sheets in the Parish Hall! All events will occur in 2024!

ISAIAH Saint Paul and East Metro Agenda Unveiling and Path to 2025 Summit

Tue Nov 28

On Tuesday November 28th, we will make political meaning together about the outcome of the Saint Paul elections and what's happened in the East Metro.

We will share the results of the Saint Paul and East Metro Agenda survey, the listening sessions that happened this fall and unveil our updated agenda we will advance for the next couple of years.

We will talk about our mission and set of strategies to advance a multi-racial democracy and caring economy through 2024 with the Mayor and the new Saint Paul city council. There will be an East Metro breakout to discuss the path for those who are in East Metro congregations to advance a multi-racial democracy, caring economy and just climate transition in the suburbs!.

Join us for the ISAIAH Saint Paul and East Metro Agenda Unveiling and Path to 2025 Summit on Tuesday, November 28th, from 6:15pm - 8:45pm (TBD Location).

Please contact Dan Humes for sign up information: 612-581-5418, or humes45@comcast.net

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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.

www.stchristophers-mn.org



Thank you for keeping your pledge up to date.

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