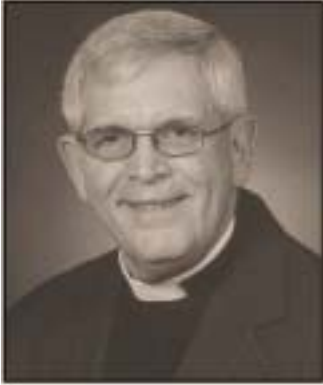




THE COURIER

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

October 2008



*Interim
Rector
Charlie Caskey*

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**WELCOME
SUNDAY**

OCTOBER 19

In a few weeks, I will join you as your interim rector in a time of transition for St. Christopher's. You have been blessed with very talented clergy and lay leadership since I first became acquainted with your parish more than a decade ago when Thayer and I first came to Milwaukee. Times of transition are the norm in the life of the church as well as in our personal lives. As human beings we are always growing and changing. For example in the last ten years we have lived in Milwaukee, Chicago, Evanston, Waukegan, Battle Creek, Michigan, and Bonita Springs Florida, our "permanent" residence. These transitions have all been wonderful and stressful at the same time. What often creates anxiety is simply discovering the "new" that we are called to embrace and letting go of the "old" so that it can be made new. This is really what "interim" ministry is about. Thayer and I have become experts in packing and unpacking. I enjoy coming into parishes and asking the "why" questions about the way things are done. In our personal life, it is like asking why do we need to keep moving things again and again we are never going to use. It is not that there is one right way to "do church," but sometimes we fall into patterns of doing things simply because that is the way they have always been done.

I discover in each of the parishes I have served that comfort with the liturgy, traditional or contemporary, depends on how welcome people feel and how well we communicate who we are, why we do what we do, and who we are called to be as members of the body of Christ and faithful Episcopalians. I have served large parishes and small ones, inner city and the so called "cardinal" parishes, large downtown and small town parishes. In each, I have shared times of joy and sadness, hope and despair. All have enriched my ministry and given me renewed hope for the growth and health of our Episcopal Church.

Discovering and adopting a contemporary witness of the Gospel that is both faithful to the mission of the Church and that redefines the way we structure our ministry can create anxiety and

resistance. Education and communication are vital to success. Congregations change in ways that bear much fruit as collaborative ministry develops with rector and vestry. The vision you will develop during this interim time will demand courage and commitment from all of us. I know that every congregation has the resources needed for mission when a stewardship of abundance is embraced by its leadership. Your outreach efforts exhibit a faith that operates from this belief—God provides when we work together to serve others in the name of Christ. Even with the financial markets in chaos, when every parishioner knows that he or she is part of a vital shared ministry within and outside the parish, the needs of the community and the world will be met in new and exciting ways.

Charlie+

Welcoming Charlie Caskey

As most of you know, Charlie Caskey will join our St. Christopher's family as our interim rector on October 16th. His first Sunday will be October 19th. With this in mind, we will formally begin the interim phase of our transition journey with Charlie's arrival. This will be a time of great challenge and great promise with such potential for St. Christopher's, a gift from God when we open our hearts to its possibilities. It will be exciting!

We want to welcome especially Charlie as a parish and as members of this parish family. We want to get to know him and he, us! Having said this, your wardens and vestry are planning a three phase welcoming process. Each will involve a different setting, a different group dynamic and a different learning opportunity.

COFFEE HOUR BASH: The vestry will host coffee hour "blowouts" after the 8:00 and 10:00 services on Charlie's first Sunday, October 19th. These will be HUGE! Great fun! Great conversation! Great time to meet and greet! Think of these as coffee hour tailgates! Very cool!

HOME CHATS: We will organize a series of small group gatherings in parishioner homes. These will provide opportunities to talk and to learn in more depth about our transition challenge in small group settings. These will be most important opportunities for Charlie to learn from you about your dreams, concerns and priorities for St. Christopher's going forward. If you would like to join me in hosting an event, please email me at hams62@hotmail.com. We will work out a master schedule to offer events on different days at different times. Something for everyone's schedule! Plus, what a great reason to polish the silver for the Holidays!

