

Saint Christopher's Episcopal Church Annual Parish Meeting

January, 2012

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Rectors Report

“Welcome.” This is the word I opened up when I communicated to you as your new rector in both my first newsletter article and my first sermon. My reason for that was that in May of 2011 as you welcomed me, I simultaneously welcomed you as we began, together, a new chapter in the history of St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church. I was honored to be chosen as your rector and enjoyed my first months here. I especially want to thank the Search Committee members for their diligent work in calling me to this position. As a person who was involved in the interview process I can attest that they did their job, they performed it well, and believe it or not they did so at an excellent pace compared with other churches in the same process during the same time period.

I have become increasingly aware of that which I knew before coming in – which is that this parish is made up of many dedicated people who are willing to participate in order to make the service and ministries of this parish work. There are the capable staff members – Nina Miller, Kellee Wattenbarger, Joe Gabalski, Linda Murphy and Gayle Gregoire (our Preschool Director), as well as multiple volunteers – those who help with administration, Christian education, serve on the Vestry, or on various Committees (Outreach, Worship, Search and more) and all the sub-committees from those, as well as areas not mentioned here.

My entry into this community has been one that allowed me in 2011 to live into your history and get a sense of who you are, beyond what we candidates in the search process read about in the Parish Profile. In that time we carried on the service that a church should. We have shared in sorrows and joys as during the same time period we said goodbye to and buried some of our dear friends while we welcomed others into their journeys with us through baptism. In addition we celebrated opportunities to have fun together when we went to the Nationals baseball game, and came together in true communal worship as many volunteered to take and lead small roles to help make the Blessing of the Animals service happen. I believe corporately we felt things “click” by the time Bishop Jones installed me as your rector as that evening it was clearly not “you and me,” but “us.”

All in all it is from the ongoing life of this parish among a healthy congregation that helped to bring me to this precipice of our future, where together we will discern where and how God will utilize us to reach out to others in the future. I thank you again for calling me as your rector and for the privilege of living out my vocational call among you.

Yours in Christ,

The Reverend Peter K. Ackerman, Rector

Senior Warden Report

January, 2011

It is said, *“It’s always darkest before the dawn.”*

To say the year 2011 began as a dark period of strange happenings, would be an understatement. Here, even in our relatively safe community of Northern Virginia, we were shaken by an earthquake of the magnitude not felt here in 100 years. And through our media, we witnessed massive disasters happening all over the world on a scale never seen in modern human history. It was a sobering period for many reasons, for the loss of so many people globally, and here too, where too many of our close friends and loved ones kept bringing us back together for special services to pray and say our goodbyes.

It was a period filled with much uncertainty and continuous reminders that we must carry on. As you read and reflect on the Register’s Report, chronicling the activities at Saint Christopher’s over the past year, we accomplished much, and we did indeed carry on.

The darkness for us at Saint Christopher’s finally began to lift as our diligent Search Committee successfully found our new Rector, Father Peter, and our period of uncertainty had an end in sight.

Your 2011 Vestry awoke saddled with a \$30,000 deficit budget approved last January. The Treasurer will address this in his Budget Report, and we have some very good news regarding this matter closing the books on 2011 and for the 2012 Budget. Key to us digging ourselves out of this hole was the very conscientious efforts of the entire Vestry and their Committees to (painfully at times) return us to fiscal solvency.

I would like to take a moment to thank not only the members of the 2011 Vestry, but also to the 2010 Vestry, led by Wardens, Richard Sellers and Tammy Farrar, who helped hold it together for all of us during that time of transition. There are many others to thank as well, including: Kellee, Joe, Helen, Linda, Marion, Stan, Gaye, and Gayle, all the others who kept things running smoothly during this time. And I want to give particular thanks to Nina Miller, our Rector’s Assistant, who was absolutely essential in keeping us, and especially me, on the right track throughout the transition period and beyond. Thank you all.

It has been one of the highest honors in my life, for you, the people of Saint Christopher's, to entrust me to serve you as your Senior Warden during this period of transition. Thank you.

