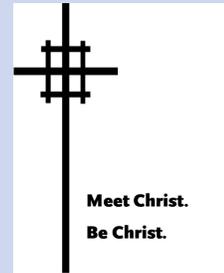


St. Christopher's

e-Traveler



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From the Rector



**The Rev.
Randy W. Johnson**
Rector

What Child is This? *by Fr. Randy+*

I had been selectively turning on Kool 108 on the FM dial in my car this past...*month*? Yes—it was the Christmas music all the time station in the Twin Cities. I usually listen to Classical MPR or the WDGY Oldies stations, but I have to admit I pushed the button on the radio control panel to occasionally catch a few tunes by Bing Crosby, or Andy Williams, or Mitch Miller’s chorus deliciously croon in the midst of a blinding snowstorm.

But, I have to admit, this Christmas season, I never heard one of my favorite songs—the delightfully lilting carol written by W. Chatterton Dix and put to the tune Greensleeves; “*What Child Is This?*” Written in 1582, this is one of the most famous English song tunes, and has even been attributed to King Henry VIII—Shakespeare even mentions it twice in his catalog of works!

The question “*What child is this...?*” opens the carol, and there are various answers given. First, the child asleep in Mary’s lap is indeed her son: “...*the Babe, the son of Mary.*” And, this fact is repeated at the end of each verse. To any observer, all appears regular, and normal, and natural...a baby comfortably asleep. The musical tonation and rhythm makes one feel the gently soothing, rocking motion that parents use to get their little ones to sleep.

But this does not fully answer the question posed by the composer. It begins with this sentimental opening, with sleeping child and angels singing and shepherds watching. The second verse shifts the placid landscape, telling us that we should be very afraid, for this silent, sleeping babe, though he be the son of Mary, is the Word made flesh. *“His love all loves exceeding: Nails, spear, shall pierce him through, The cross borne for me, for you.”* This babe... of whom we might ask, *“What child is this?”*

I believe Dix was really on to something when he penned these lyrics. He has caught something of the fundamental sense of alienation that we experience when faced with the newborn infant. The newly born child is related to the parents, of course, but to look on a newborn is not only to encounter someone beautiful and magical and joyous, but it is also about peering into the depths of strangeness and mystery.

Who is this? It is a question well beyond the simple inquiry of a person’s name. It is more aligned with the deeper question lurking beneath; *“Who are we, where did we come from, where are we going?”*

We can ask questions about Jesus, sticking to the sentimental, shallow answers, or we can peer deeper, attempting to explore the significance of the Word made flesh, of Christ our king, and the way in which Mary’s baby son fulfills both of these promises. And if we can grasp the dual nature of this divine-human child, asleep in Mary’s arms, then we too *“make haste to bring him praise”* and raise his song on high.

“The Babe, the son of Mary.”

Randy+

Notice of the Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Parish will be held on Sunday, January 22nd, at approximately 11 AM, following one combined service at 9:30 AM. Please join us to meet - and elect - new and continuing Vestry Members, and to hear about the year just ended and the year to come.

Music Notes



Karla Cole

**Director of Music
Ministries**

Another pair of Christmas services are done and dusted, just lovely memories left now. But there were a few things going on in the background that you should know about. I have mentioned before that our chancel is very much a prisoner of the outside temperature and boy, was it cold that weekend! Our organ, which was supposed to be tuned for Christmas – wasn't. And it ended up not mattering much, because even if it had been tuned, it wouldn't have been stable enough to tolerate the extreme cold. Pianos are made of tougher stuff – they have a wooden pin block, but a cast iron frame, so their variations in pitch aren't usually so great. But actually, last Christmas Eve was cold enough to effect the piano's tuning, so the organ would have been wildly out of tune.

You might ask "why wasn't the organ tuned?" Well, the company that has serviced the organ since we bought it wrote to tell me that they would no longer service it. I received their letter three days before our Lessons and Carols service, just two weeks before Christmas. At that point, there was nothing to be done but hire some extra instrumentalists and arrange music for them to play. I spent most of those two weeks transposing and massaging instrumental parts. People said it was beautiful, so I guess all the time was worth it in the end. And now we are in search of someone else to tune the organ. Seems simple, but it isn't. These people have complained about the instrument almost from the beginning. It is verrrry compact. So, when you pick up one pipe to tune it, you run the risk of knocking several others out of position trying to get the one back into place. It has some humidity related problems – things swell and stick at times. Felt and leather parts wear out and have to be manufactured by the organ tuner, which is true for all organs. But this organ has funny corners and crevices that have to be dealt with, and it is not just a little cranky and cantankerous. Frankly, the next organ tuner might well have the same reaction.

