



# THE COURIER

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

January 2012

THE RECTOR'S MUSINGS

*"See how those Christians love one another."*

When Jeff Lee, now Bishop Lee, was the fifth Rector of St. Christopher's he brought with him the phrase, still quoted by some, "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing."

When Scott Stoner was the sixth Rector of St. Christopher's he brought with him the phrase, still used on our letterhead, "Christianity is not just a religion, it's a way of life."

The seventh Rector of St. Christopher's also has a favorite phrase. It is: "Love has a look to it." It has a corollary, that the Vestry has heard, "*How* we do what we do is as important as what we do." If you asked the people from my former parish, they'd have been able to quote me immediately. I said it that often.

Love has a look to it.

Love is the defining characteristic of a Christian. It's what has always drawn people to our way of life. It's the main thing.

I don't make resolutions for the new year. I used to when I was younger but I was never able to keep up with the list of them for very long. (It was generally a long list!) Now, I just look over my life every day and ask the question, "how well did I love today?"

Sometimes I don't like the answer. Sometimes I do. But I always know.

Love does have a look to it. But, of course, love does not always look the same to everyone. Just ask a teenager if they feel "loved" when you tell them you won't give them what they want because you know it's not what they need. (Even if "everyone else is doing it.") If you are a parent, you know if you are saying no to them out of love, or out of some other motivation. You do know.

While love may not look the same to all of us, each of us knows when what *we* are doing comes from a heart of love. And that's what I think about at the close of every day. Was my heart loving today to the people I met? If not, what am I going to do about that?

The point of my favorite phrase is that it is not enough to tell someone you "love" them. It is not enough to say you "love your neighbor." It's not enough to pray in the prayer of St. Francis, "grant that I may not seek... so much to be loved, as to love."

Love has a *look* to it. It often takes sacrifice. It takes modifying our behavior to be loving. Love can be very costly.

Love has a look to it. Let it be what people see when they come to our church. Love has a look to it. A blessed new year to each of you. With love, Debra+

# Warden's Words

What did you get for Christmas? What did Santa bring you? Did you get what you wanted? These are three of the most commonly asked questions that are often posed in the weeks following December 25<sup>th</sup>. Most people answer with a list of items they received. Children will often tell you about their favorite gift OR tell you what they didn't get. And when people tell you what wonderful things they received they are often beaming with delight.

Well, I have to tell you what I got for Christmas—a new camera. I feel just like a little kid with a new wonderful toy. This is a “grown-up” camera—not just another point and shoot digital one that I can pop into my purse. I got a camera that is a CAM-ERA. You know, with an interchangeable lens, filters, fancy bag, video ability—the works!

This camera will require a bit of a learning curve on my part. I will have to learn how to use all the bells and whistles. I will have to take my time and be willing to experiment. I know I will take some good pictures, some ok pictures and some not-so-ok pictures. I will have to learn how to look through the viewer from a different mindset. Perhaps more importantly, I will need to adopt an open mindset. I will be learning to look for the perfect shot, just the right angle, just the right light and probably drive my family nuts.

It is a bit intimidating, this new toy of mine. I looked at it for a few days before I began to get it set up and ready to use. I wanted to have enough time to do it just right. Well, the reality of that possibility happening was quickly replaced by needing to just get at it. Sit down and start. Jump in with both feet. Be willing to make a mistake or two. Get frustrated. Walk away, and come back to it.

I do have to admit that the delete feature with digital cameras is both a blessing and a curse. You know when the shot is lousy right away so—DELETE! But then, how do you know that the shot is really bad? And finally, I will just have to go forward, take the pictures and print them. Have faith that the photos will all develop just as they should.

My new camera is a bit like the year ahead for St. Christopher's. 2012 has all the makings of my new toy. We will be adding new members to the Vestry that will bring new thoughts and ideas—just like my new fancy lens and filters. We will begin to look through a new lens together and continue to chart our path. As a Parish, we will be adopting a new budget based on 2012 pledges and historical costs.

As a community, we will continue to make decisions about our future: next week, next month and the years to come. Just as with my camera, we will be looking for just the right angle, just the right shot and just the right light. Our learning curve may be steep at times. We may make a mistake or two. We will have to learn to look through our camera lens with an open mindset. We will have to be willing to “take the pictures and print them.”

And we will need to have faith that the photos we take together will all develop just as they should.

