



THE COURIER

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

November 2011

THE RECTOR'S MUSINGS

Many people have said to me in the past month and a half since “the fall,” that they will and are praying for me. I believe that they are and I believe in the efficacy of prayer. I am grateful for the prayers of the folks who offer them.

Some people have gone a bit further and have asked, “what should I pray for?” In the beginning, when I was so frustrated by my inability to do much by myself, I asked people to pray for *patience* for me. And it's still not a bad thing to pray for.

But I realized several weeks ago that what I really needed folks to be praying for was not *patience* but *trust*.

I am immersed in life issues right now that require me to trust beyond where I am perhaps naturally inclined to trust.

During the surgery process I needed to trust in the doctors. I went to Froedtert, which is a teaching hospital. The orthopedic surgeon who was the attending physician on my case is world class. But there were a plethora of medical students and residents who were also involved in my care. (And, seriously, I absolutely believe that some of them could *not* have been older than sixteen!) I needed to trust that they would all know enough to do what needed to be done to repair my torn quad tendon.

And I need to trust in myself. And I need to trust in you. And I need to trust that both areas of trust are not misplaced.

How hard it is to trust. We know that if we trust we make ourselves vulnerable to being hurt. Most of us have been hurt somewhere along the line by someone we have trusted. How hard it is to trust again.

Some of you have asked about Jamie and how she is doing. Her first chemotherapy protocol (which made her so very sick) ultimately did not work for her. So, she is now on another protocol. She appears to be frisky and happy. I need to trust in the oncology veterinarian that we are doing everything we can for this little life I love so much. Trust is hard.

And then, of course, there is God—and Jesus. Most importantly I need to trust in God. I need to trust that God is with me on this journey I am on right now. That every faltering step I take right now, and always, is undergirded by God's love for me. I need to trust that God has not abandoned me, even when it feels like that's what might have happened.

And I need to trust that God is with *us* on this journey we are on together. A former and beloved parishioner of mine is fond of saying (in a lilting British accent), “I say, God's timing is perfect you know.” I need to trust that she is right.

(continued on p. 2)

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Right now as we talk at St. Christopher's about the gifts that God has given us as a parish, the good things that are happening among us, and the gifts that God has given each of you individually, we need to trust in one another. We need to trust that generosity of heart and spirit will take center stage in the weeks, months, and years ahead of us. We need to trust in one another's good will.

I saw a quote recently in one of those "Coffee News" sheets that you get at Culver's that reads:

"There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life—happiness, freedom and peace of mind—are always attained by giving them to someone else." (Peyton C. March)

It's hard to trust that giving up the things that mean the most to us will result in us getting that which we need. But, we're Christians. Jesus gave up *everything* so that he could get what he needed.

Which was us.

Now that's something to trust in. Debra+

Warden's Words

I had the privilege of acolyting this past Sunday. And I really do mean the privilege, as it happened to be the baptism of Emma Holbrook who is cuteness personified with a personality to match. I have been to many baptisms over the years but never had the honor of being so up close and personal (with the exception of the baptisms of my three daughters). During the part of the service where the parents, godparents and congregation vow to support the candidate in their life long journey with Christ, young Miss Emma chimed right along in. We all chuckled at her apparently quite deliberate participation. The service continued with the obligatory dousing of the head with water, anointing with oil and applause for the newest member of Christ's family. Now of course we were all enamored by this darling girl but make no mistake, Emma's vocal offerings were heard loud and clear. I am quite sure that she wanted us to hear her voice in the midst of all the pomp and circumstance that surrounds a baptism. She wanted to be counted. She wanted to be heard.



As I reflected back on this charming moment I thought about the family of St. Christopher's and how, just like Emma, we want to be heard. We want to be heard by each other, by Debra and most of all by Christ. That is what brings us together on Sundays, at committee meetings, Vestry meetings, Outreach opportunities, funerals, baptisms—you name it—whenever we gather.

Our community has an incredible opportunity in the next few weeks for our collective voices to be heard as the Stewardship Advisory Group invites each of us to participate in small or large group gatherings to explore the next chapter in the life of St. Christopher's. Yes, the financial picture and health of our parish is on the agenda but so is the opportunity to share our individual and collective dreams about where St. Christopher's is right now and where it is going. I encourage each and every one of you to attend either a small group gathering in one of our parishioner's homes or one of the coffee hours following services during the month of November. Come be part of the process, to listen and to be heard. Just like Emma.

