



THE COURIER

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

August 2011

JOTS FROM JAMIE

Hi, my name is Jamie. You haven't heard from me in a while. I've been very busy chasing voles, and keeping the cat in line. It's hard work for a terrier.

But I wanted to write you now to update you on what's been happening in my life. Last month they told me that I have something called "cancer." Mom cried a lot. And I could not understand why since I have been a very good dog. But then she petted me a lot, hugged me, and even gave me more treats than usual. So, I was thinking this "cancer" thing can't be all bad.



I've been going often now to see this very nice dog-doctor who also give me lots of treats. She's been giving me these shots that I *do not* like much. But the treats sort of make up for it. I get lots of treats, especially when I put my paws up in the air. Humans are suckers for the paws up in the air gig. Gets 'em every time.

A few weekends ago I got very, very sick after one of those shots that I got. Oh man, was I sick! But Mom stuck close to me, and took very good care of me. She told me while she was petting me (she was crying again, too) that lots of people were "praying" for me. She said LOTS of people.

Well, I don't really know what "praying" is. Mom says that praying is when you open your heart to God and let God in. I always have my heart open to God, I think. (Isn't this why "dog" backwards is spelled "G-O-D?") Mom says that praying *for someone* is when you open up the part of your heart where you keep someone and let God into that special place. Wow. I did not know that I was in so many people's hearts. That's so cool.

I think I like this "praying" stuff. After three days of feeling pretty awful I started to feel better again. And I like knowing that people were praying for me and for Mom. I promise that I will pray for you, too. I'll keep you in my heart. Thanks for the prayers. Ruff! And love, Jamie

Rector's Note: Jamie, who is eight years old, was diagnosed last month with canine lymphoma. (Like non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in humans.) She is currently undergoing chemotherapy and got very sick after her fourth session. She has rebounded from that and her cancer is undetectable now. She'll be receiving chemotherapy for six months with the hope that her lymphoma will go into remission and I'll have her with me for several more years. For those of you who knew, thanks for the prayers. Love, Debra+

Warden's Words

It's that time of year again for me. I am in official countdown mode. The days are ticking away to when we take our two older daughters back to college, sports practices start anew for our youngest daughter and the calendar starts to fill up with dates. Lots and lots of activities: events, meetings, forms to be filled out, various registrations, doctor appointments and of course back-to-school shopping because nothing fits our youngest and our older daughters want to get the last Target run paid for by mom and dad.

I have lists upon lists going. Some written down but mostly in my head of all the things that need to get accomplished. To-do lists for my family but also for me and of course St. Christopher's. Hopefully, all accomplished in short order, just as I have planned without multiple last minute changes to send everything spinning out of control.

My lists all have agendas. By agenda, I mean specific goals in mind. A reason for what I am doing. An end game if you will. My reason for what it is that I am setting out to do. One could say a "what's in it for me" point of view.

I have worked hard on those lists. I've spent lots of time planning them, discussing them, crossing all the proverbial i's and crossing all the t's. All the things that **I** want to accomplish. **Need** to accomplish. **Dream** about accomplishing because if I don't accomplish them I can't imagine what would happen if I don't.

And what would happen? Really, what would happen? Chaos in all probability but there is a chance that something more could come out of it. Something more could be ADDED to my agendas and lists if I let go of them. Something good and wonderful could happen if I let myself be open to the possibility of the unknown. If I could be open to dreaming bigger. Of letting other people, things or forces create my lists. My daughters *may* or *may not* profit from my letting go of my Target back-to-school shopping guidelines but you get the idea. More is possible.

More is possible because God dreams bigger than we do. I heard that very message at my brother's church in Rochester Hills, MI, this past weekend. They were spending time this summer studying characters in the Bible and the emphasis this past Sunday was Jesus' mother Mary. The idea put forth was what would have happened when Gabriel visited Mary, presented God's plan and Mary had an "agenda." What if she had said, "What's in it for me?" instead of accepting God in her life? I can't answer that but I do know that I am eternally grateful that she didn't have a "to-do" list for this one. God was dreaming big.