Peace,

Debbie Roesner  
Senior Warden



## The Book of Common Prayer: The Collects

Our journey through The Book of Common Prayer has now reached the section entitled “The Collects for the Church Year.” (For anyone who is actually paying attention, I have skipped the Great Litany. At St. Christopher’s, we most often say or chant the Litany during Lent, so I’ll address it as we get closer to Ash Wednesday.) Beginning on page 157, the collects account for more than 100 pages of the BCP. But what the heck is a collect, anyway? We know that the collect appointed for a particular Sunday appears early in the Eucharist, before the readings, and that it is printed on the scripture insert, and that collects have both a traditional form (for those of us who celebrate Rite I) and a contemporary form (for the Rite II enthusiasts among us.) Essentially, the collect does exactly what the name implies – it *collects* (emphasis this time on the second syllable) the essence of the readings for the day, helping us to focus on the particular message that links the various readings and the Gospel. Reading through the collects for a season (or for the entire church year) gives us a sense of how the church year unfolds through the scripture we read. The collect for the Epiphany is a good illustration of how the collect works to “tie together” the themes of the Epiphany:

Oh God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Bonnie M. Thomson  
Junior Warden

## Books for Kids

St. Christopher’s responded generously to the request to provide the students of Our Next Generation with new books for Christmas. Our Next Generation is a neighborhood after-school program which provides tutors for school age children. The staff at ONG is developing a new program to help improve reading levels. Owning a book is a real incentive to read for pleasure and thus improve reading skill.

Thirty students received a personal wrapped gift with two new books at the ONG Christmas party on December 19. The students themselves made suggestions of specific titles or types of books that interested them. We even had some extra donated books which were given to the library at ONG.

Thanks to all who participated in this Christmas outreach endeavor.

Carolyn Davies for the Outreach Committee



**Save the Date!**  
**Sunday, January 29, 2012:**  
**Annual Meeting and Potluck after 10 AM Service**

**(and the budget will be presented)**

# Alcohol Use in Church

Some information about your Rector: I am not a tee totaler. If I am somewhere where I don't have to drive, I appreciate a Southern Comfort on the rocks or a good cognac (I am born and bred in Wisconsin after all, the brandy capital of the world!). I am not too much of a wine drinker but fell in love with good Chianti Classico the second time I was in Italy and toured a winery in Tuscany. For me, with Italian food, nothing tastes better.

What I don't do is drink and drive so most of you will never see me drink unless you are at my house, or perhaps if we are at diocesan Convention on an overnight.

I have heard numbers of rumors about what I think about drinking in general, and drinking at St. Christopher's, in particular. This article is an attempt to provide some clarity. I offer it with a gentle reminder that if you want to know what I think, you can always just ask me. Perhaps you have noticed that I'm not shy about sharing my opinions (she said with a grin).

First, you should know that I certainly do have *personal opinions* about drinking in church. But in relationship to alcohol use at church, I do not make any *decisions* without the vestry. In these last two years what that has resulted in is the vestry deciding that at children oriented church activities we will not serve alcohol and that at adult oriented activities we will.

Honestly, my *personal opinion* is that I do not think there is a need for people to drink at church related activities. Since none of us lives at the church it means that many who will drink at the church are going to have to drive with alcohol in their system. And that worries me. But, it's my personal worry and my personal opinion. For those of you who might think that "the Rector always gets her way" here is one significant way in which I do not. The vestry and I make these decisions together.

I heard recently from a parish leader that there was a concern raised that we did not have wine at the Agape meal last Holy Week. We did indeed have wine at the meal. She insisted that we had not. I laughed and said, "yes, we did."

What changed is that we served the wine rather than putting bottles out on the table. This, too, was not my decision, although I think it is a good one. Our Wardens checked with our insurance carrier and our policy dictates that if we are going to have alcohol at church events it must be served. So, serve it we did. We actually pre-poured glasses which we will not do this year since we ended up throwing out a fair amount of very good wine. Although the vestry and I have not talked about it yet this year, I would be surprised if we did not have wine again at the Agape meal.

Some of you are probably wondering why this was not an issue in the past. I really don't have an answer to that except to say that now we know what our policy says and we need to be in compliance with it.

You should also know that we are also expected to have a "suitably attractive non-alcoholic alternative" at church events if we choose to serve alcohol. We will also comply with this expectation. This just makes sense.

Here is the thing: everyone who is reading this article knows that alcohol abuse and alcoholism is a problem in our society. Everyone who is reading this article likely knows someone in their immediate sphere whose life is impacted by the mis-use of alcohol or by alcoholism. (These are, of course, two separate issues—one is a disease process and the other is not.)

