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Hello, St. Christopher's Community!

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### **New Life of Grace** *by Fr. Randy+*

*Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin and have raised him to the new life of grace. Strengthen him, O Lord, with your presence, enfold him in the arms of your mercy, and keep him safe forever. Amen.*

These were the first words spoken as we stood together as a family around the beautiful baptismal font at St. Christopher's. The group of persons gathered was relatively small, but included the individuals most closely held in the heart of the young man who was about to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. There were smiles and nods of encouragement as I explained the process details and meaning behind each portion of the baptism rite. This was a very important step—to take the time to help the young man understand the “*what*” behind the “*why*” we are gathered in this space today. In his Holy Baptism, he is participating in the full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble.



The baptismal candidate was a person with special needs, and was encouraged and empowered by assisting me to light the Pascal Candle, by standing alongside me as we said the prayers, and by dipping his fingers into the soothing warmth of the blessed water in the font. He smiled widely as he closed his eyes and my thumb glided across his forehead, making the Sign of the Cross, saying;

*You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever. Amen.*

This young man felt in his bones and to his very core what it meant to be now adopted into a much larger family of believers, into a communion of saints, into a place of safety and acceptance and compassion and love.

*Give him an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.*

*Let us welcome the newly baptized.*

*We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.*

Rejoice, I say Rejoice! A New Life in Grace, indeed!  
Randy+

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## **Last Call for Photos!**

We're still looking for photos for our new directory. 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.

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**Remember, remember the 5th of November!**  
Gunpowder, treason and tacos!

There will be walking tacos, s'mores and the requisite bonfire for what the Brits call "Bonfire Night" - Sunday, November 5th at 5:00. See you then!

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## 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 On Sunday the 5th, 5-7 PM.

**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.

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## 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.

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## In Case You Missed It:

*Here is the Stewardship presented by Josh Kattelman on October 15th.*

Before COVID, I would often accompany my father-in-law to a members-only Norwegian men's lunch club called *norske torske klubben* (or "norskie torskie," as it is affectionately known by some, probably the Swedes). The club meets once a month to share a communal meal consisting of a whole boiled potato, a piece of baked cod and a tiny sprig of parsley (for color, obviously). Oh, and butter. Lots and lots of butter.

Prior to this very pale meal, the club officers welcomed guests like me, conducted the club's monthly business, shared updates on new and departing members, and told mostly off-color "Ole and Lena"-type jokes. After lunch, the club listened to a guest speaker give a talk on a topic of interest: mostly sports, often World War II; and occasionally Aquavit, a Scandinavian liquor that tastes a bit like the way paint thinner smells. Simply put, norskie torskie is a kind of liturgy.

During COVID, the club moved its meetings online. And with good reason: the age of the average club member is well over 70. Unfortunately, the internet is not a format that is very friendly to Norwegian lunch clubs. Indeed, an online meeting goes against the very purpose of such a club. I never attended an online meeting. My father-in-law and I stopped going when they resumed meeting in person. And while I do occasionally miss sharing white food and strong liquor with a bunch of old guys, the loss of norskie torskie does not

impact my life in a significant way.

On the Road to Emmaus is a simple story. It is a story about liturgy. After the crucifixion, two of Jesus' downtrodden followers encounter a man on the road to Emmaus, a town about 7 miles from Jerusalem. The man reminds these two what the Scriptures said about Jesus. The two invite the man to share a meal. As the man breaks and distributes the bread, the men suddenly recognize that it is Jesus.

The Church likewise is a simple institution. It is not a benevolent society, like the Red Cross or the Lions Club. The purpose of the Church is not social justice, though obviously it gives its support and blessing to those who promote justice and peace. Rather, the Church is where the Liturgy is celebrated. On Sundays, we walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus while we listen to the scriptures during the Liturgy of the Word. We participate in His resurrection during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The story of my reception into the Episcopal Church is uninteresting. I won't bore you with the details. But I am blessed to have St. Christopher's in my life. It is the place where the Liturgy takes place. And while I can live without the liturgy of norskies torskie, I can't imagine living without the Liturgy of the Church. So I will do my best to help keep the lights on.  
Thank you.

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## 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](mailto:mnrappers@gmail.com)) or Kim ([kimmersue58@hotmail.com](mailto:kimmersue58@hotmail.com)). Event donations are due by **November 15<sup>th</sup>**! The St. Christopher's Event Fair will occur December 10<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup>, with specific event sign-up sheets in the Parish Hall! All events will occur in 2024!

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## Upcoming Lectionary Readings

### October 29: Pentecost 22, Proper 25

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

### November 5: All Saints' Sunday

Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 34:1-10, 22; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12.

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

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