PARTY WITH A PURPOSE: The Caring Ministry will host their annual Christmas party on December 3rd in support of the St. James Red Door Ministry. This is our annual mitten drive. Warm hands! Warm hearts! We will gather as a parish in our own community space. Again, this will be parish wide opportunity to meet and mingle with Charlie in more formally beginning our transition.



So, climb on board the Transition Express! Plenty of great seats! Heading for the Promised Land! (I think you have heard this part before!) If you have questions or ideas, please let Tom or me or your vestry friend hear from you. We are all on this journey together. Nice crowd!

Thanks and God Bless,

Ran Hamner,
Senior Warden

From the Wardens



Making the Hippo Dance

Every month there are loads of articles that make their way into the Courier. There are analogies, metaphors and stories shared. It all can be a cacophony of information, an overload of reading between the lines. The skill of reading between the lines is what we do best as spiritual people. It is the way to get ideas across. It is a way of making really complicated issues simple, a way of making big weighty hippos dance. But sometimes the message gets lost in the metaphor.

I've noticed over the past few months that my articles in the Courier have beat around the proverbial burning bush. There is something fantastic happening to us and I'm just writing about fireflies and bridges! It is all an attempt to make the hippo dance. Maybe you get it maybe you don't.

So let me quite plainly describe the hippo that I'm trying to make dance.

We are going through an incredibly valuable time at St. Christopher's. All the voices that we as wardens and Vestry hear are very important. They create the chorus that is our congregation, our vision and our direction. It isn't a single voice or a selected few voices

that are our congregation it is everyone. A cantor's voice is lovely to hear but add that single voice to the harmonies of the choir and you have a heavenly sound.

My father-in-law loved a poem called "Paddle Your Own Canoe". The gist of it was that you make your way forward in this world based on the actions that you are taking or refuse to take. Those actions are a beacon and an example for others around you. Becoming a part of St. Christopher's by volunteering and taking part in discussions is a way you can help paddle this canoe. Refusing to speak up, being part of the silent majority just isn't an option in this life, or the life at St. Christopher's.

Your vestry is creating the best environment for us to find another outstanding rector for this congregation. We have spent hours talking and discussing and meeting and getting counsel. It is a process that appears to be moving slowly but it is probably the fastest moving and well-planned thing I've seen. Sure there are bumps in the road but there always will be.

Charlie Caskey starts with us soon. He'll keep our eyes looking forward and make sure that we are not short-changing ourselves. He isn't going to do the work for us but he will keep us "honest". He isn't the one picking the rector, we are. Charlie's role is to take this really great, wonderful congregation and demand/require the best out of us. My hope is that he will also kick us in the shorts when we need it.

So here's my hippo: "The interim process is uncomfortable but also can be very rewarding thing. Be a part of it." We as a Vestry and a congregation will work hard to make it the best time and to help us come the absolute right solution. Fireflies and bridges aside I think we can make this hippo dance a mighty fine Charleston.

Tom Napper
Junior Warden

Financial Recap

(as of August 31, 2008)

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
August Income:	\$ 33,068	\$ 32,981
August Expense:	\$ 46,395	\$ 40,607
YTD Income:	\$ 369,822	\$ 430,359
YTD Expense:	\$ 415,973	\$ 390,001
2008 Net Income/(Expense)	(\$ 46,151)	\$ 40,358
Outstanding Building Loan	\$ 339,998	

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 Associate Rector



Transition
Weighted Emergent
Intrude Disturb Generate
Unbounded Spirit Unbind Us
Now

Children's Ministries



Our children's programs are back in session with notable energy and enthusiasm. We have welcomed back our seasoned veterans of the ROOTS programs and have welcomed newcomers and returnees to St. Christopher's parish.

We followed Pastor Jan's advice and ramped up the volume for our Kick-Off Sunday by rockin' and rollin' with our "Rock On St. Christopher's!" theme. What that has to do with religious education may have been on the mind of some parents, but the kids were tuned in and ready to get back to their ROOTS!

God's seven days of creation and the story of Adam and Eve are the topics currently on the minds of the children and our parent volunteers. Even the Ark has a program to explore how special each and every one of us is in God's mind. The older children are learning about the Garden of Eden and the temptations that have perplexed us since the beginning of days. The themes of making mistakes and owning up to them, telling the truth, being obedient, and the always present and everlasting God's love for us are presented in ways that are fun and informative.