(continued on p. 5)

## 8 AM Worship Survey

Several months ago a serious concern was raised by one of our members that the 8AM worship service was longer than it used to be. This individual believed that there was more music during the service than in previous years, and it seemed that the sermons are now longer than they were in the past. It was suggested that it might be better for 8AM attendance if the service were shorter.

There are many different ways that the 8AM liturgy could be constructed; some taking more time than others. I knew I was not willing to shorten my sermons any more than I already have from those I preached at my previous parish. And, I also knew that I did not have the time to construct separate sermons for the two services we have.

So, I decided that I would survey those members who frequently attend the 8AM service around other issues that affect the length of the service and then use the data to help me make decisions about that service. And the response to the survey was gratifying. Twenty-five people took the time to fill it in and send it back.

The results surprised me in some areas. What I learned is that, in general, people felt strongly about the service. And after the survey was distributed I learned that people mostly thought that they agreed with one another. But finally, what the data shows, is that the 8:00clockers agree on *absolutely nothing*.

What I will do now is use the data to respond to people's expressed desires as we change our service booklets to correspond with the seasons of the church year. I have teasingly said to some of the 8:00clockers that everyone will get to be equally unhappy. Or perhaps, after they see the data, they will understand that they do not in fact agree on what they want, and that if they are patient, the season will change and the next time they may get more of what they want.

To all of you who responded to the survey I send my gratitude. Here are the results (with some of the commentary that people also sent in.) You will note that the numbers do not always add up to twenty-five. Some folks did not respond to the question numerically, but in prose.

### **Question 1—number of hymns:**

No hymns—4 said yes.

One hymn—8 said yes.

Two hymns—8 said yes.

More than two hymns—3 said yes.

(continued on p. 6)

## Alcohol Use in Church (cont.)

Our church community is not immune to these issues. Many people come to church as part of their attempts to keep problems with alcohol out of their lives. Finding alcohol at church events makes those attempts more difficult. In general, those folks will stay away from church events and that saddens me. But my feelings do not dictate church policy on this issue.

The vestry and I will continue to talk over issues related to the use of alcohol event by event at the church. That is the way we have decided to handle alcohol use at the church. Together, we will continue to try and make good decisions for the whole of our church community.

## 8 AM Worship Survey (cont.)

### *Commentary on question 1:*

“Don’t care—no more than two if we continue with hymns.”

“Sing one hymn at the offertory—does not have to be so many verses.”

“One hymn at the offertory.”

“No more than three verses.”

“More than two hymns, but only two verses each, and some ‘better hymns’—some are so oddly worded they distract.”

“I’m ambivalent on how many hymns but not more than two.”

“Music too loud—it does not matter how many hymns.”

### **Question 2—desired service music:**

Singing the Gloria—11 said yes; 12 said no.

Singing the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)—17 said yes; 7 said no.

Singing the Lamb of God—15 said yes; 8 said no.

Singing the Kyrie (during Lent)—14 said yes; 8 said no.

### *Commentary on question 2:*

“Prefer to sing service music more than hymns.”

“I like the Lamb of God, but if one has to go, I’d opt for this.”

“Gloria—with piano much better.”

One person said they were ambivalent about service music but “did not need any of it.”

Another person did not mark anything but that they could “go either way” on it all.

### **Question 3—Continuing to say the Prayer of St. Francis:**

21 said yes.

1 person said no. This person felt very strongly about their “no” and suggested a return to the Prayer of Humble Access.

1 person said they could go either way; “whatever the majority wants.”

### **Question 4—Eliminating all music from the 8AM service:**

3 said yes.

20 said no.

### *Commentary on question 4:*

One person did not mark anything but said, “Okay with me.”

One person said, “no opinion.”

One person answered their “no” followed by an “absolutely not!”

One person commented that they felt the prelude and the recessional with a hymn were important.

### **Question 5—Use Rite 1 (Prayer II—what we are currently using) or change to Rite 2, Prayer A.**

Rite 1—10 said yes.

Rite 2—10 said yes.

(continued on next page)

## Children's Christian Formation

Dear St. Christopher's,

I just want to start by thanking everyone for making this year's Christmas pageant so wonderful! The children did an amazing job, and it was due to all the parents, parent volunteers, teachers, and staff chipping in and doing their part to help make it run so smoothly. I had a great time working with everyone, especially the children, and helping put it all together. I hope all of you involved had as much fun as I did. Thank you again to all of you!



