

St. Christopher's News Summary

February 2019

“Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.” – Matthew 11:28



Message to St. Christopher's Parishioners

In winter we are tempted to question our faith, to doubt our value. With nothing to show, no “fruit,” no productivity, no outward activity to speak of, we feel as though our worth has shriveled to nothing. God is silent. Friends drift away. The ground goes fallow. All we can do is wait.

In the winter of his soul the psalmist wrote, *“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning”* (Psalm 130: 5-6).

The truth is, God is not in a hurry. When we feel that it is God's job to respond quickly to our every request, we are on a fast track to disillusionment. Unless our waiting is shaped by the confidence that God is at work, the perceived delay will debilitate us. The season of winter encourages the development of a confident trust that God is at work even if He is not operating within our preferred time frame.

So what is winter about? How may we cooperate with the Spirit's transforming work in this challenging season of the soul?

In winter the focus of a tree turns inward. Fruit falls away. Leaves drop. Yet while the tree appears barren and apparently lifeless on the outside, inside much is happening. In winter the trunk of the tree grows another ring, building its core strength to endure the force of spring storms, stave off blight, and bear the weight of fruit in summer. At the same time, the tree stretches deep, extending and expanding its roots to absorb nutrients and develop a firmer base. In the formation of the soul, rings and roots develop through the practice of core disciplines, like prayer, study, fellowship and service.

The spiritual season of winter is designed to produce the spiritual strength necessary for us to withstand the occasional storms and to prepare us for the coming of spring.

Introducing Father Matt Burdette

The Rev. Dr. Matthew Burdette will be joining St. Christopher's as our new priest-in-charge on March 1, 2019. He hails from Princeton, New Jersey, and is currently serving

as a curate at Church of the Good Shepherd in Dallas and serves as associate director of the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology.

He studied at General Theological Seminary and completed a PhD in theology at the University of Aberdeen. He is married to his lifelong friend, Evie, who works as a nurse.

After a good series of discussions with the diocese' Canon to the Ordinary on St. Christopher's best way forward, our vestry came to the conclusion that Father Matt was likely the best fit for our parish. To test that assertion, a small group from the vestry had a lengthy meeting with the prospective priest followed by a larger group who met with both him and his wife.

Our vestry came away impressed. He is genuinely nice person who cares about people, his faith and the church. The Episcopal Church is very central to his belief system and he really wants to become a full-time parish priest and commit himself to the success of our parish.

He took a particular interest in St. Christopher's early on, and during Father Jeremy's tenure here, he approached the diocese about his interest in ministering to us. At that point, the diocese wasn't interested in appointing yet another priest to our parish. He has really done his homework to gain a good understanding of our situation by speaking at length with Father Jeremy and studying available materials on our church at the diocese.

Father Matt sees our location as promising in terms of accommodating our growth. With his particular skill set, he is optimistic that working together with us, we can grow the congregation to a healthy number. In addition to his work at Good Shepherd, he has appealed to a group of acquaintances who don't attend church, and has a good number of them attend his Wednesday evening prayer and bible study sessions at the Canterbury House.

He and Evie plan to live at the white house adjacent to the church so he can walk to work. He will attend the services with us on Sunday, February 24 and is looking forward to meeting our parishioners at that time.

Dates and Activities to Remember

Annual Shrove Tuesday Talent Show and Pancake Supper Pancakes served at 6 p.m. Talent Show begins at 7 p.m.	March 5
Ash Wednesday	March 6
St. Patrick's Day Parking Fundraiser	March 16

Annual Meeting Highlights

Excitement and optimism were abundant during St. Christopher's 2019 Annual Meeting on Jan. 27.

Senior Warden Madalyn Wells announced that The Rev. Dr. Matthew Burdette will become our new Priest-In-Charge on March 1, and reported that he is extremely excited to be joining us. A letter to church members from Fr. Burdette was distributed to everyone at the meeting and via email. If you have not yet seen it, additional copies are available in the church Narthex. (An introduction to Fr. Burdette is included above.)

In other business, Madalyn reported that the Vestry has appointed Bill Maddox and Chico Holland to each serve one-year terms on the Vestry, filling two currently vacant slots. Three new Vestry members were elected to serve three-year terms. New members, approved by unanimous consent, are Justin Chen, Morris Evans and Alison Grinter. Becky Meyerson and Alison were elected to serve as delegates to the annual Diocesan Convention.

Bookkeeper Devana Jackson provided a brief financial update, reporting that we ended 2018 with income exceeding expenses by \$3,354. She credits parishioners for bringing pledges up-to-date in late 2018 and praised efforts to keep expenses to a minimum.

Devana said the 2019 budget has been developed, as always, by faith and pledges. She reminded everyone who has still not turned in a pledge card to consider doing so soon so that we can ensure a strong year with positive results.