We are still in need of volunteers for these programs –ROOTS and the ARK -and for the nursery duty on Sunday. Parents whose children are involved are encouraged to sign up for the open spaces on the lists which are posted on the board in the community room.

A last note to parents. . .if you are having trouble getting your children to eat those red, juicy apples, please remind them that Miss Sally was just using the story of the serpent in the Garden as a parable!!!!

Sally Walters,
Director of Children's Ministries



TRANSITION POSITION

Three years ago my wife and I made the decision to return to St. Christopher's. We have three grown boys and it was a great move for our family. St. C's is not a new place to me. I attended church here as a child and was confirmed back in the 1960's so I am familiar with the church. The pews are the same ones I sat in some 40 years ago. Has the church changed after all these years? Lets examine this idea for a moment. Since I have left and come back, the walls are still white, the same parquet floor is in place – even the altar is the same. These are images familiar to me; ones that I associate with the wonderful place called St. Christopher's. On the one hand, these images have a permanent etch in my memory and in this sense the church has not changed all that much. On the other hand, the sanctuary walls have been painted, the floors redone and the chandeliers polished, thanks to a very successful building renovation and construction project. Our new community room, office space, nursery, and kitchen, as well as a reformed and reconstructed area for ROOTS, offer us a new space to grow in as a parish. It is indeed exciting to see and be a part of this change. Do the walls make the church? Sure, the physical bricks and mortar identify the church. Yet the church is so much more and this is a major change that I have experienced since returning to St. Christopher's. The parish is larger, and more involved in community projects. Programs at the church and in the community allow us as parishioners to work with one another and to move forward in the name of the Holy Spirit.

Change is a funny thing. Some people do not mind change, they welcome it for it brings new ideas and faces that we can get to know. Others like it less, for it makes them feel less comfortable than what they are used to. If change happens too quickly, it can be unsettling. What changes are in store for us as a community at St. Christopher's? In the next few weeks we will begin to experience our new interim rector, Charlie Caskey. Welcome to St. Christopher's, Charlie! As we move forward with our process of calling a new rector to our parish, Charlie will help us to see and experience the process that is associated with this next phase of change. I find it to be an exciting time for all of us at St. Christopher's and I look forward to the changes ahead.

Kip Jacobs,
Member of the Vestry

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



Committee Updates

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The St. Christopher's Finance Committee, reinstated this past summer, is a vital body reporting to the Vestry. Two of its key goals are to provide financial oversight throughout the yearly fiscal cycle and to assist the vestry in the integration of all the financial resources and aspects of our community. As such the membership of the committee is comprised of representatives from the Stewardship Committee (Laura Gough), Capital Campaign Committee (Charlie Krause), Endowment Committee (Chilly Braun), Vestry (John Wolf), Treasurer (Hannah Pillsbury) and 2 at-large parish members (John Kendall and Erik Andersen).

The charter we have been given is a big one but one that we all are willing to take on. As we journey down this path, we hold all members in our hearts and truly understand that the financial gifts given to St. Christopher's are treasured gifts. We are working hard to ensure that St. Christopher's actions in financial terms exemplifies not only good stewardship but stewardship with heart and accountability.

Please feel free to talk with any member of the committee. Just as the Vestry needs to hear your concerns and joys so do the members of this committee. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

St. Christopher's CARING MINISTRY

– A group of individuals committed to Caring for the needs of our Community and beyond. Volunteers serve in many ways: they write cards of support and encouragement, make and take meals, visit and share the Eucharist with the sick or homebound, send care packages, host receptions and pray for our community.

This year, we have sent over 80 cards, made and delivered 34 meals, given 10+ rides, visited over 14 members (some visits are ongoing) made over 100 calls to members, will send 6-10 care packages, and have hosted several receptions!

Volunteers help when/however it fits in with their schedules. Meetings are the second Monday of the month, 9a.m. at church. Our next meeting is October 13th. If you can't make the meetings, you can always be an on-call volunteer! This is a fun group of men and women who share a willingness to serve others! Please join us for great fellowship, friendship and spreading St. Christopher's Love to all.