Peace,
Debbie Roesner, Senior Warden

Not Just Another Saturday

Walk through the doors around 9:30 AM on a Saturday at St. Andrew's, one of The Gathering's three weekly lunch sites, and the first thing you notice are the smells wafting from the kitchen. Say, "hi" to those already there, put on your apron and hat and the morning starts.

First we crowd into the kitchen to find out exactly what it is that smells so good and then we begin wiping down the tables, setting out the chairs, buttering bread, arranging cookies, "rolling" utensils, wrapping bread and—always—talking, sharing and laughing. By about 11:15 AM we're ready to set out the food, offer a prayer and get ready to serve.

While the food is being placed on the line, the volunteers decide who will serve each dish. A typical lunch includes a hot entree, starch, vegetable, salad, fruit, dessert and beverage (we ask our volunteers to bring milk and/or cookies). At 11:30 AM we open the doors.

Since guests at each site reflect the characteristics of that area, we host more women, more children, more families, less homeless and fewer people overall at St. Andrew's than do the other sites. Our guests enjoy a relaxing and well-prepared meal (Julie Wolf, a professional chef, and her husband John are usually the volunteer cooks when we are there) in their own "neighborhood center." Our volunteers, with more time to connect with their guests, gain invaluable feedback—feedback which never fails to validate the need for and value of their efforts. Amazing what good food, a genuine smile and a heart-felt "Good morning!" can do to foster good will!

Typically, we serve around 80 people; last month was much busier with 146 guests! We got "blessed" even more than usual that day!

After the doors close around 12:30 PM the volunteers join together for lunch – it is *always* good. Then we clean-up the tables, stack the chairs, sweep the floor, turn out the lights and say good-bye until our next opportunity to be a part of The Gathering's dedicated group of "people in community feeding the hungry."

St. Christopher's has been closely involved with The Gathering on many levels since its inception nearly 30 years ago and, for some time now, has regularly provided volunteer groups at the St. Andrew's site. Along with our "old hands," many families have found this to be a great opportunity to introduce their children (frequently as young as 9 or 10) to the next level of outreach—one where that palpable feedback could help to cement a commitment to a lifetime of caring and giving.

Our next opportunity is on Saturday November 12th—it's usually every other month on the second Saturday, but look for information 2-3 weeks in advance in Sunday inserts, Weekly Updates and on the Community Room bulletin board.

We hope you will consider joining us—again, or for the first time. It's not just another Saturday; it's a chance to live what we pray:

"it is in giving that we receive."

Contact Harry Ansley (hfansley@yahoo.com ; 414-731-8350) or MaryBeth Ansley (meansley@mac.com) for more information.

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Qs from the Pews

Dear Priest,

Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus? Signed, Skeptical

Dear Skeptical,

Yes, I believe in the resurrection of Jesus.

I am tempted to leave it at that but I am guessing that your question has a “why?” after it, anticipating my answer.

I have done quite a lot of funerals or memorials since I have come to St. Christopher’s. In general, I appreciate doing funerals more than weddings because most Christians come to funerals wanting to hear the promises of our faith. People’s hearts (and ears) are wide open at funerals. “Tell me,” they almost beg. “Tell me that there is more. Tell me the promises of our faith. Tell me about the resurrection after death.”

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a central tenet of our faith as Christians. We pray during one of our Eucharistic Prayers on Sunday, “Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.” For me, those are not empty words.

Here’s the thing, I don’t really know *how* Jesus was resurrected. And I don’t really care what happened on the molecular level. (Anymore than I care about what happens on the molecular level to the bread and wine on Sunday as it becomes the body and the blood of Christ .)

But *that* Jesus returned on the third day following his death, that the disciples profoundly experienced his presence in an absolutely real way, that he was buried in a tomb and rose again. Yes, I believe all of that.

Our sacraments derive their power from our belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ and thus we pray each Sunday in the Nicene Creed, “On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures.”

I read in the Scriptures the experiences that the early Church had of seeing Jesus again. And then I have my own experiences of Jesus today, and my own experiences of death and resurrection, and I think, “how can I not believe in His resurrection?”

I do understand that some contemporary scholars consider the biblical accounts of Jesus’ resurrection to be completely derived from the experiences of Jesus’ followers and the Apostle Paul. And maybe that’s true.

But your question to me was, “Do you believe in the resurrection?” And the answer is, “yes, I do.”
Signed, the Priest

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.

