

THE COURIER

The Newsletter of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, River Hills, WI

August 2008

TRANSITION POSITION

*A monthly update
on the Transition
process,
written by members
of the Vestry*

in*ter*im:

What exactly is an interim and why is having one the next step for St. Christopher's? As a vestry we have taken considerable time discerning this. Perhaps you have had similar thoughts. It's important that we all continue to engage in open, honest communication about where we are as a congregation and where we are heading in the future. And it is for this reason that we hope to welcome an interim in the next few months.

Although I was not a member of St. Christopher's a few years ago, I understand that the building process was quite a task to undertake. There was a lot of conversation before the project even got started. What did people want in a church building? What parts were to remain the same and what other areas need a new coat of paint? What would it mean to change the space a little bit here, or a lot over there? Construction broke ground and although it sounds like everything went fairly smoothly, there were many decisions made and slightly tweaked along the way. Even now we as church members still discern how to use the space for the many activities that take place throughout the week. Maybe decorations change a little to suit a group's needs (The Cave!) all in an effort to make the space work for us. It's a healthy process to figure out what is best for us, St. Christopher's.

An interim period at a church is very similar. It's a time for us to step back, with the interim priest, and look at ourselves as a parish. What do we want to do together? How do we want to continue worshipping, caring, outreaching, playing, and praying together? What has worked in the past and what might we want to try in the future? At vestry meetings we have often referred to an interim priest as the mirror through which we are able to see ourselves more clearly as a group. In doing so we develop a better understanding of who we are as a parish - and what kind of priest we eventually want to call as our rector. Knowing who we are will help us to know what type of rector we want. Like the building process, this interim period will also be a healthy process to figure out what is best for us, St. Christopher's.

Please continue to seek out members of the vestry if you have questions about this exciting transition period!

Emilie O'Connor,
Member of the Vestry



Interim ministry - A mirror to see ourselves more clearly.



From the Associate Rector

Jesus went out and sat outside the organic food market. Such a great crowd gathered that they blocked the streets

and sidewalks. Jesus told them many things in parables saying: "Listen! Early, one dark, cold February morning a Wisconsin farmer sipped coffee by his computer. He was calculating the cost of wheat, corn and soybean seeds, insect & weed control, gas, equipment maintenance. He read the commodities forecasts and estimated his return on investment.

March, April, May & June came. Some seeds could not fall into the ground because the winter was too long and bitter. Some seeds fell into the ground. With the first warm Spring sun, they grew quickly, but then were washed away in the rain. Some seeds took root in the farmer's field, now dried enough from melting snow & rain, but then were washed away in the floods. Tenacious farmers had to recalculate. Some seeds are now planted for the first, second and third time."

Just as the farmers in Jesus' time, when farmer's planted 'hope was high, but profound uncertainties remained (C.S. Monitor).' Would the seeds germinate? Did the farmer anticipate everything? Would the crop yield a profit? Would there be enough food? Then, as now, people depend on the outcome of seeds planted in the field.

Now, as then, no matter the outcome, some would have the ability & means to recover. Some would lose everything. Some would still eat well and some would find themselves newly seeking assistance or starving. Some would hoard & some would share. Some would secretly delight in poor yield as profits rose. Some would work tirelessly so at least a few more would eat for another day.

Whatever the time & place in history farming or home gardening is risky. As much as we plan, so much is beyond our control. Even if things go as planned, the work never ends. Whoever we are, we all have some experience or connection with planting seeds and

growing things. Jesus was all about planting seeds...Gospel seeds.

These were the seeds of love, healing, reconciliation, wholeness and peace. Jesus was generous, caring, patient, nurturing, faithful, tireless in his work planting and growing those seeds. If he didn't, those seeds would die. Jesus calls us to the same type of planting and tending. We, who call ourselves Christians claim the Gospel seed planted in us at Baptism. We promise to be faithful caretaker's of the seeds.

Many at this point in time are asking if the Gospel seed planted in the people and the church has fallen on rocks, dry ground, shallow soil, been rained or flooded out. Many are asking if the people and the church have the tenacity & faith to recalculate, replant and start anew. Those who are asking are the hungry, poor, uneducated & those without healthcare. They are the people in hiding due to guns & gangs, IED's and Hum-V's. They are the lonely, abused, grieving, exhausted, depressed, & spiritually hungry among us.

