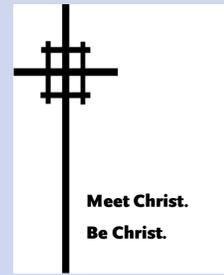


St. Christopher's

e-Traveler



[Visit our Website](#)

From the Rector



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

Wrestling for Change *by Fr. Randy+*

"I'll see you then, after school," said my 8th grade gym teacher, Mr. Keller. "Alrighty, then..." was my somewhat non-assured response. That was how it all started—my short two-year career as a wrestler for Central Junior High. A *naturally gifted wrestler I was not*. I found myself regularly being thrashed about by kids in my weight class for the duration of two years, only occasionally grasping triumph from the jaws of defeat. My only consolation was I "*wrestled up*," meaning I weighed 137 lbs. and wrestled in the 145 lb. class. This meant I could eat anything I wanted for days before a match weigh-in, while my teammates sweated and starved to meet their weight class requirements. *Small victories...*

With my dismal wrestling record, I can't imagine what it would be like to be so evenly matched with my opponent, that we would go at it all night before one or the other prevailed. Yet, this is exactly what happened to Jacob on the night he wrestled with God (*Read Genesis 32:22-32*). It was only at dawn breaking, that Jacob's hip went out of joint and the match ended.

I have never been involved in a physical wrestling match as this, but I have wrestled the night through in my mind—through worry, emotional pain and strain, and in prayer. I am certain of few things, but I am assured that I have not been alone in this most human of endeavors.

Interestingly as I have prayed in the night, the prayer became not merely an activity of the mind, or even the heart, but it became a physical engagement and bodily manifestation. I was exhausted, sweating, and seeking rest at last, as I lay exhausted hoping for sleep to overtake me.

My midnight struggling can be somewhat related to Jacob's all-night wrestling match with God. And like Jacob, while I did not limp away from the struggle with a dislocated hip, I have been changed by the experience. Fr. Richard Meux Benson writes that, "...none can come to Christ...and go away as they came...Our coming to Christ changes everything."

This story of Jacob struggling with God is deeply embedded in our spiritual landscape. And though we may not think of ourselves as Jacob, who among us has not struggled mightily with God, as we attempt to discover God's will for us? Who has not struggled mightily with God, as we attempt to find our path, our way? Who has not struggled mightily with God, as we attempt to follow God's call?

But something happens when we wrestle with God. It happened with Jacob, and the promise of God is that it will happen with us. God does not wrestle with us to crush us, but to bless us, and to give us strength. And in this blessing and strengthening, God changes us. God changes us, for "...none can come to Christ...and go away as they came...Our coming to Christ changes everything."

The promise of God, even in the face of struggle, is the promise of divine companionship in the face of adversity, and it is God who will strengthen us, and bless us, allowing us at last to prevail. And having prevailed...we will be changed.

The referee looked me directly in the eye, blew his whistle and said, "Ready...Wrestle!"

Randy+

Music Notes



Karla Cole

Director of Music Ministries

I went to a couple of funerals last week. The elderly mother of friend of mine and my new daughter-in-law's grandmother had died on the same day the week before, and so I drove to Duluth one day and St. Cloud the next. The funeral in Duluth was at St. Paul's and I knew ahead of time that there would be masked, half-voice singing of

hymns at this very traditional Episcopal gathering. I was fully prepared for my own emotional reaction to the hymn-singing after going for so long without it. And their organ is much bigger than ours, so its deep bass pedals rumbled throughout the building, adding to the impact. People were seated in every other pew, but even so, the church seemed quite full and even though half-voiced, the singing was sturdy, if not vigorous. But I felt perfectly safe. The Episcopal Church has been cautious all along and fully vaccinated me felt quite comfortable with all those precautions and even with the singing.