Former Wardens, you all know – indeed, *It Takes a Village...*

Respectfully, Your Brother in Christ

Carroll R. Hill

Senior Warden

Junior Warden's Report

January 2011

My fellow parishioners,

Being a geeky meteorologist, I can't help but open my annual report with a weather analogy. We've "weathered the storm". The last two years have been rough for St Christopher's. The challenge of losing a long time rector, followed by the lengthy search process, facilities problems, and a rough economy all took their toll on our parish, but we have proven to be a steadfast bunch. We not only survived this tumultuous period; we emerged stronger than ever! And I want to thank all of you, the people of St Christopher's, for making this possible. Thank you for supporting the parish with not only your money, time and talents, but with your dedication as well. YOU are the reason we are thriving. YOU are the reason new families have joined us. YOU are the reason we have a dynamic new rector. YOU are the reason I enjoy worshiping here every week. And YOU are the reason I love this parish. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you on the Vestry the last 3 years. It was an awesome experience, thanks to the St Christopher's Family. Happy New Year!

2012 Annual Meeting

Treasurer/Finance Report

2011

The Vestry approved a budget for 2010 with a deficit of approximately \$33,700.00. As you will see, with prudent stewardship and the generosity of the congregation St. Christopher's was able to end the year with a net deficit position of approximately \$13,500. Please note that the attached financial reports are not final, as we have not closed the books for the year.

Overall actual income was slightly over budget by 3%. Pledge income was almost right at the amount budgeted (\$332,122 actual vs. \$329,000 budgeted). Plate income came in below budget (\$22,620 actual vs. \$30,000 budgeted). Other income amounts (rent, undesignated gifts, and preschool reimbursements) helped reduce the deficit amount. However, because of the size of the deficit, it was necessary to reduce our cash position in the account that was being used as a reserve.

Expenses were slightly below budget (\$392,624 actual vs. \$395,933 budgeted) which also helped with the deficit. Overages were greatest in Fringe Benefits, Buildings and Grounds while we were under budget in Outreach and Worship.

The balance sheet shows our year end asset position. The cash balance in operating funds at year end was \$25,838. Because of the up-and-down year in the equities market the endowment fund remained relatively unchanged from year end 2010. The preschool had a cash balance of \$22,683 at calendar year end 2011. (The Preschool's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.)

2012

Thanks to the hard work of the Vestry and Gaye Evans, Chair of the Finance Committee, a balanced budget was approved for 2012. Because of the deficit from last year and the reduction in our cash position, it was crucial to have a balanced budget. Pledge income is projected to increase by 6.5% (\$21,000) over 2011 budgeted amount. Plate income is projected to decrease by \$4,000. As in previous years, plate and pledge make up 96% of St. Christopher's projected income and other current income sources are not expected to add significantly to budgeted income. Overall estimated expenses are expected to increase only slightly over 2011 actual expenses.

Audit/Review

A review of St. Christopher's 2010 financial position was performed by an outside CPA and we received an unqualified opinion that our financial books and records were in good order and they meet all generally accepted accounting principles.

Appreciation

The duties of the Treasurer under the Canons of the church involve "taking charge of and processing the offerings and income of the church, disbursing payments to meet the obligations of the parish and maintaining the financial records and reports of the parish". While it may not sound like much, it could probably be a full time job. And since I already have one of those I get lots of help. The tellers who count the money each week are the first line in processing the pledge, plate and other income. Additionally, the multitude of tasks to keep the financial records of the church in order is substantial. Fortunately we have the more than able assistance of Linda

Murphy, the church bookkeeper, Marion Evans, the assistant treasurer, and Helen Spence, our Pledge Monitor, to help with purchasing, reporting, check writing, reconciling the accounts, making midweek deposits, keeping track of the payments parishioners make on their pledges and providing the year end reports for tax purposes. In other words they do most if not all of the real work and I am most thankful for all that they do.

Additionally, Gaye Evans is the Chair of the Finance Committee and has provided invaluable assistance with the budget. Additionally, Jerry Rietman and Mary Johnson are members of the committee and Diane Owen is the Finance Commissioner Vestry representative on the committee. We are blessed to have their knowledgeable and valuable assistance and I am grateful for the help they provide.