The next question you might ask is, "why'd you buy it in the first place?" All of this happened during the Renewal project when there were many changes afoot. The thrust part of the balcony had been built without sufficient supports, so it had to come down. The choir moved downstairs and we moved my own piano here for a while because the upright piano in the balcony was worn out from years of heat and humidity up there before the air conditioning had been put in. The chancel was reconfigured and the tile floor was installed, the granite altar and lectern were commissioned, and the railings built. The old Allen electronic organ was 45 years old, well past its 25 to 30 year service life and had pretty much given up the ghost. Almost every week, some relay or other simply ceased to function and there were no new parts being made. If any parts were to be found, they had been languishing on a shelf for 45 years and weren't terribly reliable either. This organ was an economical replacement that could just be brought into the church without any need for another big construction project and we thought at the time that it would suit our needs until we decided it was indeed sufficient, or until we figured out exactly what we *did* need in its stead.

"So what now?" Well, we try to find some intrepid soul who wants to get to know our little organ and keep it tuned and functional. Beyond that, we'll have to do some collective thinking and talking about what we really need now and in the future, and where we should go from here.

New Year blessings to you and yours!

An Invitation from Rev. Marilyn

Join a **FREE** weekly online bible study on Ruth & Esther
(Hurry to register! Begins January 11th!)
Hosted by ChurchNext

Join award-winning author and scholar Lindsay Hardin Freeman, as she takes participants on an in-depth examination of the Books of Ruth and Esther.

Lindsay is the author of the ground-breaking best-seller ***Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter*** (expanded second edition available for pre-order now, (\$22)(February 2023).

The stories of Ruth and Esther have much to teach us about the Hebrew concept of chesed, which means sacred kindness, as well as the willingness to be in sacrificial relationship with loved ones and our communities.

Resources here: <https://www.goodbookclub.org/resources/>

Lindsay will examine these themes and others in six Wednesday-night sessions during Epiphany from 8-9 p.m. ET, Jan. 11-Feb. 15, 2022.

Follow this link (or copy and paste into your browser):
<https://www.churchnext.tv/library/live-class-examining-ruth-and-esther-191382/460347/about/>

Footprints January 2023 News from Children's Ministries



Marion Hunner

**Director of
Children's Ministries**

Epiphany Presentation: I am so excited to be back in person for our Epiphany Presentation this year! Our presentation is based on the Godly Play stories of Advent and Christmas. We hope you will join us at the 10:30 service on **January 8th**.

Family Worship: We usually meet on the 1st Sunday of the month, but seeing as that is New Year's Day, we will skip January. In December we "traveled" throughout the church where our 4 Advent candles were placed. At each candle we read scripture and a prayer, then sang our way to the next candle.

We ended in the sanctuary where we shared Holy Eucharist around the altar. Family worship will resume in February.



Acolytes: Those who attend the 10:30 service have had the opportunity to watch our Junior Acolytes learn “the ropes” at the altar. They have gradually taken on more responsibility over the last year and a half, and they are doing a great job! We recently trained our 3 oldest Jr. Acolytes to become Acolytes. They will be carrying the torches and switching to black vestments.



Short Notes

Baptism Celebration on January 15th

By Marion Hunner

Please join me in the Parish Hall at 9:30 am on January 15th, for a special Celebration of the Anniversary of Baptism. We will enjoy this celebration together, and I will provide the tools to repeat at home with family and friends

on the anniversary of your/their baptism. Together we will share stories of our own baptisms (or those of loved ones), engage in caring conversations, explore scripture, and pray.