We are always looking for volunteers! Questions, please call: Lauralee Uihlein 262-376-9110, or email: caring@stchristopherswi.org or contact any of the Caring Ministry volunteers.

Please plan to join us when the Caring Ministry will host:

4th Annual Social with a Purpose (actually 2 purposes, this year)

December 3, 2008 4-7p.m (Childcare and rides available)

We will collect warm weather clothing and toiletries for St. James Red Door Ministry AND have an opportunity to "Welcome Charlie Caskey and his wife, Thayer" to our community! Sign-up sheets will be posted for volunteers on the bulletin board later this month!

Items to Note

Take a Look – Book Nook



Over in the corner of the Community Room near the doors to the outside, you'll find a cozy little nook with a couple of comfortable chairs. And in between the chairs are several shelves of books in groupings just begging to be read there or at home. You've found the beginning of the new St. Christopher's Book Nook for your reading pleasure. Take a peek at the current offerings of

- Wisconsin authors
- Biographies
- Non-fiction
- More current popular fiction
- Humor

Some things to know about the Book Nook:

- Suggested check out time is three weeks, but you may keep your selection longer.
- Plans are to rotate books frequently so be sure to check the selections often.
- Feel free to read there if you like in the quiet, bright spot.
- The Meditation Room has some selections of a more spiritual nature and watch for books featured by season starting with Advent.
- Also watch the weekly bulletin for information about where and when you can donate books.

What we could use from you right now:

- **Smaller book shelves both for display and for storage**
- **Suggestions for what you would like to see in the Book Nook, i.e., collections by authors or subject matter or**

Please call Debbie Roessner at 352-4553 or Susan Hackl at 352-1028 about your bookshelves and suggestions.

Happy Reading!

A message from your building use stewards...

St. Christopher's beautiful facilities are available for personal use by parishioners and their families and also community groups whose purpose and activities are consistent with St. Christopher's mission and vision.

Thus far, we have opened our doors to scouting groups, various support groups and the Herb Society just to name a few.

The requirements for use are minimal so if you are interested please contact Loraine or Robyn in the parish office at 414-352-0380.

The next gathering of the **Book Group**, which is always seeking newcomers or returnees!, will be November 10th at 7:00pm at Nancy Barton's house.

The book for discussion will be The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch. It is short in page terms but long on points to ponder.

Items to Note

PET BLESSING

St. Christopher's will be holding our annual Pet Blessing on Sunday, October 5th at 11:15 a.m. Please bring your pets to this event celebrating the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi and World Animal Day! All are welcome.



An old friend's new ministry

The **Samaritan Family Wellness Show**, featuring Scott Stoner, will debut on Sunday, October 5. Scott will answer questions related to personal, marital and family wellness each Sunday evening from 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. on **WISN Radio 1130**.

If you are outside the Milwaukee area, you can listen to the show live on WISN's website, www.newstalk1130.com.

If you would like to submit a question for Scott to address during the program, please visit Samaritan's website at www.samaritanfamilywellness.org.

A regular podcast of the radio program will also be available from the website and on iTunes shortly after the debut.

Hear ye – Hear Ye !

Calling all St. Christopher's
laundry, ironing,
folding experts!
Altar Guild needs you!



Are you looking for a way to serve your church? Please consider becoming a member of the Altar Guild. The Altar Guild prepares the altar for all worship services. We invite you to come to our meeting on **Oct 5th at 9 a.m.** (between services) to learn more about this meaningful, important ministry. Any questions, please call Roz Krause 414-352-1877 or MJ Perry 262-241-8775

J.O.Y. House Computer Lab

St. Christopher's is still accepting donations to fund a Computer Lab along with installation and network services for the J.O.Y. House, an inner-city ministry for young men. We are looking for your donations of any size to purchase the equipment. The cost is anticipated to be approximately \$6,700.

Please join us in helping the youth of the J.O.Y. House have a way to do homework, increasing their chances for success at school and beyond. Checks can be made out to St. Christopher's with J.O.Y. House in the memo line.

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. Charles Caskey, *Interim Rector*

The Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski, *Associate Rector*



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