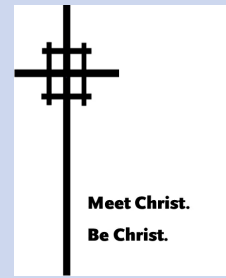


St. Christopher's

e-Traveler



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From the Rector



**The Rev.
Randy W. Johnson**

Rector

Living Stones *by Fr. Randy+*

When we have a moment to sit together and catch a breath, Kim and I are avid watchers of BBC productions on KTCA Public Television—especially historical and documentary offerings. Last week, we happened upon an offering on Scottish Castles—specifically Rosslyn Chapel in Midlothian, Scotland. This mid-15th century chapel is actually an incomplete church construction of the Catholic Church. It is now an active Scottish Episcopal Church, as well as being an incredible jewel of dazzling stonemason craftsmanship. The detail of stone carving and masonry work cannot be overstated—*it is a masterpiece!* This is the same chapel building made famous in the Dan Brown in his book *Da Vinci Code*.

I marveled at the intricate architectural design and artistic carving of the stonework, as well as the brilliant coloration of complexly created stained glass windows. It is truly a marvel of human design and imagination—constructed by skilled human hands.

How did the craftspeople determine the placement of stones in order to bear the weight of the walls and roof? How thick must the foundational walls be to showcase delicate stained glass, yet be strong enough to lift them towards the heavens? Building such a structure was a dangerous and risky endeavor.

It is difficult for me to get my arms around the myriad of challenges these

craftspeople and design engineers overcame to build such a structure. The individual stones making up this place must be uniquely shaped—fitted together to exacting proportions—one upon another. They were carved in a quarry, and then chiseled and fitted precisely--exactly joining one another to produce strength and stability and beauty—and all according to a master plan. The author of First Peter also wrote of a similar metaphor (I Peter 2:4-10). We are like stones in a building that is being erected on a solid and immovable cornerstone, which is Christ. He is the sure foundation, “*a cornerstone chosen and precious*” for those who have come to believe and trust in him. He is a “**living stone**”—not some dead figure from the past whose words and deeds we recall, but a living presence, active among us. And like him, we too are “**living stones,**” who are “*being built into a spiritual house*” for the glory of God, and according to God’s masterful plan.

There are four possible implications of this metaphor for our lives:

1-It means our lives are to be solidly centered upon Christ. Our circumstances can change or fail, our bodies decline or our reputations are tarnished—yet, Christ alone is our sure foundation.

2-If we choose to build our lives on this cornerstone and offer ourselves to be built into a “*spiritual house,*” we will need to be *shaped* and *fitted* to fulfill the role the Master Builder has in mind for us. We need to be chiseled and formed—our rough edges being smoothed so they can fit tightly against the stones around us.

3-Realize that we are not meant to stand on our own, but *bejoined with others* into a structure that is greater than its individual parts.

4-We are reminded that it is a great privilege to be chosen and shaped and fitted into the dwelling place for God that God is fashioning. The author of First Peter reminds us of the honor of being chosen to belong to God: “*Once you were no people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy*” (v. 10).

What greater purpose or greater glory could an individual “*stone*” have than this, to be joined together with others to the praise of God’s name?

We are reminded; “*like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house*” (v. 5). The Builder has a plan. There is a place for you. God will form and chisel and shape you into what God intends for you to be. Your part is to *let* God work with you, to give yourself over to him so that he might fashion you according to his divine purpose.

Be a **Living Stone**; “*...in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*” (v.9).

Randy+

Music Notes



Karla Cole

Director of Music Ministries

Last week, we buried Barb Danley, the last of the long-postponed COVID era funerals. Barb had chosen the music for her funeral service and one choice, “In the Garden,” was a bit of a surprise for me. The song had been published in 1912, and in my experience, it had most often been requested for funerals back in the 1980’s. So, I thought Barb a little young for it, actually. And as I thought about the song, it occurred to me that perhaps it had been sung in 1918-1919 for funerals of the victims of the Spanish flu. That gave it an interesting historical circularity with our present day.

“In the Garden” was popularized by the singers at the tent revivals of Billy Sunday – the Iowa-born baseball player who got religion and became a wealthy conservative evangelist long before the invention of the television. The text is very personal in tone and it has a lilting, if sort of dated melody complete with a refrain that quickly develops into an earworm. It comes from the American and British canon of “small g” gospel songs (not to be confused with the capital G Gospel music from the African-American tradition). And the songs all have these very personal texts that tell of an intimate relationship with Jesus, a simplistic, black and white sort of theology, and earwormy tunes. They are products of their times, for even the popular music of the day is, by our standard, sort of naïve, simple and sappy.