Ministry Schedules

The new Sunday Ministry schedule came out via email on December 18th. You should have received your 2023 Quarter 1 schedule if you serve on any of these teams: Usher, Crucifer, Lector, Intercessor, LEM, or Acolyte. If you did not receive the schedule, or if you are interested in joining any of these teams, please contact Marion Hunner. The schedule is also available on our website: www.stchristophers-mn.org/worship

December Pulse of the Parish

The Vestry decided to forgo the reading of the Pulse of the Parish at the Christmas and New Year's Day services so it is here for your reading pleasure.

Finance: We continue to look good for the year overall, with only buildings and grounds expenses more than budgeted due to tree removal. We continue to grow our surplus/reserves due to savings realized - thanks to Fr. Randy working part-time, and the Youth Director position being vacant. We've allotted \$58,440 of the surplus into the 2023 budget. Offerings and pledges seem appropriate for the year. Congratulations to Pat Ahern for his willingness to serve as the new chair of the Finance Team next year. Many thanks to Bruce Warkentien for his serving in that role for four years.

Altar Guild: Will be decorating Friday the 23rd for Christmas, weather permitting. All welcome to come and help. The team purchased two new patens for communion, a chasuble and stole for clergy vestments.

Childrens' Ministries: Kids are practicing their Epiphany service scheduled for January 8, 2023. Enjoyable surprises await.

Communications: Chris Mayr will be chairing Communications Team after his Senior Warden tour of duty. He hopes to hold a meeting in February.

Community Dinner/Keystone: The dinner will need to be reconstituted/re-imagined for 2023. We don't have enough volunteers to do this on a regular basis (at least 12). We'll consider other options going forward, perhaps done on a monthly basis.

Faith Family Well Being: Thanks to all folks who signed and mailed holiday cards to our Afghan family. Thanks to Cheryl Warkentien for bringing a meal to Barbara Kent's family.

Hearts and Hands: Serving Second Stork plans and plant delivery for our homebound faith family members were stymied by snow. Thanks to the 8 o'clock service faith family members the nine plants were delivered after attending church.

Kitchen, Funerals/Caterer, Special Gatherings: Looked into rules regarding

bringing homemade food as well as food being made and served in our kitchen for parish events. State statutes allow us to continue to do this/use these items for our own congregation. For bigger gatherings such as funerals, we're using outside food. The group will meet in January to firm up caterers and creating template for families dealing with funeral arrangements and receptions. Goal is to make it as easy as possible for them and our volunteers.

Stewardship: We've achieved 92% congregation participation with 100% Vestry participation.

Vestry approved the Finance Team Overview, outlining various members' roles and responsibilities; and the revised language of authorized parish contract signers for by-laws/Finance policies; a Mission Opportunities Grant for Hearts & Hands, and while a year late, the naming of Jean Crow as Treasurer. We need three Convention Delegates plus an alternate identified and slated for approval by the January 22 Annual Meeting. Please let Fr. Randy know of any candidates.

Great news! Five faith family members have signed up for Rev. Canon Blair Pogue's ECMN Faithful Innovation Project!

Finally, the organ tuner has failed us, despite multiple calls from Karla for the last several months, to service the instrument. This leaves us unable to use the organ for Christmas, and Karla will continue to search for a vendor who can help with the unusual requirements of this instrument.

Announcements/Shoutouts: A big shout out to Karen Hanna for her huge effort setting up the Parish Hall for the Lessons and Carols reception and, as it turned out, for Barbara Kent's post-funeral reception.

Thanks to those faith family members who helped with the Barbara Kent Funeral and reception.

Cheers to Karla, the Choir and Musicians for presenting this year's Lessons and Carols. Thanks to those folks who delivered the plants to our homebound on December 18.

Want to know more? The meeting minutes will be available after they have been approved at the next Vestry meeting on January 16, 2023!. Thank you for all you do for our faith family!