The reality is that we all have a stake & and the responsibility for tending the Gospel seed in us, in each other & in this parish. We are to provide food & a place at the table for the physically & spiritually hungry. God will not accept the rational that we'd have done more or better if we had better spiritual leaders. We are called to be those leaders.

Good farmers, gardeners and churches will always be recalculating. They will always be asking, what kind of seeds are best grown in our fields? What care do these particular seeds need? What pests need to be controlled or removed? What keeps us from tending Gospel seed? Is this return on investment for us or for God? In simple terms these are the questions, St. Christopher's must be asking during transition, as it recalculates what Gospel seeds are to be grown in this time and place. God's promise is, that if we continue this process of recalculation and carefully tend the seeds, the return will be one-hundred fold. We can't argue with that ROI.

Jan

(from her sermon on Sunday, July 14th)

Children's Ministries

KICK OFF SUNDAY is SEPTEMBER 14th!!!!

Moms and dads are asking "where did the summer go?" and children are thinking that school and Sundays in church are a loooong way off. But the reality is facing us as the days get shorter and the weather begins to cool.

It is almost that time again!

We will be joining together on Sunday, September 14th to kick off the new year in the church school.

■ The ROOTS curriculum is taking shape and there is a promise of stories of heroes and scoundrels from the Old Testament and the life of Jesus from the New Testament. We will devote ourselves to a 4 week rotation, starting with a movie in the Cave and then 3 weeks in the art, drama, and games rooms. We will welcome last year's graduates from the Ark program into the K5 and 1st grade group, and a new combination of 2nd and 3rd, and 4th and 5th graders. Everybody, including the director, has got the hang of it, so this year should be a smooth transition!

■ The 3 and 4-year-olds will be safely boarding the Ark each Sunday to travel along and learn about our faith. We are working on a new curriculum for them and you will be hearing more about that as we make our way to Kick Off Sunday. Trish Juranitch, who has devotedly served this ministry for so many years, has decided to retire from the job in order to meet the demands of her own family. We will miss her creative and lively gatherings which prepared our youngest students for their growth in our faith.

■ The nursery is going through a transition as well. Lauren and Sam Schiro have moved on in their youthful careers. Lucky for St. Christopher's, we have been blessed with a group of teenagers who are willing to get up early and minister to our littlest ones so that parents can participate fully in the service. Their dedication and attention has been awesome and all of us are truly grateful for their efforts!

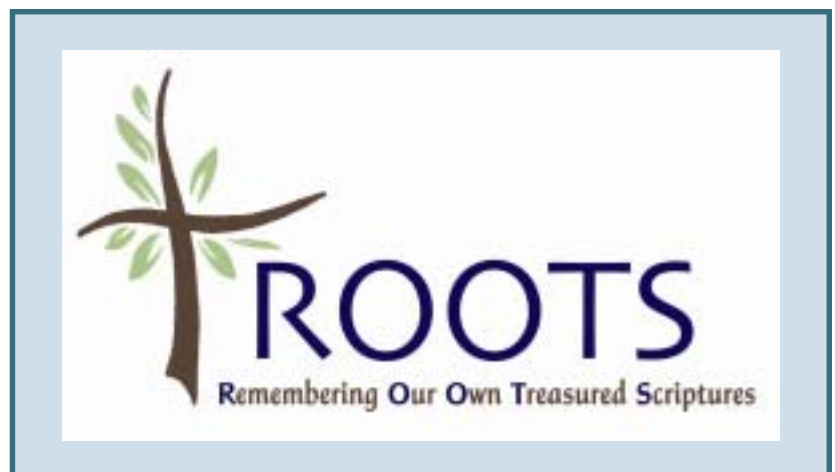
As we begin to gather again, starting in September and throughout the school year, let us focus our thoughts on how we can all minister to our most precious assets – our children - and thus, our future.

With that in mind, sign-up boards for parent volunteer opportunities will be in place on September 7th. Be sure to bring your calendars and get there early for your choice of opportunities!

For more information on the children's educational programs or the nursery, please contact Sally Walters at scwassoc@yahoo.com.

Sally Walters

Director of Children's Ministries



From the Wardens

I was standing, with my son, on my father-in-law's porch the other evening trying to figure out what to write for the Warden's Words. James looked up at me and screamed "Look Dad, FIREFLIES!" Which I thought was a good enough topic as any.