Stewardship Advisory Group

The 2011 stewardship campaign is about to begin and this year is going to be a little different. I am happy to tell you that we are blessed to have the assistance of several parishioners who have voluntarily come together to form a stewardship advisory group—henceforth to be known as SAG!

They took on this challenge because they feel very strongly about the community that is St. Christopher's and want to ensure that we not only survive, but thrive. They have spent many hours thinking outside the box about how best to engage everyone in this process so we can insure a successful outcome and build on all the positive things that are happening in our church.

But the difference with this year's campaign doesn't end there. The next part involves you, because we need your advice and support to make it all happen. The activities planned in the next several weeks will offer you the chance to come together to talk about the community that is St. Christopher's, what that personally means to you, celebrate our many blessings and successes, and do problem solving together on the challenges that face us.

I encourage you to respond with an open heart and mind when you are contacted by the members of SAG and hear what they have to say. Make time for them in the way you feel most comfortable, but please make time for them!

Sincerely,
Diane Andersen, Vestry liaison to SAG

View from the Vestry

So, what do we do at these monthly vestry meetings anyway? The first order of business at the vestry is always to center ourselves on God and focus our work. We begin with a check-in and share where we have been in our spiritual lives for the past month. Some of the questions in the past have included, "If you could be God for the day, what would you do?" (boy, that one got some interesting responses!) and "Where have you seen God in your life in the past week?"

The Vestry's main job is to manage the finances of the church. We spend time reviewing the monthly income and expenditures and projecting the same for the upcoming month, courtesy of our acting treasurer and warden, Debbie Roesner. We discuss and vote upon financial decisions that the church has to make, like building maintenance and repairs. We work hard to weigh and balance our parish's needs along with being good stewards of our church's finances, dedicating ourselves to operate the parish based on the budget that we set. Debra gives us a "state of the church" report each month, detailing some of the building and grounds issues, membership changes, updates on the various ministries of the church, Christian formation, programming, and upcoming events in our parish. Additionally, we decide on what articles will be included in the Courier each month. Various committees and subcommittees will come to report on an as-needed basis. This month, we heard reports from the outreach committee, and voted on funding their projects from the endowment. We also heard from the stewardship committee, as our stewardship campaign is in progress.

Parishioners are encouraged to talk with members of the vestry regarding the work that we are doing. Please feel free to talk with any one of us about any questions that you might have. Vestry meetings are always open for anyone in the parish to attend. Vestry minutes will be available to read on the bulletin board after they have been approved by the vestry.

Jeni Piper

Children's Ministry

Dear St. Christopher's,

This last month the children have been busy working on many different and exciting projects. Your kids have been learning about Jacob's stories, and his relationship with his sons, especially Joseph. Last week all the classes learned the story of Joseph. They learned about his ability to interpret dreams, and about the famous coat that Jacob gave him. After hearing Joseph's stories, each child made a different color square with a scene from the story. I attached each square to a coat and recreated Joseph's multi-colored coat. The coat is now hanging downstairs in the hallway for all the students, parents, and other church members to enjoy. Please come down and look at some of the artwork and projects our Sunday school children have created.



This past Sunday October 30th the children spent time decorating boxes for the food drive we'll be starting next Sunday November 6, 2011. All the classes are working on collecting food to give to a food shelter in the North Shore area. This ties in nicely with our lessons on Joseph since he helped the Egyptians collect and distribute food to people in need during the seven-year famine. Our food drive will run from November 6th through November 20th. Anyone who is willing to help us by donating non-perishable food items is welcome too, and the generosity would be much appreciated!

Looking ahead to the next few Sundays, the students will be learning the story of Moses and the burning bush, stories of David and the challenges he faced in becoming king, and the story of Jonah and the whale. We will still be focusing on the themes of respecting God, being willing to respond to Him when He calls on us, and believing He exists among us even though we can't see Him. These themes will take us up to Sunday November 27, 2011, which would have been our first lesson in Advent. **We are, however, canceling Sunday school on November 27th because two teachers are not available and I will be out of town. Nonetheless, we will still have the kids learn about and participate in Advent lessons the first three Sundays in December. That will take us right up to the Christmas Pageant on December 24th.**

Thank you for all of your help and support in making this a great start to the Sunday school year. It's been a truly remarkable and rewarding experience getting to know all of you and your children. I'm really looking forward to the weeks and months ahead.

Warmest regards,
Katie Madlung

Praying into Advent

LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY - This fall, on the first four Tuesdays of November, from 7-8:30 PM we will gather together to learn about and talk about prayer. We will talk about how to pray, why to pray, and when to pray. We'll talk about what prayer is and what it is not. We'll talk about how we pray, how we want to pray and how others pray.