Oddly enough, I learned many of those songs in Lutheran Sunday School, taught to us by the very earnest former Methodist lady in charge of the children. It was all Bach chorales upstairs with the organ, but downstairs, it was Revival Hour with a tinny player-piano. Weird, I know. I recognized many of those songs on trips to downtown Fort Worth as a child. There was an old, blind lady who sang and sold pencils, accompanied by a man playing a battered guitar. They were always camped out on Throckmorton Street and I begged change from my dad to run up and buy a pencil. Boy, they were twangy – the singer *and* the guitar. But, even as a child, I understood that it was their expression of deep faith. Much as I am called to music ministry, I am sure that they felt called to sing those songs in witness to the city. They could have sung Tin Pan Alley and cowboy songs, but they chose “In the Garden” and “What a Friend we have in Jesus”.

Once I grew up and got a musical education, I became rather dismissive of those sorts of songs and hymns. And it took me many years to come back around to an appreciation of their charms. The artless simplicity and honest sincerity inherent in those gospel songs are old-fashioned, yes, but charming in their way. In our hard-charging, norm-challenging 21st century sophistication, I kind of envy that simple, accepting sort of faith. Free from doubt and supremely confident. There’s a lot of comfort in things being black or white. The trouble is, the world is full of grey.

Bishop John Spong died a couple of weeks ago, and in the articles and opinion pieces, as much as they lauded his championing of womens' and LGBTQ rights, they ripped him for his honest admission of how difficult our faith can be to believe sometimes. Creation? Virgin birth? Even the Resurrection? To those outside our walls, these things can seem otherworldly and maybe downright crazy. As he was alternately branded a heretic or a prophet, Spong was unafraid to question these long-held tenets of the church. In a 2013 interview with *Religion News Service*, by way of explanation, he quoted an older bishop as having said "the older I get, the more deeply I believe but the fewer beliefs I have." It is hard, this faith of ours. It's murky and confusing and demands difficult things of us. Yet, the words of Jesus speak simply of love. And that's not grey.

Grace and peace,
Karla

Footprints OCTOBER 2021 News from Children's Ministries



Marion Hunner

**Children's Ministries
Director**



The program year has begun, and we are on our way! On the first Sunday of the month we have Family Worship at 4pm, so you may not see the families in church on those mornings. Sunday School takes place from 9:30-10:20 on the 2nd through 5th Sunday of the month. We are gathering outside and alternating between Yoga Bible Stories and storybooks that connect to the lectionary. When the weather gets rough, we will move into the building and find a space where we can keep appropriately distanced. We will also be working on some service projects, so please note the request for recycling donations below.

Junior Acolytes – We have created a new role to get our younger children directly involved in the liturgy! Junior Acolytes will process behind the Crucifer and help by carrying vital elements to the altar. We are giving these kids the option to sit with their families or up front with the altar party, and we are also letting them choose whether or not to vest in red robes. We held a training on September 26th and it was lots of fun – check out St. Christopher's Facebook page. We won't have Junior Acolytes every week, but we are excited to add them to our roster of folks serving in church.

Recycling Donation Requests: We will be working on some service projects this program year, and we need your help. If you are able to donate either of

the items below, please leave them in the classroom next to Marion's office.

- T-Shirts: We need Youth Medium and Large, and Adult Small, Medium, and Large. Anything smaller or larger than these don't work well with our project.
- Plastic Bottles: We need sturdy beverage bottles 16-24 ounces WITH their cap. Please be sure to rinse the bottles well before donating.

Attitude of Gratitude

Might you have five minutes and twenty-three seconds for YOU? Please find a quiet spot, turn off the TV or put down the paper (if you're like me and still read the hardcopy of the newspaper). Or sit in your car and turn down the radio. Please invest 5:23 minutes and watch and listen to this video. [A Grateful Day](#) You'll be glad you did! Thank you!

Chris Mayr



For it is in giving that we receive

-Francis of Assisi

Although the summer is drawing to an end, the Giving Garden at St. Christopher's continues giving!! As we all know, it was a VERY hot and dry summer, but the garden persevered. To date we have provided the Keystone Food Shelf with over 450 pounds of produce for the community, with more to come! The garden is being expanded and plans are already underway for next summer.

- The Green Team

Pulse of the Parish

Vestry meeting held on September 20, 2021

The purpose of this report is to inform you about the work and actions from the September 20 Vestry meeting.

After opening prayer, reading of the Vestry Covenant, and approval of the August minutes, Finance Team member Tom Linder reviewed August financial report highlights. He reported that year to date, we are close to revenue projections for building use revenue, thanks in large part to Day Care and spiritual direction. Pledges and offerings are a bit ahead of projected totals due to prepayments. Thankfully the PPP loan has strengthened our financial position this year.

The Vestry approved the proposed budget for 2022. It includes an increase to

account for the full-time salary and benefits for our Rector Randy. You will be receiving it in the mail soon with the Fall stewardship appeal package. The budget will be finalized in December after we have accounted for the 2021-22 annual appeal pledges and more complete information on actual revenue in 2021.

Sr. Warden Mike Sirany discussed plans to update our very old phone system, which will also require an up-dating of the support wiring and networking prior to installation. The Vestry voted to authorize the upgrade to the infrastructure and purchase/installation of a new phone system.