The Skagit Valley Chorale was *the* initial super-spreading choral event way back in March of 2020. In case you've forgotten, 52 of the 61 singers present became infected, several were hospitalized and two died. From that rehearsal and some other weddings and funerals, the scientists determined that singing was the biggest culprit. Even those of us that aren't trained singers are fully capable of putting out a lot of aerosols as we sing. The prudent move was to stop singing and many churches stopped worshipping in person as well. And now, almost a year and a half later, we're still dealing with the fallout. Some churches have abandoned their earlier precautions altogether, while others, ours included, seem to be taking exasperatingly slow baby steps back to normal. Perhaps we would be *more* back to normal were it not for the unknown spectre of the Delta variant. And that's been the running theme through this whole thing, really, The Unknown. A brand-new virus that could be carried around and spread by people who didn't even know they had it, while others sickened and died all alone so as not to spread it further. And it took them quite a while at first to figure out how it was spread, resulting in our wiping down all our groceries and leaving our Amazon deliveries in the garage overnight, and fretting about that guy in line at the post office with his mask hanging under his nose.

There is no uncertainty in Stearns County, however. After being Minnesota's viral hotspot for months on end, they've turned the corner and you absolutely wouldn't know that there'd even been a pandemic. The little Catholic church in Holdingford was nearly packed on a very warm day. There were no empty pews or bottles of hand sanitizer, or mask-wearing reminders. I tried not to fret, consoling myself with my fully vaccinated status. The handful of people that I knew were up front, so I sat in the back with the folks who didn't sing and didn't go to communion. I take it back, the first hymn, Amazing Grace got almost everyone up and singing a little. But the rest of the dreary Catholic renewal music was apparently as uninspiring for them as it was for me. After mass was ended, the family escorted the casket to the graveside and the rest of the folks crowded into the parish hall for ham sandwiches. The pandemic is truly over out there.

I suppose it's quite normal, this Tale of Two Funerals. Depending on what church you attend these days, your experience may vary widely. Early on, the Catholics got dispensation from the Governor to have weekly masses, and Fr. Randy tells me that there have never been any spreading events reported. With masking and social distancing, those services were safe. It was just weddings and funerals with hugging and eating and drinking where infections could be traced. We've all done our best to be patient with our Bishop's guidelines, but patience is running a little thin these days. I can tell you that we're putting more normal-looking plans into place for worship this fall. So, start up your shower singing in earnest now. We need to rebuild our endurance. One thing I noticed at the funeral in Duluth was that singing four or

five verses of a hymn was exhausting in a mask. You needed to take more frequent breaths and have a little bigger gap between verses to tank up. The conversations I've been having with colleagues have centered around singing only two or three verses of hymns as we start to sing again. And the choir will need to ease back into singing as well. The science suggests no more than thirty minutes of singing in a rehearsal space. So for us, that's probably thirty minutes in the choir room followed by thirty minutes in the church – that's only two thirds of our usual rehearsal time. Consequently, we'll be learning some easier things and reviving some old favorites for a while. But Lessons and Carols are underway, as well as an Evensong and Afternoon Tea. I'm hoping to rustle up a Gift of Music event or two as well, to remind folks of just what we've been missing. I hope this gives you all something to look forward to. And that we'll soon be as freewheeling as those folks in Holdingford – but doing it safely!

Grace, mercy and peace,
Karla

Footprints JULY 2021 News from Children's Ministries



Marion Hunner

**Children's Ministries
Director**



I am happy to say that we are slowly moving back into some more normal activities!

Our monthly Outdoor Family Worship (which we began last August) continues to be a cornerstone of Children's Ministries. When we met on June 23rd, it was our first maskless event. What a joy it was to see everyone's smiling faces! Fr. Randy and I flipped the service, celebrating the Eucharist first, and then moving into scripture. We told the story of Moses leading the Israelites across the Red Sea . . . represented by dueling sprinklers! Families were warned ahead of time, so everyone was dressed to get wet. We all laughed and had fun playing in the sprinklers on a hot summer day, followed by popsicles.



I am getting VERY excited for Vacation Bible School in July. All of our regular St. Christopher's families are signed up, and we even have a few friends coming along to join the fun. I am forever grateful for the many adults who come forward to serve during this fun-filled week. Registration is still open until July 2nd, so if you know any

children age 3 – 5th grade who might be interested, please send them to our website for more information and a link to the registration form <https://www.stchristophers-mn.org/vbs.html> , or give them my email address and I will be happy to answer any questions.



REQUEST TO BORROW:

If anyone has a hand drill that we could borrow during VBS, please let me know.

Youth



Chad O'Leary
Director of Youth Ministries

Dear Friends,

This will be my last entry in our **e-Traveler** series! I wish to use it as an opportunity to say goodbye and thank you for your love and support during the past 8 years.