What about us, the community of St. Christopher's? What would happen if we allow for the possibility of more? What if we let go of our agendas? What if we let go of that control that is so important in our lives? What if we tried being still for just a moment and listened for God in our lives? It has all the possibilities of a trip to Target with an open shopping list!

Peace,

Debbie Roesner
Senior Warden



Movement in the Parish

Lots happening this summer at St. Christopher's. Attendance at worship has been lower as people travel or simply "take time off" from church. But we've baptized two babies: Violet Marks (Mary Marks' granddaughter), and Avery Smith (Catherine Davidson's granddaughter).

We've said good by to Ellie Abbott and Sandy O'Connor with lovely Memorial services at which many of you were in attendance. It pleased me to see so many of you come to pray at our friends' Memorial services. It is the privilege of a Christian to be buried at church with other Christians in attendance. And we opened our church to the Davies family for Carolyn and Tom's brother-in-law's Memorial service on the same day that we helped the northshore community say farewell to Ann Heil.

Some faces in the pews that long time members might not be familiar with:

Carol and Mike DeSisti and their daughter, Isabella (who, at fourteen months already knows her alphabet!) And, Sarah and Matson Holbrook who come with their lovely baby daughter, Emma. We will be baptizing Emma in the fall.

Many of you know that Raquel Rutledge and John Diedrich (and their wonderful kids, Daniel and Robert Claud) will be moving temporarily to Boston this summer. They leave mid August. Raquel has been awarded a fellowship in journalism at Harvard for the upcoming school year. They will be back for Christmas and the plan right now is for John to return permanently with the boys next March. Raquel will follow in May. We will miss them while they are gone but look forward to the wonderful stories they will have to tell when they return.

But How Do They Qualify?

In the spring, I was assigned the task at Red Door Clothes to hand out the tickets to our guests as they arrived. Each ticket is numbered, and they exchange it at the top of the stairs for a slip of paper they'll turn it when they check out. It is a simple way of keeping track of how many people come in each Saturday.

In the middle of the morning, about 9:45 as volunteers for The Gathering were assembling, a mother and her young daughter came to our door, confused about how to get to the meal program. As I indicated where they were to go, guests streamed by and picked up their tickets on the way up the stairs. The mother and her daughter stepped aside, watched the traffic and thanked me on their way out.

But a minute later, they were back. Who were these people going up the stairs? What were they doing here? I explained about Red Door Clothes and how we give out six items of clothing to adults, ten to children, and anyone could have fresh underwear and socks, even if they didn't take any clothes. The mother then asked: "But how do they qualify?"

"Qualify? They just come."

She looked a bit confused. In her experience, I imagine, people in need had to have a recommendation from some agency, or a voucher, or show an ID for entry. They didn't "just come." And, to add more confusion, I told her that we were open twice a month, and they could come back for their clothes each time, no limits.

It seems to me that the essence of our Christian life of love and service is summed up in the attitude that what we are doing is to help those "who just come." No questions, no vouchers, no ID, no limits. That's how Jesus shows us His love... That's how we respond.

Gust Olson

Qs from the Pews

Dear Priest,

I can't get a fix on whether you are "progressive" or "conservative." There's lots of talk among people in the parish trying to figure that out. So, let me just ask you directly: what are you?

Signed, Wanting to know

Dear Wanting,

I am smiling broadly as I write this. You do not ask an easy question because I, like most people, am complex.

And words are just so darn important. Words like "progressive" and "conservative" are highly charged words that mean different things to different people. So, being attentive to nuance, I guess I would say that like my immediate Rector predecessors, I would locate myself in the more "progressive" wing of the Episcopal Church. In fact, knowing both Scott and Jeff well was what, in part, initially attracted me to apply to St. Christopher's.

I've been a priest for a long time in this diocese and have known of and about our parish for all of my priesthood. In the larger diocese, St. Christopher's has been known as the "progressive northshore church." This, I am sure, makes some of you who are reading this article, cringe, because you would in no way think of yourself as "progressive."

What I know about our parish, now that I have been its Rector for a year and a half, is that we are highly diverse on issues regarding our preferences for "high church" and "low church" (that is to say, our worship preferences.) And we are highly diverse along lines of theology, socio-political issues, and, of course, along lines of social status. Perhaps, in comparison to St. Boniface and Christ Church we are "progressive," but that's only in comparison. I am sure that the members of those parishes and their respective clergy would have interesting things to say about that comparison!