These sessions are open to the diocese of Milwaukee and we hope to talk with people from other parishes. But, mostly, we'll be meeting together as members of our parish interested in prayer; that sacred dialogue with God.

If you are interested in learning how to pray, or praying differently, or just talking about issues of prayer I hope to see you at the church. You do not need to come to all of the sessions to come to any one of them. I am glad to talk with anyone seeking more information before deciding to come.

Please call the church office to let us know to expect you. Debra+

ADVENT QUIET DAY TO BE HOSTED AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S - An Advent Quiet Day will be held at St. Christopher's on Saturday, December 3, from 9 AM - 3 PM. It will be led by The Rt. Rev. Ed Leidel, and co-sponsored by St. Christopher's and Christ Church, Whitefish Bay. The day will be devoted to: "Emergent Spirituality: Growing Your Faith beyond Certainty. Exploring new pathways into God's Embrace with Diana Butler Taylor, Phyllis Tickle, Parker Palmer and Ken Howard." Lunch will be provided. Cost is \$15. RSVP to Kathy Pratcher, Lay Ministry Coordinator at kathy@christchurch.org.

Coffee Hour!

Each Sunday families (or singles) have the opportunity to "host" coffee hour. It is simple and easy! Bring a treat or two; either something you've whipped up or something from Pic'N'Save or Sendicks

Set out mugs, glasses, napkins, juice, cream and sugar and spoons (all in the kitchen). Make coffee (it's really easy, the machine does the work) and smile as people gather in community to enjoy the end of the morning. Quick clean-up (the machine does the work!) and you have just "hosted" coffee hour.

If you've always wanted to share in this ministry, but are unsure what to do or how to do it, just sign up in the Community Room, call the office and a veteran coffee person will be on hand to help out! It's a great way to give back to your St. Christopher's family!

MaryBeth Ansley

Damage to the Washington National Cathedral



[Editor's Note: This excerpted description of the damage done in August and September to the Washington National Cathedral was written by Cynthia Walker, Lynn Laun Lindert's daughter, and a Trustee of the National Cathedral Association. Many thanks to Lynn for sharing this information.]

On August 23, 2011, the 5.8-magnitude earthquake that shook the East Coast caused substantial damage to the Washington National Cathedral (WNC) in Washington, D.C. WNC provides a spiritual home for the nation as well as serving as the "seat" for both the Episcopal Church USA and the Diocese of Washington.

While the interior of the Cathedral is structurally sound, exterior damage is significant, particularly on the "Gloria in Excelsis" central tower and some buttresses. There is evidence of lateral rotation and displacement in the pinnacles and cracks are also evident in some flying buttresses, particularly those around the apse on the east end of the Cathedral. Three of four pinnacles on the central tower were significantly damaged, being essentially "decapitated" with the loss of the finials (capstones), other blocks and decorative elements.

Immediately after the quake, Hurricane Irene bore down on the East Coast with 70+ mph winds, so engineers had to assess the damage to the tower, roof and structural elements, as well as secure loose or damaged blocks using metal cables to avoid further losses.

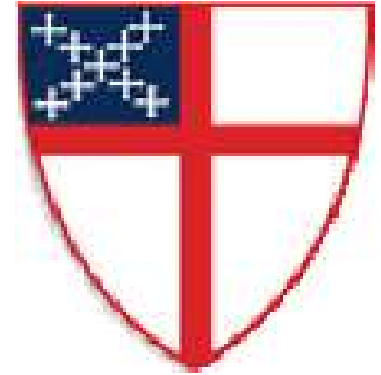
Steps to stabilize and secure the Cathedral included installing a debris net on the interior of the Cathedral at the clerestory level above the nave, crossing and transepts. Plans also include building a steel scaffold and debris net system around the central tower. To that end a 500-ton crane was brought in to erect the scaffolding, but Wednesday, Sept. 7 at about 11 a.m., this colossal extended crane collapsed. Through God's grace, only the crane operator sustained minor injuries. No further damage to the Cathedral occurred, but it "clipped" the adjacent Herb Cottage, Bishop's Garden, Church House (the Diocesan office) and crushed several cars.

Ultimately, the scaffolding will be required to rebuild the central tower because the upper portions need to be dismantled to be repaired. Each stone must be lifted to determine if it should be kept, preserved or replaced.