Respectfully submitted, January 23, 2010
Stan Spence, Treasurer

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

2011 Income v. Expenses

	Jan - Dec 2011	
Income		
3100 · Plate	22,619.16	30,000.00
3200 · Pledge	332,122.60	329,000.00
3300 · Rent Income	4,895.60	2,000.00
3500 · Pre-School - Gift	4,670.00	
3550 · PreSchool Reimbursements	5,360.00	3,377.00
3575 · Health Insurance Reimbursement		
3720 · Undesignated gifts/contribution		
3720.1 · VBS Donation	982.28	
3721 · Interest Income	34.74	750.00
3722 · Building Usage	0.00	1,500.00
3800 · Restricted gifts/contributions	90.00	
3810 · DESIGNATED FUNDS	358.00	1,000.00
3860 · Special Offerings	3,726.03	
3870 · Transfers	0.00	
Total Income	379,210.01	368,127.00
Expense		
4100 · Salaries	154,548.08	176,332.00
4117 · Supply Clergy/Organists	800.00	1,800.00
4120 · Fringe Benefits	93,880.00	66,641.00
4130 · Payroll Taxes	9,378.15	8,640.00
4140 · Search Committee Expense	292.00	13,000.00
4150 · Administration	62,445.61	60,552.00
4210 · Christian Formation	4,603.76	5,000.00
4220 · Outreach	35,400.18	46,757.00
4230 · Worship	2,495.79	4,085.00
4240 · Communications	209.10	600.00
4310 · Buildings	23,774.37	13,620.00
4320 · Grounds	3,828.49	3,000.00
4510 · Stewardship	379.07	800.00
4540 · Fellowship	334.64	300.00
4550 · Vestry	0.00	200.00
4555 · Membership	0.00	200.00
6560 · Payroll Expenses	299.00	300.00
Total Expense	392,668.24	401,827.00
Net Income	-13,458.23	-33,700.00

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church 2012 approved budget

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

3100 · Plate	26,000
3200 · Pledge	350,000
3300 · Hanover Group- Tues AM	2,500
3500 · Preschool gift	8,040
3550 · PreSchool Insurance Reimbursement	3,400
3720 · Other Income	500
3720.1 VBS Donation	400
3721 · Interest Income	200
3722 · Building Usage	1,100
3860 · Special Offerings	1,000

Total Income	393,140
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Expense

Total 4100 · Salaries	139,368
4117 · Supply Clergy/Organists	1,800
Total 4120 · Fringe Benefits	92,138
Total 4130 · Payroll Taxes	8,362
Total 4150 · Administration	57,105
Total 4210 · Christian Formation	4,650
Total 4220 · Outreach	41,960
Total 4230 · Worship	3,000
Total 4240 · Communications	400
Total 4310 · Buildings	40,480
Total 4320 · Grounds	2,600
Total 4510 · Stewardship	400
Total 4540 · Fellowship	300
4555 - Membership	200
6560 · Payroll Expenses	300

Total Expense	393,063
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Net Ordinary Income	77
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Stewardship Education Annual Report

The Stewardship Committee consisting of Helen Spence (chair); Jerry Rietman; Richard Downey; Ruth Erbe; Camilla Hicks and Chris Erbe (vestry stewardship commissioner) along with Father Peter developed an annual giving campaign in Summer 2011 called "A Sacrifice of Thanksgiving." The committee launched the campaign the first Sunday of October and continued through the entire month. The theme of gratitude to God for the goodness in our lives was stressed in word, print and song during the month which included five Sundays. The effort resulted in the following pledge amounts as of Jan. 15, 2012:

- \$344,094.00, which is \$1,688.60 more than 2011
- 110 pledges, which was the same number as last year.
- 55 pledges which were up from 2011.
- 35 pledges which were the same as 2011.
- 10 pledges which were down from 2011.
- There were 10 new pledges.

All in all, the trends for annual giving (and for the giving of time and talent) are positive at St. Christopher's. Yet there is much work to be done in building our membership and in increasing impact and relevance both to ourselves and to the community.