Nothing quite like fireflies and their little blinking lights. You remember those summer nights running around trying to catch a few. Holding them in your cupped hands to see them glow. Ripping off their glowy parts to make bracelets and rings. No? Maybe that was just my sisters and mother...who would now be doing some serious time in insect prison for all the glowbug bracelets they made. I was listening to my favorite radio show/podcast "Radio Lab" <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/radiolab/> about a scientific theory called Emergence. The

theory discusses how patterns, rules, behaviors emerge from a group to form a collective idea. If you ask yourself who created the famous neighborhoods of Milwaukee the correct answer might be "everyone and no one". Sure there were a few people that created or built the physical place but when you talk about the "feel" of a neighborhood, that comes from everyone in the 'hood but really not a single person or persons.



*Junior Warden
Tom Napper*

So, what does that have to do with fireflies? Down in the darkest jungles of Thailand there were some bug scientists, John Buck and Elizabeth Buck, who went to this mythical river whose banks were illuminated by fireflies. It wasn't that these critters were just flashing on and off; the crazy thing was they were flashing in unison! Yes, they were all blinking at the same time and this wasn't just a couple of fireflies, it was thousands. The entomologists slowly paddled down the river, just the sound of their oars breaking the water's surface. At one moment the river would be illuminated by the glow the next, darkness, light, dark, light dark.

So this scientist couple decided to grab a few hundred of these fireflies to study them. So they netted a few hundred and brought them back to their hotel room. When they got back to their hotel they, turned off all the lights and let the bugs go. As the couple tell the story now, they are in their 90s, nothing much happened. They lay there together on the floor of their room looking up at all these lighting bugs floating around their room. Eventually the husband fell asleep and the wife was lying there awake still staring at the ceiling. Suddenly she noticed that there was a small group of bugs in the corner of the room blinking together. Then, gradually, a few more joined that first group, then a few more, until eventually they were all one big blinking stop light in a one stop light town. On-Off-On-Off.

They found that as the lighting bugs got closer. As they moved from being individuals floating around looking for other lighting bugs, singing their own tune, to a group of lightning bugs they all began to blink together. It was the proximity to each other that did it. Why? Well no one really knows. What they do know is that there really isn't one clear firefly that makes it all happen. It happens on its own.

June Financial Recap (as of June 30, 2008)

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
June Income:	\$ 12,660	\$ 32,981
June Expense:	\$ 52,914	\$ 40,605
YTD Income:	\$ 303,127	\$ 364,396
YTD Expense:	\$ 326,227	\$ 308,785
Outstanding Building Loan	\$ 347,489	

Many St. Christopher parishioners travel throughout the summer months. We hope you all are enjoying time together with family and friends and finding moments of relaxation and renewal. The work and ministries of St. Christopher's continue throughout the summer months; the Holy Spirit keeps us moving forward. We ask all parishioners therefore to keep your pledge payments up-to-date. Thank you to all who work hard to support St. Christopher's in many different ways!

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please contact any vestry member, Ran Hamner, Senior Warden, Tom Napper, Junior Warden, or Hannah Pillsbury, Treasurer.

From the Wardens

When my father-in-law passed away the outpouring of sympathy and generosity of this community amazed me. Everyone at St. Christopher's just offered all kinds of services: meals, daycare, rides for the kids, tickets to Six Flags, cleaning the gutters (really!), loans of toys and games. It was truly unbelievable. It touched our family deeply and made me marvel at how when we are together as a group we ZOOM! We take off. I don't think any one person in the group of people that volunteered stood up and said, "Hey, you...go clean his gutters. You there...loan them your iPass and you cough up that Six Flags ticket!" No. It was innate. It was something that everyone knew to do. Sure there were people who helped coordinate it pieces of it (which we are hugely grateful for). Sure there were people who opened the lines of communication, but so much of the requests to help I got were from individuals. Individuals who were coming closer, who were singing together, maybe without even knowing it.

It is this innate knowledge we all have about St. Christopher's. When someone dies in a family we can all feel and personalize what has happened. You can sense what is needed from your own experiences. It is a bit tougher to do as a congregation. What is it that we need? Well, my nudge here on this one is we need to be closer. Just like the glowfly. Individually and apart they had a little glow but together they were the blinking stop and go light in a town without street lamps.

