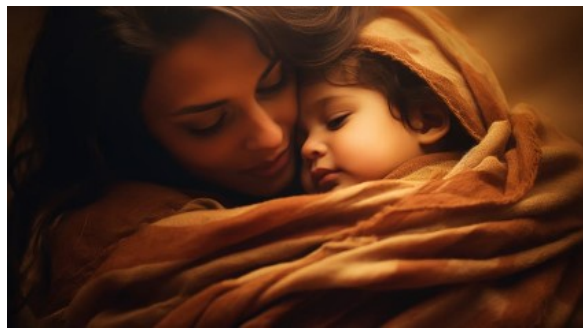


Hello, St. Christopher's Community!



Unintended Consequences *by Fr. Randy+*

How many times has it happened to you? You became engaged or involved in a situation or incident or event, where most persons believed there was an expected outcome, but something entirely different resulted in the end?

A sports team has a slight lead, tries to run out the clock for the win, then makes a huge mistake which allows their opponent to score and win the game. The new recipe you tried for the first time for family and friends, it goes up in smoke, and you end up doing “take-out” for the celebratory meal. You believe you had earned a work promotion, yet another person is chosen—then you are contacted by another company who recognizes your abilities and offers you a greater opportunity. It happens every day!

In this Advent season, I cannot help but look at the crazy circumstances that led to the birth of Jesus in lowly Bethlehem. Unintended consequences, indeed.

“In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and

family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.” (Luke 2:1-5)

A situation of hardship, discomfort, and even great peril for Mary and the unborn child, Jesus. A time of extreme greed and control by the Emperor Augustus—reaching even deeper into the pockets of the people for levying additional taxes and closely monitoring the people—including those who may be considered opposed to his authority.

But what were the unintended consequences of this action by Augustus? Rather than being a divisive action, an enormous hardship upon the people, an additional iron rod on their shoulders—this action provided the incentive and reason for Joseph and Mary to return to the hometown of their roots—the tree of life from King David, to the fulfillment of the scriptures which directly connected the birth of our Savior, the Messiah, to the line of David.

The powerful and the rulers of this world did not understand this—their selfish actions and short-sighted goals laid directly into God’s plans of the selfless and the powerless and the humble to become the heralds of the coming of the Messiah—the Savior of the world. What they so were afraid of has come to pass because of their decisions and actions.

“And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinth 13:13)

Love incarnate in the person of Jesus—fully human, yet fully divine—abides in this world God created. An unintended consequence in human minds—the intended consequence of God, indeed. Amen. *Randy+*

A Different Kind of Service

The holiday season can be a time of great sadness for many, with cold, darkness, and memories of better days. If you’re feeling that this year, or know someone who is, think about attending a special service just to help with the holiday blues.

St. Anne’s Episcopal Church in Sunfish Lake offers a Winter Solstice service and Bonfire on 12/20 beginning at 7 pm. (stannes-mn.org).

St. Mark’s Cathedral in Minneapolis is offering a Longest Night service at 2pm on 12/21. (our cathedral.org).

Many other churches may offer similar services; search for Blue Christmas or Longest Night services. If you’d like to talk further, feel free to call Marilyn+.



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!

Adult Formation for Advent

We have begun a weekly Bible study on our Advent Sunday readings for the following week. This will give us all a little advance notice of what the readings will be, and the preacher can glean ideas from the discussion. Grab coffee and join us at 9:15 in the Gathering Room.

Event Fair Continues

Don't miss your chance to sign up for 2025 activities at the Event Fair in the Parish Hall! Registrations will stay open until Sunday, December 29th in the Parish Hall. If you cannot stop by in person, please ask a friend to sign you up in your absence, or, let Ann (mnrappers@gmail.com) or Kim (kimmersue58@hotmail.com) know your choices. A BIG THANK YOU to all our event donors for donating their time, talent, and treasure to bring us this fun schedule of events!!! We hope everyone will engage and enjoy our fun-loving church community!

Greetings and Blessings Book Group,

The Book Group, proposed name: **St. Christopher's Crossings**. Please let us know what you might suggest for our book group name.

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

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

There is an audiobook version on YouTube, **Braiding Sweetgrass**. Enjoy!

January 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.

There are several copies 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? You will need to contact Angela Robinson, 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.

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

December 22: **ADVENT 4**, Year C

Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 3, 15, or 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45(46-55).

December 29: **Christmas 1**, Year C

Isaiah 61:10—62:3; Psalm 147; Galatians 3:23-25, 4:4-7,; John 1:1-18.

Sunday Ministries December 22

8:00 AM

Lectors - Pete L, Tom M
Intercessor - Chris M
LEM - Chris M
Usher - Tom M
Altar Guild - Jennifer W
Coffee Host: open

10:30 AM

Nursery: Janet C, Kathy A
Lectors - Jean C, Scott C
Intercessor - Bill H
LEM - Lyn L, Madisen C
Crucifer - Madisen C
Ushers - Jean & Scott C
Altar Guild - Jean D
Coffee Hosts - Jean & Scott C

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.

www.stchristophers-mn.org



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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