The meeting included several other updates:

- Junior Warden Wally Wheeler reported on a variety of repairs that were required after a Fall lightning strike. He also encouraged anyone who sees a problem to let him know so it can be addressed quickly and efficiently.
- Montessori School Director Becky Meyerson said the school is currently full with 110 students and a waiting list. Becky answered a variety of questions about students' achievements and successes from the school.
- Children's Chapel co-director Holly Wheeler highlighted chapel activities throughout the year and praised the students, teachers and assistants for their hard work and dedication.

The meeting concluded with Madalyn expressing thanks to the Vestry and enthusiasm about the year ahead.

Shrove Tuesday Talent Show and Pancake Supper

If you like to sing, dance, tell jokes, play an instrument or have another talent you want to share, be sure to sign up for the St. Christopher's Annual Shrove Tuesday Talent Show and Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 5. The Daughters of the King will provide all of the delicious pancakes you can eat beginning at 6 p.m., and the entertainment gets underway at 7 p.m.

Everyone from our youngest members to the most senior are encouraged to perform. If you're interested, please contact Phil Mein. Also the choir will perform songs from the musical *My Fair Lady*, and anyone who would like to participate is invited to rehearse with the choir each Sunday after our 10 a.m. services.

This is always a fun-filled evening with plenty of great food and fellowship. We hope to see you there!

Epiphany Pageant's Rich History at St. Christopher's

The annual Epiphany Pageant is a wonderful tradition that has spanned several generations of St. Christopher's children.

Sherri Harris told us that she was the first Epiphany Director back several generations ago when our grown-ups were young. Holly Wheeler understands that our church decided to have an Epiphany Pageant instead of the more traditional Christmas pageant so that we could include the Three Wise Men.

Devana Jackson sewed all the incredible costumes many years ago. Reita Hardeman and Holly recently revamped the angel wings and halos which were falling apart. Alyce Green painted the original wooden backdrop. Then, several years ago, she was inspired to paint a new, fresh, even more beautiful backdrop.

Sometimes, siblings played Mary and Joseph, such as, Claire and George Wheeler, Analise and Harrison Dubose and Tess and Luke Stanford. In 2018, there were cousins – Eric and Happy. One year we had a live Baby Jesus – Jamie Tracy's son.

Normally, the little sheep have their headpieces off by the time they have crawled down the aisle. Now we have shepherds like Millie and Happy who are a great help.

Alison Grinter shared that "Catherine was over the moon to get the role of Mary this year." Indeed, she and Henry were very caring parents for the Baby Jesus.

Playing Mary is a coveted role for the little girls and sometimes they have to wait a few years for their turn. Susan Norman commented that Millie is now playing roles that Alice played a few years ago.

Others in this year's production were Tate and Niles who were twin angels and Victoria who was an Arch-Angel. Readers were Charlie and Elaine Wells and Bebe (who also sang a beautiful solo of *We Three Kings*). Some of our youngest members, including George, Lewis and Isaiah, were sheep. Cole offered to help however needed and everyone was grateful.





Our Epiphany Pageant has been directed by many from Sherri Harris to Mark Pearson to co-directors Holly Wheeler and Madelyn Wells. Many others have helped to make sure the Epiphany Pageant such a favorite event. Much of the information in this article was provided by Holly Wheeler – thanks be to her! *(Our thanks to Anita Rager for this article.)*

Volunteers Needed

Please consider signing up for one or more of our ongoing ministries:

- The new year is upon us. It would be great if you could host one of our coffee hours after the 10 a.m. services.
- Flowers on the altar do a lot to add to the richness of our church experience. Perhaps you could do so in remembrance of an important person in your life or in celebration of a special event.
- Ushers are important ambassadors for people visiting St. Christopher's. Consider serving as an usher for our 10 a.m. services.
- The St. Patrick's Day Parking Fundraiser is an enjoyable opportunity to help parade attendees find safe parking and also to raise money for the church. Come out and join us on March 16.
- And of course, we are still seeking parishioners who will make a pledge to St. Christopher's so that we can better understand our financial position and manage our programs for the year. Pledge cards are in the Parish Hall breezeway.

Your participation in any of these ministries is a great way to serve our parish. If you would like to help, sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

Schedule of Services

Sundays

- 8 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I
- 9 a.m. Sunday School Lessons and Discussion

- 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II – Rite I on fourth Sunday

- 10 a.m. Children's Chapel – Ages 3 through 10

Wednesdays

- 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I - with discussion afterwards

Weekly Readings

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
Feb 3	Jeremiah 1:4-10	71:1-6	1 Corinthians 13:1-13	Luke 4:21-30
Feb 10	Isaiah 6:1-8, [9-13]	138	1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
Feb 17	Jeremiah 17:5-10	1	1 Corinthians 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
Feb 24	Genesis 45:3-11, 15	37:1-12,41-42	1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38