Gathering together in our groups at bible study, book clubs, outreach programs, youth groups, committee meetings, coffee hour and our services; those times are when we meet to share our ideas and thoughts about our journeys and the journeys of St. Christopher's. Sharing these thoughts in these small groups is our identity. Coming together to share these thoughts with the larger group is our beacon for the rest of the community around us. Without sharing our thoughts to everyone our beacon dims. Our beacon is the target for so many people paddling their canoes toward us.

As this summer winds down (hard to believe) and we move into September I wonder how many of us will come together. We'll be days away from having an interim in place and be on our way to finding a new rector. It is my hope that we begin to move closer together, to bring all our hopes and desires for our community to light. To share, trust and celebrate. To find those groups, and pockets of people that you haven't seen all summer. To talk, discuss and share with everyone your hopes and dreams for St. Christopher's. To look around and see what St. Christopher's is needing from you. Hopefully our singing in unison, our trusting and working together will create a beacon that shines far and wide. And unlike fireflies, I don't think anyone is going to come and try to shove us into a jar or make bracelets and rings out of us. At least I know where my sisters are these days!

Tom Napper, Junior Warden

SEARCH COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Forward to:

Ran Hamner

hams62@hotmail.com

or

Tom Napper

tomnapper@sbcglobal.net

by **AUGUST 15**

Nominations for Search Committee should be sent to Tom Napper or Ran Hamner by the **August 15th**. The committee will be vitally important to the parish and to our search process. We are looking for 10 or 11 parishioners. The Search Committee will be responsible for working with the Parish on our visioning process: What is it that we as a Parish think God is calling us to do in this place? This information will be very important to us and to our rector candidates in making the best match between our needs and candidate's skill set. The committee will also interview candidates for the position and make recommendations to the Vestry on whom we should call. Our time frame will run from about September 1, 2008 until we call our new rector sometime in 2009.

Members of previous Search Committees have found this to be a marvelous experience individually and as a member of a committed group, open to the presence of the Holy Spirit. Don't be shy about nominating yourself if you feel called to serve. We expect to have our Search Committee formed by September 1st or thereabouts.

Notice Board

A new directory is coming in September!
Please return your Parishioner Data Sheet
by August 30.



In July, the people of St. Christopher's responded to an urgent appeal from The Gathering meal program by contributing 117 cans of fruits and vegetables.

The Gathering serves meals at three sites in the downtown area, and is one of St. Christopher's outreach partners. Many thanks to Outreach co-chair Mark Heffron for spearheading the drive.

Sticky Notes

It's Summer in Milwaukee and the Livin' is Easy!

I often like to wax nostalgic about the summer jobs I had growing up. Funny how sweet memories can be and I find myself wishing I was a lifeguard again as I swim with my son, Jack and watch him learn how to float and swim on his own. He definitely takes after his Mom, spending hours diving under the water only to reappear in fits of giggles. Absolutely one of the best jobs I ever had in my life, but definitely better suited to a high school or college student.

Another job I had in my college years was working at the Hydro (American Translation: Power Company) building in my hometown of Thunder Bay, Ontario. I did many different things in this job, painting, repairs, running the freight elevator, working with construction contractors and moving tenants offices. By far the best shift I worked was the 3 – 11 p.m. shift, perfectly suited for a college student that liked to stay up late and sleep in until noon. During this shift I was responsible for locking up the building after all of the office workers went home at 5 p.m. and then making several rounds during the evening to ensure the security of the building before I left at 11:00 p.m. This involved me taking a key punch machine to several strategically placed boxes throughout the building. At the end of each month my boss would take out the tape from the machine and review where I had hit and where I had missed, making sure I had checked all areas each night. Sounds easy right? Methodically and systematically walk to each box and punch. Apparently not so easy for a 21 year old who was more concerned with meeting her friends out after work than focusing on the task at hand. Each month my boss would find one or two boxes I missed over the course of the month. I don't have to tell you, this was not acceptable and I had several conversations about this with my boss over the course of my three years in that job.

Which brings me up to today, there are some things that stay with you in life and I still find myself checking doors to

make sure they are locked. When I roll up to St. Christopher's on my bike on Monday morning I will go up to the French doors off the community room and give them a yank and find they have been left open or go to the nursery and find the door to the play area is open. I will even have family members drive by the church if I know that there has been an event and say, "Could you just check the doors if you drive by, just to make sure they are locked." To my alarm, my instincts are still right and the doors are found to be open. I know this is River Hills and not downtown Thunder Bay but old habits die hard and it is still important to me that my place of work and my place of worship is kept safe. So if you are ever driving down River Road or if you are the last one out on Sunday morning – do me a favor and check the doors – you'll be helping me make up for all those doors I missed back in Thunder Bay.