Your question makes me smile, because since I have been in the diocese for all of my priesthood, and St. Christopher's is my third "cure" as a Rector or priest-in-charge, I am well known. I have been known in my previous position as a Rector for my social justice work with the homeless and my pull towards a more progressive worship style. Neither of these, of course, fit St. Christopher's when I came here so, really, what you see in me here is an adaptation *to you*.

I have recently heard that some people think that I am "too Catholic." I honestly am not sure what that means, but I'd guess it means that I have a slight preference towards some reverence in worship style. However, if you come to the 10AM worship service it's hardly a quiet and reflective service!

Perhaps that comment refers to my shift from the use of "real bread" for Holy Communion, which I know was experienced as a loss for some members of the parish. But I used real bread every Sunday at my previous parish for almost a decade. The difference is that parish did not practice "intinction" (the dipping of the bread into the common cup.) So, using real bread was easily

Editor's Note: 'Qs from the Pews' are taken from questions that come up at Coffee Hour or in conversations with the Rector. If you have a Q to submit for this column, please email the Rector or the office.

possible. Here, by the time the third row of pews receives Holy Communion, intinction means that they are going to be drinking “wine mush.” My decision to change breads was based on their complaints to me, not any latent “Catholicism.”

What I am is Anglican. I am proudly Anglican. I love the breadth of our Communion’s worship style from evangelical (think Elmbrook Church) to very high church (think St. Peter’s in Rome.) In worship style I locate *myself* as solidly “broad church.” I can live with a more high church liturgy. I can rock with the evangelicals. But, I am most comfortable both as a presider and as a worshiper somewhere in the middle. I went to a broad church seminary.

I love the breadth of our church’s embrace of differing theologies and the fact that people of highly diverse opinions on the major social issues of the day can still come together at the altar and receive Holy Communion elbow to elbow. I love that we all share The Book of Common Prayer even though the language may mean different things to each of us.

Because I am Anglican, that means that I am a Christian. I am proudly Christian. I do not seek to follow an amorphous God. I seek to follow Christ. We’re a Christian church. You called an Episcopal priest as your Rector (well go figure!).

So, you will hear me talk about Jesus and Christ in my sermons, as I teach, in my writings, and as I pastor. I do not think that there is only one way to salvation. But the words “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) have meaning for me. They do not say, “I am the *only* way. . .” Jesus Christ is certainly *the way* that works for me. I am Christian. And I am not ashamed to be Christian.

Perhaps it is this that makes some people think that I am conservative. I am hardly that. But Christian, I surely am.

A quote from an article on Anglicanism online says, “The degree of distinction between Reformed and western Catholic tendencies within the Anglican tradition is routinely a matter of debate both within specific Anglican churches and throughout the Communion.”

I note with interest that it is a matter of debate within St. Christopher’s.

The questions of “Why isn’t our worship more informal? Why don’t we use contemporary music?,” vie with “Why are some people standing and some sitting? Why doesn’t everyone do it the same?” “Why isn’t there more silence in our worship? Why does the choir sing those contemporary anthems?”

Personally, when I am on retreat I love the quiet and reflective worship services at the retreat center I usually go to. But, on a Sunday morning, I prefer a more expressive joy (with perhaps a bit of time for quiet reflection).

Finally, I would say that there are very progressive priests and very conservative priests who do not honor their ordination vows in a variety of ways. I am not one of them. I take those vows seriously. I read Holy Scripture. I pray often. I seek to “pattern my life in accordance with the teaching of Christ.” And I “respect and [am] guided by the pastoral direction and leadership” of the bishop. I don’t agree with the Bishop of Milwaukee on every issue. We both know where we don’t agree and where we do agree. In the end, however, I honor my ordination vows. It’s an important thing to know about me because I am not just any minister. I’m an Episcopal priest. (If you are interested in the vows that a priest takes, you’ll find them on pages 531-532 of The Book of Common Prayer. This is the black book in the pews.)