*Yours in Christ,
Christopher W. Erbe
Vestry Stewardship Commissioner*

Communications/Membership Report

Annual Report 2011

Web Site - St. Christopher's has a new look and feel as a result of a new web site. Our old web site was retired and a new updated web site is now published on the Diocese servers. By hosting our web site with the Diocese, St. Christopher's has greater flexibility by providing updates and has more security. In addition to the updates, we have an interactive web page for those who wish to contact us electronically. The web site offers us the ability to track how many people are interested in St. Christopher's. The fee for this service is \$10.00 a month (\$120.00 a year). Our web site is maintained by the Rector's assistant, Nina Miller.

Directories - The church pictorial directories were completed and distributed the first Sunday in September 2011.

Banners - Two new banners were purchased. The first banner purchased was the announcement of our new Rector. The second banner announced the pet blessing held in October. The cost of the banners was \$198.00.

Brochures - As a result of our pictorial director purchase, St. Christopher's received 1,000 customized brochures free! The brochure is approved by the Rector and will arrive in about a month. Cost 0.00

*Dawn Cannaday,
Membership and Communication's Commissioner*

St. Christopher's Grounds Commission

Annual Report 2011

It was a fairly quiet year for the grounds commission – no massive snow storms or falling trees, just the normal leaves and grass that never seem to stop growing. Thanks to all who helped during the year mowing grass and racking leaves, both at the scheduled clean up days and on their own time during the week keeping the grounds presentable. Also many thanks to those that donated flowers and shrubs for the gardens.

Late in 2011 we posted “private parking” signs at the entrance to the church parking lots. This was to deal with several cars that are frequently parked on the church grounds during the week. Hopefully this will discourage them from parking there, without having to take further action. We also reserved several of the spots for priority parking during the Sunday service. We also hosted an Boy Scout Eagle project this year. As a result the flower beds and memorial gardens were weeded and mulched, and the benches got a new coat of finish. Many thanks to those that donated money to cover some of the cost. The grounds looked much better afterwards thanks to the labor of the Boy Scouts. Hopefully we can sponsor more projects in the coming years.

We finished the year over budget by about 25%. Major costs included snow removal, salting the parking lots and charges for cleaning the gutters. In the coming year the budget has been reduced slightly to fit into a balanced budget. As a result we will have to rely on more volunteer time to clean gutters, shovel snow from the sidewalks, etc. in the upcoming year.

In the coming year look for the grounds commission to become more of a real committee. While a lot of work is done during a few clean up days held in the fall and spring, a substantial amount of work is done by a few volunteers throughout the year. This includes mowing the grass (and there is a lot of grass to mow) and cleaning up the leaves (all those pretty trees drop a lot of leaves in the fall). In the upcoming year, with a reduced grounds budget, we will need to do even more with volunteer labor. Please consider volunteering your time this summer and spring to spread out the labor involved with mowing the grass. Even a couple of hours a month would help tremendously, and give the dedicated few a break.

*Respectfully submitted,
David Kirk, 2011 Ground Commissioner*

Buildings Report

Annual Report 2011

2011 was a year of progress and transition for the building commission. As always, day-to-day operations, upkeep, and repair of our buildings were paramount. But we also made improvements to the physical plant and made strides toward expanded and more cost-effectiveness cleaning services.

A number of major repairs and capital improvements were made this past year, primarily to the Church Building. Four flat roofs were replaced and aluminum siding was installed on the Church Building as were caps over the brick abutments. These steps were long overdue and will provide long-term weather protection to the building as well as alleviate any leaky roof problems of previous years. An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was installed in the Church Building.

Of course the year was filled with numerous maintenance tasks to keep St. Christopher's up and running. Church and Education Building light bulbs were replaced, running toilets and dripping faucets were repaired, and doors were reset to close properly. Our heating, ventilation, and air conditioning contractor performed preventative maintenance and conducted repairs. We made it through another hot Virginia summer without any significant disruptions in service.

The past year was not all peace and quiet. Hurricane Irene at the end of August caused some concern. Gutters were cleaned prior to the storm making landfall and our buildings were inspected during and after the hurricane. No damage was seen from the hurricane and our church went unscathed as it had during the earthquake the week prior.