In the coming weeks, the children are going to be learning more about Jesus. They will be talking and learning about how part of our work as people of God is to recognize Jesus as God's son and believe in him. In order to accomplish this, the children will be learning about Jesus' powers to heal, forgive, speak to and inspire the people, and love.

Thank you again for all of your help and support with the pageant. I'm looking forward to continuing to teach all of your children in 2012. I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year!



Warmest regards,

Katie Madlung

## 8 AM Worship Survey (cont.)

*Commentary on question 5:*

"I personally do not feel that the 8AM service is too long, but I do like Rite 2 better."

"No opinion on this."

"Doesn't matter to me."

"Don't care. What about Morning Prayer?"

"If we abandon Rite 1, I would seriously consider going elsewhere."

Rector's closing commentary: This was an interesting exercise. I learned some things about the 8AM worshipping community. I hope they did, too. My final hope is that people do not stop coming to worship because the service is ten minutes longer or shorter given the season. My hope is that people come to worship God in all seasons.

# Outreach Committee Activity

## 2011 Endowment Grant Funding Approved

For 2011 the Outreach Committee focused on hunger, particularly the needs of children. A critical first step was the establishment of a new process for the evaluation and recommended funding of grant requests. The committee's newly developed Mission Statement provides two (2) essential guidelines:

- The Outreach Committee of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church works to spread the word of God through serving others;
- We listen to and care deeply about the needs of the people in our immediate community and will work so that others will be inspired to be involved in outreach ministry.

This led to the establishment of the following criteria:

- Is the project relevant to our area of focus?
- Is the project specific, quantifiable and measurable?
- Is the grant application accurate and complete?
- Will the project make a significant impact; are the requested grant funds critical to the success of the project?

Mini-grant applications, ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 each, were solicited from an initial list of twenty (20) agencies/programs with ten (10) grant applications being submitted. The focus was on smaller programs for several reasons, including:

- With grant funds a more significant portion of the program/project budget, the impact is both more critical and more readily measured.
- Having a more obvious impact aids in fulfilling the second of the Mission Statement guidelines: offer opportunities which might inspire others to become involved in outreach ministry.

After individual evaluation of each application, committee members then came together to discuss the projects, share their individual ratings and determine which projects to put forward for possible funding.

While all the proposed projects/programs had merit, The Outreach Committee was unanimous in the opinion that the six (6) applications with the highest collective ratings best met the established criteria and recommended to the Vestry that the requested funding—totaling \$15,000—be granted. The recommendation was approved at the December 2011 Vestry meeting and funds will be disbursed to the successful applicants, described below, by mid-January 2012:

## Our Next Generation

Amount Granted: \$3,000

Program Description: The Healthy Now program provides meals and health and nutrition education for children in their K-12 after school and evening program. The goal is to improve the already existing Healthy Now education program focusing on assisting high-risk youth to broaden their definition of health and wellness by adding a Healthy Meals component that will provide elementary and secondary school students with healthy meals as they attend their educational programs.

Evaluation: Attendance records; satisfaction surveys; anecdotal evidence and behavior observation.

(continued on p. 9)

# Outreach Committee Activity (cont.)

## **Casa Maria:**

Amount Granted: \$3,000

Program Description: a) supplement food (mostly fresh fruits and vegetables) that is donated for the meals cooked at Casa Maria (\$1,000.00);  
b) infant/toddler needs (\$500.00 for formula and bottles);  
c) food for families that have recently transitioned out of Casa Maria and are in situations of food emergency (\$500.00);  
d) food for healthy lunches/dinners when families are away from Casa Maria whether seeking employment/ housing, attending classes, or other appointments (\$1,000.00).

## **St. Catherine's Food Pantry:**

Amount Granted: \$3,000

Program Description: Emergency food pantry supplying three days of food to residents in the Sherman Park area, funded entirely by donations and staffed completely by volunteers, with 100% of funds used for food purchases.

## **Pathfinders:**

Amount Granted: \$3,000

Program Description: Provide food support for their Runaway and Homeless Youth Services, including a youth shelter which houses and/or supports 325 youth annually, street outreach programming which assists homeless youth over 4,500 times each year, supported housing for young adults, and the recently launched Drop-In Center for Homeless and Exploited Youth.

## **St. Hyacinth Food Pantry:**

Amount Granted: \$2,000

Program Description: An all-volunteer program providing food; infant needs including food, formula, diapers; school supplies; clothing to the families in the neighborhood surrounding St. Hyacinth Parish.