Jr. Warden Chris Mayr updated the Vestry on plans for the **God Has Work for Us to Do** Fall Stewardship appeal. The appeal package is scheduled to be mailed next week to all our faith family members in time for October Stewardship month. Weekly announcements by various members of our faith family will occur at October services. The appeal culminates on October 31, Stewardship Sunday.

The Vestry was informed of the purchase of a new camera to facilitate increased ease and quality of video-recording and live streaming of our services. Additional options for enhanced audio-recording are being explored.

The Vestry heard up-dates from the building and grounds, and green team liaisons. Erin Bowman reported that Children's ministry will be back for Sunday school, and plans for additional Family Sundays the first Sunday of each month.

Fr. Randy discussed on-going protocol concerns about the continuing COVID-19 situation, including information presented by epidemiologist Mike Osterholm. We will continue to monitor information, and make changes if needed.

And shout-outs are in order for

1. All the volunteers who staffed the State-Fair parking led by Don Shiek; in addition to the revenue it generated for St. Christopher's, there was a palpable spirit of comradery among our faith family members who served this endeavor; thank you to all who volunteered!
2. Thank you to the many people who made Start-Up Sunday (and great "food on a stick!") a huge success, especially Ann DePaolis Jones and Erin Bowman!
3. Thank you to Ross Ackerman and Jeff Jensen, for their on-going work with the video system, and Jeff's tireless leadership and involvement with the building and grounds team!

The meeting ended with Compline.

Please feel free to visit with 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, October 18.

CALENDAR for OCTOBER

2 Saturday

8 AM OA - Room 218

10 AM CLA - Room 218

11 AM Flute Lessons - Music Room

3 Sunday - Pentecost 19

8 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

4 PM Family Worship - Outdoors

4 Monday

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

5 Tuesday

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

2 PM to 6 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band Rehearsal - Outdoors, Parish Hall

7 PM Exploratory Team - Parish Hall

6 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

3 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6:30 PM Roseville Wednesday AA - Gathering Room

7 Thursday

3:45 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

8 Friday

3:45 PM to 6:45 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

9 Saturday

8 AM OA - Room 218

10:15 AM Private Spiritual Direction - Gathering Room

11 AM Flute Lessons - Music Room

10 Sunday - Pentecost 20

8 AM Holy Eucharist

9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

11 Monday

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

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

12 Tuesday

10 AM SG Peer Group - Gathering Room

2 PM to 6 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band Rehearsal - Outdoors, Parish Hall

13 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

3 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6:30 PM Roseville Wednesday AA - Gathering Room

14 Thursday

3:45 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

15 Friday

3:45 PM to 6:45 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

16 Saturday

8 AM OA - Room 218

10 AM CLA - Room 218

11 AM Flute Lessons - Music Room

17 Sunday - Pentecost 21

8 AM Holy Eucharist

9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

18 Monday

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

6:45 PM Vestry - Parish Hall, in person

19 Tuesday

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

11:30 AM Meals on Wheels - Offsite

2 PM to 6 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band Rehearsal - Outdoors, Parish Hall

20 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

3 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6:30 PM - Roseville Wednesday AA - Gathering Room

21 Thursday

10 AM Private Spiritual Direction - Library

10:30 AM Hearts and Hands Group - Parish Hall

3:45 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

22 Friday

23 Saturday

8 AM OA - Room 218

11 AM Flute Lessons - Music Room

24 Sunday - Pentecost 22

8 AM Holy Eucharist

9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

25 Monday - e-Traveler Deadline for October

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

26 Tuesday

2 PM to 6 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

6 PM Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band Rehearsal - Outdoors, Parish Hall

27 Wednesday

12:15 PM Holy Eucharist - Church

6:30 PM - Roseville Wednesday AA - Gathering Room

28 Thursday

3:45 PM to 7 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

29 Friday

3:45 PM to 6:45 PM - Cello Lessons - #218/219

30 Saturday

8 AM OA - Room 218

10 AM CLA - Room 218

11 AM Flute Lessons - Music Room

31 Sunday - Pentecost 23

8 AM Holy Eucharist

9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Please note that some of our outside groups have returned to meeting in the building or on the grounds. Some of those groups are now on this calendar to avoid over-scheduling. Always check with the church office before scheduling a meeting.

Last Words



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

As many of you know, I'll be out of the office most of October after getting my second hip. Please call ahead if you need to drop by - Marion Hunner, our Children's Ministries Director, will be filling in for me again (I'd sure be lost without her!), as well as some volunteers, but, there will be days when no one is here. I do hope to be back at my desk before Halloween - but don't look for my car; I won't get to drive until nearly Thanksgiving, most likely.

Thank you all for supporting me as I regain my mobility!

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 Fall Schedule:

Recorded Sermons for each Sunday are on our website.

Sunday: 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary
9:30 AM Sunday School (Not on First Sundays)
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary

Wednesday: 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist in the Sanctuary

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9 AM - 4 PM

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STAY CONNECTED