Robyn Slater, Office / Program Assistant

AUGUST MILESTONES	
BIRTHDAYS	
1	Jack Casey
3	Judy Scharfenberger
6	Joyce Kuehl Tom Napper
7	Michael Kennedy
8	Martha Kipcak Meredith Petrie Amy Ruf
10	Bob Slater
11	Rick Deuser
12	Mary Marks
14	Ginny Kyle Sarah Schmidt
15	Martha Bolles Tricia Moore John Roesner Francie Silverman
16	Abby Wigdale Maggie Wigdale
17	Maddy Gotz Henry Uihlein Lauralee Uihlein
18	Will Bartlett Ran Hamner
20	August Braeger Terry Hausmann
21	Diane Eisen
23	Harry Ansley
24	Jon Jamel
25	David Sande John Thickers William Warner
26	David Uihlein
27	Tommy Antonic Ned Purtell
28	Alan Becker John Housiaux Jason Taylor Nancy Warner Zane Whitcroft
29	Janie Asmuth Amy Clark Jessica Etheridge Helen Sheen
30	Elizabeth Purtell Lily Ruf Mickey Ruf
ANNIVERSARIES	
2	Jen & Mike Darrow
3	Dee & John Hodnett
5	Nancy & Dan Gridley
6	Rosemary & Dick Fritz
7	Heidi & Casey Brunner
14	Julie & John Wolf Jennifer & Scott Weigel
16	Susan & Brent Martin Julie & John Kennedy Karin & Jon Jamel
22	Jennifer & Darrell Fischer Elise & Stephen Neils
24	Jayne & Mark Heffron
25	Jackie & Jack Greeley Elizabeth & Sam Greeley
29	Anne & Fred Stratton Hattie & Ted Purtell
31	Kathy & John Housiaux Peggy & Ned Purtell

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Associate Rector's Email: jkjjoy55@gmail.com
Children's Ministry: children@stchristopherswi.org
Youth Group: youth@stchristopherswi.org
Caring Ministry: caring@stchristopherswi.org
Website: www.stchristopherswi.org

Parish Office

Open Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 4:00 p.m.

Staff

The Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski, *Associate Rector*
Loraine Garner, *Parish Administrator*
Sally Walters, *Director of Children's Ministries*
John Beardsley, *Music Director*
Anne Davis, *Youth Choir Director*
Robyn Slater, *Office / Program Assistant*
Gloria Bond, *Housekeeper*
Michael Schneider, *Building & Grounds Supervisor*

Vestry - Meets 4th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Ran Hamner and Tom Napper, *Wardens*
Hannah Pillsbury, *Treasurer* John Stadler, *Clerk*
(*term exp. 2009*) - Edith Braeger, Cordelia Gelly,
Mike Ruf, Lauralee Uihlein
(*2010*) - Florence Parnegg, Helen Sheen,
Kathleen Stokes, John Wolf
(*2011*) - Jo Donovan, Kip Jacobs,
Emilie O'Connor, Rick Taylor

Committee and Ministry Contacts

Altar Guild: Roz Krause, Mary Jane Perry
Acolytes: Dee Hodnett
Building & Grounds: Kip Jacobs
Building Use: Susan Martin
Caring Ministry: Lauralee Uihlein
Coffee Hour: Cordelia Gelly, Lyn Slater
Endowment: Bonnie Thomson
Events / Newcomers: Sally Walters
Finance: Hannah Pillsbury
Flower Guild: Roz Krause, Hattie Purtell
Gifts Committee: Edith Braeger
Labyrinth: Catherine Davidson
Memorial Garden: Jeanne Tanner
Mexico Service Trip: Tom Napper
Outreach: Mark Heffron, Steve Petrie
Personnel: Kathleen Stokes
Prayer Chain: Chilly Braun, Kathy Housiaux
Programs: Rick Taylor

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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The Monthly Newsletter of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

The Holy Eucharist

Sunday 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Thursday 7:00 a.m.

Outdoor Labyrinth - open to the public, weather permitting

The Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski, *Associate Rector*



Christianity is not just a religion...it's a way of life.