## **Riverwest Food Pantry:**

Amount Granted: \$1,000

Program Description: Provide an extra nutritional item(s) of food per month that is "kid friendly" to families and children in the zip code areas of 53211, 53212, and 53217.

\*\*\*\*\*

For the Outreach Committee

Harry Ansley



# Events in January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8 & 10 AM: Holy Eucharist No Sunday School, Nursery open	2 Office closed	3	4	5 7 AM: Holy Eucharist & Discussion	6	7
8 8 & 10 AM: Holy Eucharist Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open De-Greening the Church; 11:20 AM Outreach Cttee	9	10	11	12 7 AM: Holy Eucharist & Discussion	13	14 9:45 - 1:15: St. Christopher's at The Gathering
15 8 & 10 AM: Holy Eucharist Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open	16	17	18	19 7 AM: Holy Eucharist & Discussion	20	21
22 8 & 10 AM: Holy Eucharist Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open	23	24 6:30 PM: Vestry Meeting	25	26 7 AM: Holy Eucharist & Discussion	27	28
29 8 & 10 AM: Holy Eucharist Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open Potluck & Annual Meeting	30	31				

## Cookies & Carols



On Sunday, December 18th, over forty parishioners joined in the community room at St. Christopher's for the first annual "Cookies and Carols" event. The goal of this event was two-fold: to help develop fellowship amongst St. Christopher's parishioners and to also introduce the young children of our parish to traditional Christmas hymns.

parishioners joined in rousing renditions of tunes ranging from "Jingle Bells," and



Tom Davies did a spectacular job donating his time and talents to be our pianist for the event. With Tom's musical whimsy tickling the ivories, "O, Come All Ye Faithful," to "Once in David's Royal City" and a plethora of other tunes in the process. Children of all ages enjoyed decorating cookies and sharing in fellowship during the event. Special thanks to everyone who brought goodies to share, and especially the Tobin family who donated a lot of the undecorated cookies and fixings for everyone to enjoy. We hope to make "Cookies and Carols" a tradition at St. C's and a great way for parishioners young and old to gather and enjoy the Spirit of the season.



Will & Jeni Piper

## January MILESTONES

### BIRTHDAYS

1	Lilias Bruce James Schmidt
2	Nick Geimer Dan Moorehead Nathan Sande
4	Chilly Braun
5	Peter FitzGerald Nathan Holmes Ginny Shackleton
6	Dave Belfus Mike Bay
7	Lauren Schroeder
9	Charlie Krause Janet Lopez
10	Emma Holbrook
11	Thomas Davies Brandon Klas Jane Thomas
12	Cap Borges
13	Joseph Danas Claire Napper
14	David Lopez Laura Marlin
15	Lois Degener
17	Clyde Kipcak Mary Jane Perry
18	Bill Bolles
19	Leslie Latterell Bonnedä Siebecker
20	Sofia Grehn
21	Carolyn Molter
23	Malcolm Greaves
26	Scott Schroeder
27	Will Hausmann
28	Tommy Gough Mary Lee Jacobs
29	Nicklaus Ziskind
30	Grant Bay Michelle Gotz Ryan Kennedy Will Perry

### ANNIVERSARIES

7	Kathie Eilers & Barry Blackwell Mary & Rick Thickers
9	Ann & Rick Deuser
25	Juli & Matt Coburn

## ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

7845 N. River Road River Hills WI 53217

Phone: 414 352-0380 Fax: 414 352-0381

Email: office@stchristopherswi.org

Rector's Email: revdebra@aol.com

Children's Ministry: children@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*

Katie Madlung, *Christian Formation Coordinator*

Gloria Bond, *Housekeeper*

Michael Schneider, *Building & Grounds Supervisor*

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

Debbie Roesner and Bonnie Thomson, *Wardens*

Susan Hackl & Beth Freydank, *Co-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:** Judy Scharfenberger

**Acolytes:** MaryBeth Ansley

**Building & Grounds:** Diane Andersen

**Hospitality Ministry:** (contact the office)

**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

7845 North River Road  
River Hills, Wisconsin 53217-3025  
Phone: (414) 352-0380 Fax: (414) 352-0381

Non Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Milwaukee WI  
Permit No. 1643

Email: [office@stchristopherswi.org](mailto:office@stchristopherswi.org)  
Rector's Email: [revdebra@aol.com](mailto:revdebra@aol.com)  
Web Page: [www.stchristopherswi.org](http://www.stchristopherswi.org)

Address Service Requested

Dated material

This issue was mailed on January 5th, 2012

## 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.*