Upon joining St. Christopher's in 2013, I was immediately impressed by the level of youth engagement in the liturgy. It was always wonderful to see our young people serving as acolytes, readers, subdeacons, and ushers -- even if they were not able to make it to formation hour earlier in the morning. Another awesome hallmark of our youth has been their willingness to try new things to contribute to our liturgical ministries, including singing glasses -- and, who can forget that (god awful) communion bread that we tried making, at Fr. John's request?

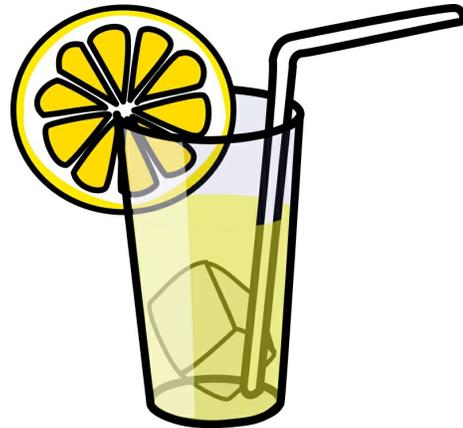
I will carry with me so many great memories, especially from our Boundary Waters canoe trip, Canadian road trip, and two pilgrimages. Both pilgrimages -- to key locations of the Civil Rights Movement in the American South, and sites central to understanding the effect of colonialism on the lives of our Native American sisters and brothers -- were life-changing. I feel so fortunate to have walked alongside the members of this community who answered the call to be part of these trips. Each one of you added something that enhanced our experience. In education we often say that we learn something new by tethering it to something you already know. I have no doubt that my learning on these trips helped me become a stronger ally, especially in the wake of the George Floyd killing and righteous anger that followed.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you. I leave a better human being than when I arrived. All my prayers as the community considers what youth ministry at St. Christopher's will look like going into the future!

Much Peace on the Journey,
Chad

Lemonade on the Lawn

St. Christopher's Faith Family members, it's time to turn the lemons of zooming, masking and social distancing of the past year into lemonade! Join us on Sundays for **Lemonade on the Lawn** gatherings after the 9:30 a.m. service.



AND, please join the Vestry on July 25th for a Picnic in celebration of St. Christopher's Day! (More info elsewhere, or coming soon in weekly e-mails.)

We hope to have others sign up to host at least one Sunday through the summer. Please contact Connie Hendrick at c-hend@umn.edu or 612-306-0182. Thank you! Cheers!



Hearts and Hands

Our Hearts and Hands group returned in good numbers on June 24th, to tie fleece blankets for donation to the children at Gillette Children's Hospital. Here are a few pictures of the group in action!

Check THIS out! Attitude of Gratitude!!

We have an Attitude of Gratitude! Here's a special thank you from Karla Standridge Cole and our parish musicians to you, our faith family members, for your philanthropic support to our parish each year. Some of your annual support goes to our faith family's fabulous Bell Choir and Choir...our Music Ministries! We hope you enjoy this musical thank you!

[Please click on this link](#), then click on cc (closed caption) and enjoy!

Thanks for all you do for our faith family!

Pulse of the Parish

Vestry meeting held on June 21, 2021

The purpose of this report is to keep you, our parish, informed about the work and action taken by the Vestry at the most recent meeting.

After opening prayer and approval of the May minutes, Tom Linder presented a summary of key points from the Finance meeting the previous week.

Included:

- We used the last of the PPP loan, reflected in the salaries. Current month building use income is lower than anticipated; and will probably stay lower than budgeted for the rest of the year. Facilities expenses are below what had been expected.
- Flood in the nursery due to toilet malfunction: Got an insurance check to cover the water damage, which included time billed for the hours volunteers spent cleaning. New carpeting is being installed.
- YTD Offerings are a bit up, but down overall from previous year. Diocese mission and ministry support is current.
- As building use is up, Ruth is talking with cleaning team about returning.
- Parking lot re-sealing and striping was completed and billed as budgeted.

