



Hello, St. Christopher's Community!

What Do You Think by Fr. Randy+

I am used to having a relatively calm and quiet ride as I traverse the metro area and across the length and breadth of the state in my “*other job*.” This opportunity for some tranquil windshield time gives me time to think and pray and ponder upcoming activities and events. But, it is something that has not been happening for the past few weeks.

Times have changed in the Johnson household, and changed for the better! We have been sharing our home with kids and grandkids as they transition back to Minnesota life. And with that change, the serene drives have turned into “*chat fests*” with excited voices of grandkids punctuating the airwaves! The chipmunk chattering is not just noise—it is actually filled with question after question and a thirst for learning and understanding the world around them. I am really impressed by the patience in persistence demonstrated by our daughter and son-in-law. They are endlessly patient with the lines of question and multiple follow-up inquiries. They are equally persistent with questions of their own.

The grandkid’s initial question is most often responded to with another question, “*I don’t know?*” On its surface, it could seem like an admission of failure to many in our culture, as if admitting a kind of ignorance or lack of intelligence. But I’d like to offer another slant, as I believe that telling the kids “*I don’t know*” offers an invitation for them to share what *they* know or, sometimes even better, to join *together* in figuring something out. This becomes especially true when you pair these three words with four others: “*What do you think?*”



Seen in this way, this combination—*“I don’t know. What do you think?”*—can be incredibly empowering. Try it some time. Next time a person, even a child, asks you a question, I invite you to take the time to raise the question, and be prepared for an incredible shared learning experience. You might be surprised at how much he or she knows and has to say about the subject matter in question.

Jesus knew the power of *“The Question.”* He used it again and again in his ministry throughout his homeland, utilizing the rabbinical teaching method of question and answer while sharing many stories and parables to challenge the status quo, cultural norms, and injustices of his time—*and ours!* His questions cause us to slow down, to risk admitting the limits of our own knowledge and experience, and consider new possibilities.

In asking *“The Questions,”* Jesus demands of us that we be thinking regularly and relentlessly about how all of our decisions should be shaped by the confession that the whole world is God’s and everything in it. And we should wrestle with the questions through the lens of, *“What do you think Jesus means?”*

I pray we can create a sense that the church is a place where all of us can find support in thinking through the things that should matter most to us.

Randy+

Make a Joyful Noise! We have an Organ!

by Fr. Randy+

It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers together to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever,” the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud. (2 Chronicles 5:13)

A joyful sound, indeed! I am delighted to announce that St. Christopher’s has made the decision to purchase the Rodgers organ we have been graciously granted to *“test drive”* the past couple of months in our worship services. The organ will replace the current Rieger pipe organ for which we have been unable to find tuning and repair services for the past year—in essence, it has been unavailable for use in our worship. The foundational role an organ plays in our musical portion of worship has been sorely missed by our faith family. Exclusion of a functioning organ has limited the musical offerings provided by our very talented musicians and vocalists.

For the past year, our vestry, wardens, and finance committee have been diligently working towards the best solution for the organ dilemma at St. Christopher's. All options to address the situation have been explored and a deliberate discernment process was developed. We learned a great deal about organ brand strengths and challenges in our worship space. Fortunately, our worship space has nearly ideal acoustical properties, and we were able to learn what specific needs we had for an instrument through the experimental use of the Rodgers organ temporarily installed in our nave. Karla has provided several opportunities for parishioners ask questions and to learn about the organ options through in-person demonstrations.

An Organ Research Committee was formed to further investigate functional needs and features desired in an organ for our space. It was determined that the current Rieger pipe organ could not be reliably repaired and tuned for our current or future needs. At the same time, St. Christopher's was the recipient of several large memorial donations which were identified as possible financial sources to provide a significant source for funding an organ purchase. These new memorial gifts, in addition to several other memorial gifts currently held in church accounts, would cover nearly one-half of the cost of a new organ. The Rodgers organ selected for purchase consideration is priced at approximately \$48,000. The gifts and memorials currently in hand are \$24,000.—nearly half the cost of a new organ.

The Finance Committee discussed the potential organ purchase and recommended that the gift and memorial monies, along with monies currently residing in the church's Pooled Investment Fund from a significant additional memorial gift, could be used to purchase the organ. We also determined that an Organ Donor request be made to the congregation for those wanting to contribute to the purchase cost of the new organ. This one-time ask would be made during the time period of All Saints Day on November 1, through Thanksgiving Day on November 23. Special gift donations towards the organ purchase in any amount is gratefully received.

On October 16, 2023, the St. Christopher's Vestry approved the purchase of the new Rodgers organ, with the permanent installation with the acoustically tuned matched speaker system to be done in the very near future. All of us at St. Christopher's are extremely grateful to those persons who committed time and expertise to come to this important decision. Look for more information coming your way on how you can contribute to this exciting endeavor in joyful music! *Fr. Randy+*

Last Call for Photos!

We're still looking for photos for our new directory. No photos on October 22nd, but Matt Cole will be back on both October 29th and November 5th. Please try to get in to see him after church on one of those days, and get your photo taken for the church directory. OR you can submit one to the office as soon as possible.