I am aware that people are still trying to figure me out. More than anything else, as a priest, I am a Pastor. What I would say is that if you want to know who I am, or what I think about something, invite me to have coffee with you, or share a meal. Or just stop by and “sit a spell” as my southern seminary classmates would say. I listen well and I’d love to listen to any of your questions. If you want to really know who I am: come and talk *to me*. I promise that I will listen—to you.

Signed, with love, Debra+ (aka the Priest)

Katie Madlung: Christian Formation Coordinator

St. Christopher's welcomes Katherine (Katie) Madlung as our new Christian Formation Coordinator!

Katie will begin immediately working with our Rector in planning the Christian education of our children for the fall.

Katie is a graduate of Nicolet High School and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she graduated Summa Cum Laude, with honors, and received her degree in Early Childhood Education. She is certified in Early Childhood Education (WI).

Katie has worked as an after school teacher at the University School of Milwaukee and as a lead teacher at Huntington Learning Center. Currently, she is working part time as a tutor in private residences and at Lake Shore Middle School, in addition to working as a teacher/therapist at St. Francis Children's Academy.

Katie did her student teaching at Hartford University Avenue School and Browning Elementary School in Milwaukee.

She is married, lives in Whitefish Bay, and has one son, Jack.

Katie's references were excellent. They said things about her such as: "She's outstanding." "She's trustworthy and extremely conscientious." "She finds a way to make things work." "Can't say enough good things about her."

I was most touched by the parent who said, "She has changed our lives by the things she has taught our son. He feels good about himself when he is with her."

We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with Katie in our Christian Education program for 2011-2012.

Registration information will be coming shortly. This will be another great year in Sunday School at St. Christopher's! We hope that our children will regularly attend Sunday School to learn the stories of our faith and how to live out those stories in our complex world.



Haiti Project Thank You

St. Christopher's has received a letter from Elizabeth van de Weide, Project Coordinator for the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee Haiti Project in which she writes: "Thank you so very much for your recent contribution [Lenten collection] of \$394.00 for the purchase of a new generator for St. Marc's in Jeannette. The availability of a large generator will make it possible for electricity to allow the use of lights in the school, teachers' dormitory and clinic, power for the computers that will enhance the students' learning experiences and so many other things that will improve the quality of life and health for this community. Thank you again for your kindness and care."

Opportunities for Ministry

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY - Churches depend on their members to offer a quality worship experience. At St. Christopher's many members have provided prayerful and dedicated ministries for many years as Lectors, readers of the Prayers of the People, Acolytes and Ushers. This has been a great blessing to the parish.

We are in need for more people to offer themselves to do ministry at worship. If you are willing to minister as **Lector**, **Reader of the Prayers of the People**, **Acolyte**, or **Usher**, please contact Debra as soon as possible.

LOOKING FOR A FEW MORE CHILDREN:

Crucifers: We are looking for a few more children who might want to be trained to be crucifers. If your son or daughter is eight or older then they are old enough to be trained as a crucifer. We train them carefully so that it is a good experience for them.

Nursery Attendant Assistants: Also, we are looking for a few more young people age 12 and up who might want to work in our nursery alongside our bonded "Nannies." We pay our young people \$10 for every Sunday they work. If you are a teenager who is interested in working in our nursery on a scheduled basis, or, if you think your son or daughter might be interested, please contact Debra either after church on Sunday, by email, or call.

Various Other Opportunities

OUR NEXT GENERATION BACK-TO-SCHOOL WISH LIST

It's back to school time again. You can help Our Next Generation's kids have supplies they need to succeed! Notebooks, pens and pencils, crayons and colored pencils, glue, band-aids, folders, pencil sharpener, ruler, scissors, backpacks (new or gently used). Drop off supplies at Our Next Generation's Center at 3421 W. Lisbon Ave. between August 11 and September 15 or bring to the church office.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Sojourner Family Peace Center



Women & men are needed days, evenings, and weekends to volunteer at Sojourner Family Peace Center. We offer opportunities to volunteer on the Domestic Violence Hotline, with battered women and their children at our shelter, Sojourner Truth House, with children affected by domestic violence, with men and women in our Beyond Abuse program, at our Restraining Order Clinic in the Domestic Violence Unit at the Milwaukee District Attorney's

Office and at our Advocacy Office. A minimum of three (3) hours each week for 6 months is requested. A 1 3/4-hour evening training program begins on September 13 and continues on September 15, 20, 22 & 27, 2011 from 5:30 - 8:15 pm. All five evenings are required.