The Cathedral, like many institutions and businesses on the East Coast, had no earthquake insurance. A preliminary assessment of the scope and cost of stabilization and repairs is underway, but early estimates are that it will cost \$25 million and take years to rebuild. Once again, as during the original 83 year construction period, the Cathedral will appeal to people across the country for financial support. For more information on the Cathedral, or how you can help, visit www.nationalcathedral.org.

101 Reasons to be an Episcopalian - Part 5

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.



33. Episcopalians try to love with the heart of Christ, think with the mind of Christ, and act as if we were the body of Christ. (Prof. Willis H.A. Moore, Diocese of Hawaii.)

34. I spent Good Friday with the folks at St. Paul's Chapel. There I talked with a young firefighter who has been volunteering at Ground Zero for several months. In the midst of his sharing he said: "If it weren't for this place, I wouldn't be able to smile." (Sharon Moon, Diocese of Washington.)

35. Because it's one religion where laughing at our own absurdities is a basic spiritual discipline and we're invited to rejoice in how much we have still to learn of God instead of how much we know. (L. William Countryman, Diocese of California.)

36. I love Anglicanism because the most stable seat, on rough ground, is a three-legged stool. (The Rev. Selwyn Swift, St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Suffolk, England.)

37. Our eighth Sacrament: Fellowship and Good Food. (Amanda Demers, Diocese of Texas.)

38. Our theology is an art form, not a law book. (Paul Gibson, Diocese of Toronto.)

39. From Miami to Manchester, from Lima to London, from Brisbane to Birmingham, Singapore to San Francisco, I can go to church and fit right in. (John F. Schwaller, Diocese of Minnesota.)

40. I am an Episcopalian because it is the one form of the tradition that enables me to still call myself a Christian. It allows me to think and to feel deeply in a life that is grounded in tradition and yet is always open to change. I sometimes think of Anglicanism as the Zen Buddhism of the West. I love it because schism is a greater sin than heresy. I would much rather be with someone who loved me than with someone who could define love. (Alan Jones, Diocese of California.)

Events in November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7 - 8:30 PM: Teach Us to Pray	2	3	4	5
6 Savings Time Ends All Saints Sunday 8 AM & 10 AM Holy Eucharist 10 AM: Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open 11:20 Outreach Cttee	7	8 7 - 8:30 PM: Teach Us to Pray	9	10	11	12 9:45 AM-1:30 PM: St. Christopher's at The Gathering
13 8 AM & 10 AM Holy Eucharist 10 AM: Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open	14	15 7 - 8:30 PM: Teach Us to Pray	16	17	18	19
20 8 AM & 10 AM Holy Eucharist 10 AM: Weaving God's Promises, Nursery open	21	22 7 - 8:30 PM: Teach Us to Pray	23	24 Thanksgiving Day: Office closed	25	26
27 Advent I 8 AM & 10 AM Holy Eucharist No Church School ; Nursery open	28	29 6:30 PM: Vestry Meeting	30			

November MILESTONES

BIRTHDAYS

1	Jen Darrow
2	Drew Gebhardt Will Kennedy Anne LaBudde Sally Walters
3	Bruce Holmes Katie Smith Jack Tobin Richard Uihlein
4	Helen Love
5	John Beardsley
6	Brooke Chase Nancy Danas
8	Owen Perry Bonnie Thomson
11	Jim Ansley
12	Lindsay Chase
13	Londa Dalton Shannon Greeley
16	Lindsey Gardner
17	Gila Holmes
18	Lindsay Garnder
19	Ginger Browne Zach Fischer
20	Iris Jamel
22	Carrie Bedore
23	Donna Belfus
24	Wendy Sopkovich
25	Sarah Aik
26	James Napper
27	Anna Gerrits Annie Norman
29	John Davis Sally Roesner Andrew Sande Michael Sande
30	Sofia Brunner Raymond Dykema Charley Jane Gardner Mimi Norman Polly Uihlein

ANNIVERSARIES

24	Lynne & Michael Belcher
26	Martha & Bill Bolles
27	Susie & Fred Kasten Terri & Keith Molter

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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

Hospitality Ministry: (contact the office)

Endowment: Erik Andersen

Finance Sub-committee: Charlie Krause

Flower Guild: Hattie Purtell, Helen Sheen

Labyrinth: Catherine Davidson

Memorial Garden: Helen Sheen

Outreach: Steve Petrie

Prayer Chain: Chilly Braun, Kathy Housiaux

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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.