New business:

- Lemonade on the lawn has been very well received. The Vestry is hosting it on July 25, after the 9:30 Eucharist. Planning on a picnic-style meal, including hot-dogs, brats, potato salad, watermelon, and other treats. July 25 is also St. Christopher's day (our namesake!), so we hope everyone will plan on joining in the festivities and celebrate our church together! More information will be coming.
- The Vestry discussed ways of growing the parish, integrating the Circle of Life presentations with our overall welcoming of new members. Work is being done on up-dating our new membership packets, and how to follow-up with new members. We have had a number of new visitors recently; please be a welcoming and inviting presence to those new to our parish.
- Vestry liaisons reported on the various teams throughout the parish that they are working with. The communications team, led by Allison Jensen, will be meeting soon to look at ways of enhancing the quality and effectiveness of how we communicate who we are to the community outside our doors.
- Fr. Randy discussed Covid-19 safety protocols, newest guidelines from ECMN for gathering and building use, and some of the planning involved as we consider changes in some of our Covid-19 protocols.
- Fr. Randy discussed possibilities for new ways of mentoring or working with youth, including partnering with other churches.

Special shout-outs to:

Jeff Jensen and Don Sheik for rebuilding the stairway to the Dellwood house, and
Ann DePaolis-Jones, Connie Hendrick, and Al Reedstrom for *Lemonade on*

the Lawn.

The meeting ended with Compline.

Please feel free to contact any of our Vestry members if you have questions or comments. The minutes of the meeting will be available after they have been approved at the next Vestry meeting, Monday, July 19.



In-Person Worship

**WE HAVE ENDED ON-LINE
PREREGISTRATION FOR ATTENDING
WORSHIP SERVICES.**

Sunday service have moved to ONE
service at 9:30 AM for the Summer.

Wednesday 12:15 pm services will be in the church, not the chapel.

CALENDAR for JULY

4 Sunday - Independence Day - Pentecost 6

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Lemonade on the Lawn

5 Monday -- Office **CLOSED** for Holiday

6 Tuesday

11:30 AM Meals on Wheels - *Offsite*

7 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

9 Friday

11 AM - Keystone Mobile Food Shelf - West parking lot

11 Sunday - Pentecost 7

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Lemonade on the Lawn

12 Monday

6:45 PM Finance Team - Parish Hall, in person

14 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

17 Saturday

11 AM Jerry and Peggy McCauley Memorial Service - Church

(No reception)

18 Sunday - Pentecost 8

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Lemonade on the Lawn

19 Monday

9 AM -- VBS Begins!

6:45 PM Vestry - Parish Hall, in person

20 Tuesday

9 AM -- VBS

21 Wednesday

9 AM -- VBS

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

22 Thursday

9 AM -- VBS

23 Friday

9 AM -- VBS

25 Sunday - Pentecost 9 - St. Christopher's Day

9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Lemonade on the Lawn/PICNIC!

26 Monday - e-Traveler Deadline for August!

27 Tuesday

11:30 AM Meals on Wheels - *Offsite*

28 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

Please note that some of our outside groups have returned to meeting in the building or on the grounds. Those groups are not on this calendar. Always check with the church office before scheduling a meeting.

Last Words



I hope you have enjoyed the July ***e-Traveler!***

I am feeling a bit rusty in my "IT" or "Computer" skills this week, as I get to know the new office computer - a completely different setup than the last 8 years. But, things have changed a bit, so, it took me a few days to get settled in to the new system.

I also had to get Fr. Randy to crawl under the desk to deal with power cables and network cables - I wish I'd thought to take a picture to share with you!

This is my "excuse" for sending this e-Traveler a day late, too.

Ruth Thillen
Parish Administrator

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

VESTRY:

Michael Sirany, Sr. Warden; Chris Mayr, Jr. Warden
Allison Jensen, Clerk; Jean Crow, Treasurer

Ross Ackerman, Patrick Ahern, Erin Bowman;
Ann DePaolis-Jones; Josh Kattelman; Alexander Kun;
Jeanna McLoughlin; Leslie Norton; Al Reedstrom

STAFF:

Ruth Thillen, Parish Administrator
Chad O'Leary, Youth Ministries Director
Marion Hunner, Children's Ministries Director
Karla S. Cole, Director of Music Ministries
Rev. Marilyn Baldwin, Assisting Priest
Rev. Randy W. Johnson, Rector

Our Current Schedule

Recorded Services for each Sunday are on our website and on Facebook

Sunday: 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary

Wednesday: 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary

Current 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

STAY CONNECTED