Please call Melinda Wall Piraino at 414-933-2722 or email her at melindap@familypeacecenter.org by September 9, 2011 for further information.

Mass in the Grass (and sometimes inside)

The weather this summer did not cooperate very well with Mass in the Grass. One Wednesday was so windy that the wine blew over, one was so hot that I threatened to preside inside the french doors in the air conditioning while everyone else was outside (they all agreed that the Williamsburg room was a better idea!). And one Wednesday it was pouring rain.

But those who came had a more intimate experience of worship along with little ones asking great questions like, “I’m hungry. Can I have some of that bread?”

Afterwards a light summer supper allowed for some far-ranging and great conversations. We’ll try it again next summer and pray that the weather will cooperate.



July Baptism



Avery Revell Smith, with parents Lissa and Shawn, and grandmother Catherine Davidson

101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian - Part 3

Eight more reasons to be an Episcopalian, taken from the little book entitled *101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian*. It's put out by Morehouse Publishing and is a compilation of reasons from folks in dioceses across the church.

17. My mind is Protestant and my spirit is liturgical. Where other than The Book of Common Prayer can my worship go and still have both to be happy? (Phyllis Tickle, Diocese of West Tennessee.)

18. Ours is not just a checkbook ministry. Episcopalians roll up their sleeves and help. (Agnes L. Haviland-Moore, Diocese of Connecticut.)

19. We have full-bodied worship: bow, kneel, sit, stand, kneel, hug, walk, and sometimes even raise your hands, cry, laugh, sing, shout, whisper, smell, taste, feel, touch, hold, see, and behold and on and on. (The Very Rev. Marilyn J. Engstrom, Diocese of Wyoming.)

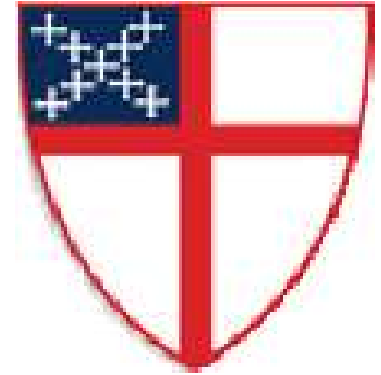
20. Where the road to Easter is never a short cut, but you always get there. (The Rev. Dr. Barbara T. Cheney, Diocese of Connecticut.)

21. Pregnant priests! Celebrating! (The Rev. Deborah Galante Seles, Diocese of Chicago.)

22. I love Anglicanism for its basic humanity, its sense of decency and order, its freedom of thought and its insistence on the corpus of faith, "those things necessary unto salvation." I love it for its tradition and for the women and men of faith who have been lights of the generations in whose company we worship. I love it for its quirkiness, its untidiness, its comprehensiveness and for its ability to receive, accept, alter or jettison new things, while being always merely and astoundingly the Church. (Father Tony Clavier, Diocese of South Dakota.)

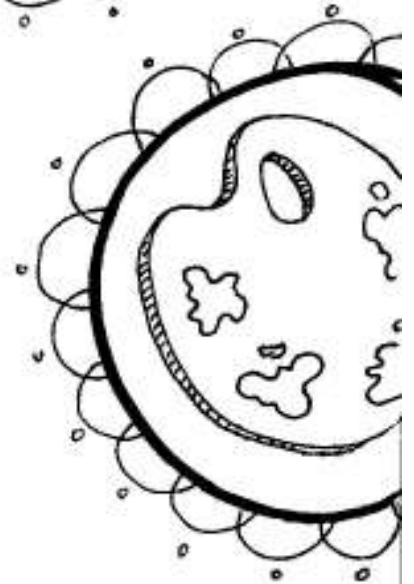
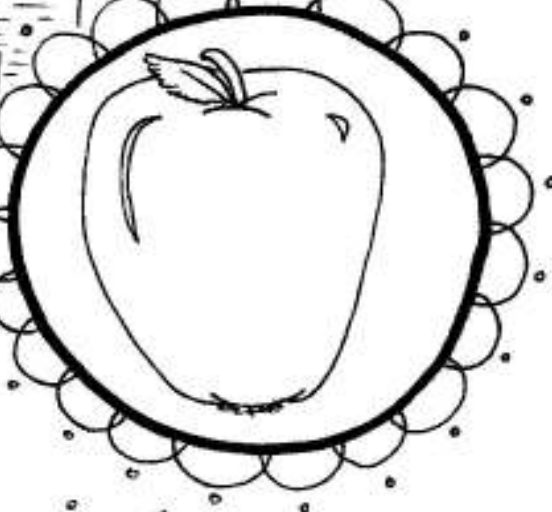
23. It's a church where you can come in without leaving your brain at the door and then have the opportunity to love all of those who managed to come in with their "wrong" ideas. (The Rt. Rev. Leo Frade, D.D., Diocese of Southeast Florida.)