Music Up Next

The choir reprises an anthem that we (well, at least the director) loved from last season - "I will be a child of peace" by Iowa composer Elaine Hagenberg. She is a music educator, a choral clinician, and an up and coming composer who really knows how to tug the heartstrings with her musical language.

What Would Jesus Drink?

I'm not sure, exactly. But he, or rather, we will be drinking it at Torg Brewery, 8421 University Ave NE, Spring Lake Park. **This Sunday**, October 22, 3-5pm. They have a broad assortment of styles of beer, hard and soft seltzers, sodas and snacks, as well as crowlers and growlers. See you there!

Coming Soon...

Daylight Saving Time **ends** on Sunday, **November 5th!**

“Remember, remember the Fifth of November, gunpowder, treason and plot; for there is a reason why gunpowder and treason should ne'er be forgot.” We'll remember Guy Fawkes Day with a gathering in the North parking lot. Watch for details!

All Saints' Day Remembrance: If you have friends or loved ones who have died in the last year (since November 1), please submit the names to the office, and we will read them at the All Saints' Day service on November 5th.

Invitation

It's that time of year again, when the Vestry begins to consider candidates for openings in the leadership of our faith community. This year, we will be looking for a Junior Warden (1 yr), three Vestry members (3 yrs), and a Treasurer (3 years). If you are interested in serving as one of these positions, please speak to Fr. Randy Johnson, Karen Hartman, Sr. Warden, or Barb Hovey, Jr. Warden.

In Case You Missed It:

Here is the Stewardship talk on Hope, presented by Joel Norton on October 8th.

Good morning! My name is Joel Norton, My family and I have been members here at St. Christopher's since 2010. I am here today to talk with you about the importance of giving to this year's Stewardship Campaign. By having a strong church, we can send a message to all newcomers, please “Stay with us.” Just as the disciples ask a perfect stranger on the road to Emmaus to please.. “Stay With Us.”

I recall my own story of how St. C's welcomed my family into the church. I remember coming into a welcoming church building in 2010, seeing the beautiful stained glass windows, hearing the wonderful music and seeing the interim Rector, Tim Hodapp, up front. All the time, I kept having the feeling I've seen him somewhere before. I knew that guy. It was not until the end of the service, that I realized he was an old High School classmate of mine at the Catholic High School I attended 30 yrs ago. I was the only Episcopalian at a

High School full of Catholics, and now he is the only Catholic in a church full of Episcopalians. And what was he doing here?? It was impossible for us to catch up on 30 years in the greeting line. But I do remember one message from Tim at the time. please...“Stay with us” Come again and let's catch up. I then remember heading down to the Parish Hall for coffee. I met a guy called Chris Mayr. He told me all about the history of the church and what St. C's had to offer my family. Not only that, he followed us out into the parking lot to answer any questions and to say please...“stay with us.”

We did stay, I got involved in the Green Team, the Giving Garden, and I even served on the vestry and as Warden. My wife, Leslie, became a member of the Bells and Recorder choir. My kids were baptized and confirmed here at St. C's. As part of the youth group, we traveled to the BWCA, Banff Canada, and to the Indian Reservations in the Dakotas. We grew in our faith here at St. Christopher's because the church supported these programs and said loud and clear: please... “Stay with us.”

So, how can we strive to welcome others into our fellowship?First, by being open and inclusive, making sure that everyone feels at home here at St Cs. Second, by supporting church functions and ministries that reflect our values, whether that's beautiful music, great sermons, social justice, or community service. And lastly, by supporting our church in ways that are meaningful to us, whether that's through time, talent, or treasure.

I invite each of you to consider how you can contribute to making St. Christopher's a place where everyone feels welcome. Your contributions are what make St. Christopher's the supportive, loving community it is.

Thank you for allowing me to share my journey with you today. Please join me in supporting our great church in this year's Stewardship Campaign. Thank you.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry calls church to prayer following attack on Anglican hospital in Gaza

We have all been invited in the last few days to join with Archbishop Hosam Naoum and the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, as well as Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby, to pray fervently for all those who have been hurt, harmed, or killed in this conflict.

My heart aches when I remember visiting al-Ahli hospital in 2018 during Holy Week to meet the medical teams and all the people of that remarkable ministry. They were passionately committed to anyone who had need.

I know personally how faithful Episcopalians are in praying. During my surgery and recovery, you have prayed for me and for my healing, and I am more grateful and thankful than words can say.

Right now, I ask you to pray fervently for the birthplace of the Abrahamic faiths and for all its people. Pray for those who have been hurt, harmed, or killed—regardless of who they are or who did it.

Pray also for the leaders and people of the entire region, that they will remember God's mercy, and that they will find the way to a just peace where all may live in safety and security as God intends.

Pray this week for President Biden, that he may be an advocate for immediate

humanitarian access for those who desperately need food, water, and medicine—and for comfort and consolation for those who have been displaced and those who are grieving loved ones.

Please join me in praying:

For Peace: Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Prayers for the World, *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 815.

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 (mnrappers@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!

Upcoming Lectionary Readings

October 22: Pentecost 21, Proper 24

Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96:1-9(10-13); Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22.

October 29: Pentecost 22, Proper 25

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18; Psalm 1; Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46.

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.

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