CALENDAR for JANUARY

1 Sunday – Christmas 1
10:00 AM Holy Eucharist

2 Monday
Closed for New Year Holiday

3 Tuesday
1 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 6:30 PM
7 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band – Parish Hall

4 Wednesday**12:15 PM Holy Eucharist – Church****4 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM****6:00 PM Bell Choir - Balcony****6:30 PM Wednesday AA – Gathering Room****7:15 PM Parish Choir – Music Room****5 Thursday****1 PM Private Spiritual Direction – Library to 11 AM****3:15 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM****6 Friday - Epiphany****4 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:30 PM****7 Saturday****9 AM Flute Lessons – Music Room****3 PM Epiphany Program Rehearsal & Dinner****8 Sunday – EPIPHANY****8 AM Holy Eucharist****10:30 AM Holy Eucharist with Epiphany Program****9 Monday****9 AM Private Spiritual Direction – Library to 10 AM****3 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM****5:30 PM Finance Team – Parish Hall****10 Tuesday****1 PM Ben Desmond Funeral Service - Church****1 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 6:30 PM****7 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band – Parish Hall****11 Wednesday****12:15 PM Holy Eucharist – Church****4 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM****6 PM Bell Choir - Balcony****6:30 PM Wednesday AA – Gathering Room****7:15 PM Parish Choir – Music Room****12 Thursday****3:15 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM****13 Friday****4 PM Cello Lessons – #218/219 – to 7:30 PM****14 Saturday****8 AM Private Spiritual Direction - Library****9 AM Flute Lessons – Music Room****15 Sunday – Epiphany 2****8 AM Holy Eucharist****10:30 AM Holy Eucharist**

16 Monday

3 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

6:45 PM Vestry – Parish Hall

17 Tuesday

8:30 AM Private Spiritual Direction – Gathering Room – to 5 PM

10 AM O.A. – Room 218 (In person!)

1 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 6:30 PM

7 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band – Parish Hall

18 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist – Church

4 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

6 PM Bell Choir - Balcony

6:30 PM Wednesday AA – Gathering Room

7:15 PM Parish Choir – Music Room

19 Thursday

3:15 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

20 Friday

21 Saturday

8:30 AM Private Spiritual Direction - Library

9 AM Flute Lessons – Music Room

22 Sunday – Epiphany 3

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

11 AM ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

23 Monday

3 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

24 Tuesday

11:30 AM Meals on Wheels - Offsite

7 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band – Parish Hall

25 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist – Church

4 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

6 PM Bell Choir - Balcony

6:30 PM Wednesday AA – Gathering Room

7:15 PM Parish Choir – Music Room

26 Thursday

3:15 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

27 Friday

10 AM Private Spiritual Direction - Library

4 PM Cello Lessons – #218/219 – to 7:30 PM

28 Saturday

9 AM Flute Lessons – Music Room

29 Sunday – Epiphany 4
8 AM Holy Eucharist
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

30 Monday

eTraveler Deadline

3 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 7:15 PM

31 Tuesday

1 PM Cello Lessons - #218/219 – to 6:30 PM

7 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band – Parish Hall

Please note that MOST of our outside groups have returned to meeting in the building. Those groups are now on this calendar (*in italics*) to avoid over-scheduling. Always check with the church office before scheduling a meeting.

Last Words



I hope you have enjoyed the January **e-Traveler!**
Wow, here we are at the beginning of another new year. They do come whether you're ready, or not! January can be cold and bright, and those are the days I love. The snow squeaks under foot, and my eyes are always squinting because I have forgotten to bring sunglasses!

I hope to see many of you at the Annual Meeting on the 22nd!

Ruth Thillen

Parish Administrator

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

VESTRY:

Chris Mayr, Sr. Warden; Karen Hartman, Jr. Warden
Robert Williams, Clerk; Jean Crow, Treasurer

Ross Ackerman; Patrick Ahern; Cheryl Bailey;
Madisen Crow; Eric Hedican; Ann DePaolis-Jones;
Alexander Kun; Leslie Norton

STAFF:

Ruth Thillen, Parish Administrator
Marion Hunner, Children's Ministries Director
Karla S. Cole, Director of Music Ministries
Rev. Christopher Haack, Deacon
Rev. Marilyn Baldwin, Assisting Priest
Rev. Randy W. Johnson, Rector

Our Schedule:

Recorded Sermons for each Sunday are on our website.

Sundays Through Memorial Day:

8 AM Holy Eucharist

9 AM Fellowship

9:15 AM Adult Ed – Parish Hall

9:30 AM Sunday School (except 1st Sundays)

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

11:30 AM Fellowship

Wednesday: 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9 AM - 4 PM

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church | 2300 Hamline Ave. N.

Roseville, MN 55113

651-633-4589 | Fax 651-633-7361 | www.stchristophers-mn.org

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