24. We belong before we believe. (Joanna Wragg, Diocese of Southeast Florida.)



Coloring Page for Children

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ummer soon shall turn to fall...



L
ord, let our school days bless us all!

ministry-to-children.com

Mandy Groce '11

August MILESTONES

BIRTHDAYS

1	Jack Casey
3	Judy Scharfenberger
6	Joyce Kuehl Tom Napper
7	Michael Kennedy
8	Martha Davis Kipcak Meredith Petrie Pamela Langer Amy Ruf
10	Bob Slater
11	Rick Deuser
12	Mary Marks
13	Mitchell Bay
14	Ginny Kyle Sarah Schmidt
15	Martha Bolles John Roesner Francie Silverman
16	Abby Wigdale Maggie Wigdale
17	Maddie Gotz Kathy Rostad Henry Uihlein
18	Will Bartlett Ran Hamner
20	Tom Dobrowits Terry Hausmann Jason Weseman
21	Mitch Coburn Diane Eisen
24	Jon Jamel
25	David Sande John Thickers William Warner
28	John Housiaux Nancy Warner
29	Janie Asmuth Amy Clark Helen Sheen Olivia Weseman
30	Lily Ruf Mickey Ruf

ANNIVERSARIES

2	Jen & Mike Darrow
6	Rosemary & Dick Fritz
7	Bonnie Thomson & Don Callahan Heidi & Casey Brunner
14	Stephanie & James Klas Jennifer & Scott Weigel
16	Susan & Brent Martin Julie & John Kennedy Karin & Jon Jamel
22	Jennifer & Darrell Fischer
24	Jayne & Mark Heffron
25	Jackie & Jack Greeley
29	Ann & Fred Stratton Hattie & Ted Purtell
31	Kathy & John Housiaux

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Youth Group: youth@stchristopherswi.org

Caring Ministry: caring@stchristopherswi.org

Website: www.stchristopherswi.org

Parish Office

Open Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Staff

The Rev. Debra Trakel, *Rector*

Gust Olson III, *Parish Administrator*

John Beardsley, *Music Director*

Gloria Bond, *Housekeeper*

Michael Schneider, *Building & Grounds Supervisor*

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

Debbie Roesner and Bonnie Thomson, *Wardens*

Florence Parnegg and Susan Hackl, *Clerks*

(2012) - MaryBeth Ansley, Jeni Piper

(2013) - Ginger Browne, Diane Eisen,

Judy Scharfenberger

(2014) - Diane Andersen, Darrell Fischer

Committee and Ministry Contacts

Altar Flowers: Roz Krause

Altar Guild: Roz Krause, Mary Jane Perry

Acolytes: MaryBeth Ansley

Building & Grounds: Diane Andersen

Caring Ministry: Mary Jane Perry, Helen Sheen

Endowment: Erik Andersen

Finance Subcommittee: Charlie Krause

Flower Guild: Hattie Purtell, Helen Sheen

Labyrinth: Catherine Davidson

Memorial Garden: Helen Sheen

Outreach: Steve Petrie

Prayer Chain: Chilly Braun, Kathy Housiaux

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Dated material

This issue was mailed on August 4th, 2011

THE COURIER

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. Debra Trakel, *Rector*



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