In August we made the transition from a Sexton to a commercial janitorial firm to handle our cleaning needs. This allows us to receive janitorial services six days per week instead of five days per week as it had been before. Further, our current provider performs other special services such as semi-annual carpet cleanings. We strive to get the most comprehensive and cost-effectiveness cleaning services for St. Christopher's.

Admittedly, I wish I could have accomplished more as Buildings Commissioner in 2011 but much of my work was, by nature, responsive instead of proactive. In the coming year I will strive to make a realistic set of goals such as painting and other improvements. A buildings committee would be a great way to allow people to voice their preferences as to which projects should be taken on first and as a way for those with skills and interests in improving our two buildings to be directly involved. Look to hear from me about this in 2012. Many thanks to those who helped me out in my rookie year. There is much to do and many hands make light work. I look forward to serving you and our Church for another year as your Buildings Commissioner.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Johnson
Buildings Commissioner

Memorial Committee Annual Report

Annual Report - 2011

The Memorial Committee of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church is a standing committee of the Vestry with responsibility for the administration of funds provided in memory of individuals.

In 2011, the following memorial gifts were provided.

- A stained-glass window of St. Nicholas, in the Meditation area, in memory of Nick Apostoles.
- Large-Print Rite I and Rite II Prayer Books in memory of Virginia Magdielene Hayghe Tupper (Virginia Clark's mother)
- Four chairs, one table and an area rug in the Meditation area in memory of Bill Huber.
- Altar Linens in memory of Betty Duley.
- Ceramic Lenten candlesticks, large bowls and chalices in memory of John Vickers-Smith.
- Garden birdbath in memory of Marilyn Weigel.
- Musicians for Easter Service in memory of Chuck Bibbings.
- Funds to General Operating Fund in memory of Howard Hicks.
- Funds for Hypothermia program in memory of Olive Michael.
- Plants for Japanese Garden in memory of Lucille Shaw.

The members of the Memorial Committee are Peter Ackerman – the Rector, Bill Bruch, Debbie Harris, Barbara Johnson, Judy Lawson, Barbara Milton, Ruth Ritt and Susan Tilt. Tammy Farrar, the Junior Warden, is an ex-officio member of the committee.

Judy Lawson, Chairman

PARISH LIFE

Parish Life Report 2011

The Parish Life Commission is involved in the “quality of life” issues of St. Christopher’s Church, and includes fellowship, food, and social activities for the congregation. The ministries under Parish Life include Coffee Hour Refreshments, the Christophers, St. Martha’s Guild, and other church-wide social or fellowship activities.

The Christopher’s

This is the group chaired by Marjie Gray that provides meals to parishioners in need following hospitalization, childbirth, or injury. When the church office or other member notifies her that meals are requested, she contacts her network of volunteers who sign up to provide dinners daily or several times a week as needed. Additional volunteers are always welcome to this ministry, which recipients have said is one of the most meaningful and welcome ministries we have at St. Christopher’s.

Coffee Hour Fellowship Hostesses

Each week following the 10:30 service, a lovely spread of refreshments, coffee and tea is provided by the coffee hour ministry. This has come to symbolize a lot of who we are as a parish—welcoming, generous, and hospitable—and provides a striking welcome to newcomers.

St. Martha’s Guild

In April, the St. Martha’s Guild was revived. We have about ten participants, with two sets of team leaders that alternate organizing events. For exceptionally large or involved events, both teams can participate. Additional volunteers are solicited to bring food or assist on an as-needed basis.

St. Martha’s had a very busy summer, with the arrival of Father Peter, the Parish Picnic, and funeral receptions for a number of long-time and well-loved parishioners.

Several members of the church have taken the Food Safety Certification Course, which is required by Fairfax County. Whenever a commercial kitchen is used to serve food, there must be one certified food safety manager present. Others have expressed interest in taking the course, and hopefully are planning to do so.

Parish Thanksgiving Dinner

The parish hosted its annual Thanksgiving Dinner for about 25 people who enjoyed the fellowship of the St. Christopher’s family with turkey, ham, and a fabulous array of side dishes and desserts. Kellee Wattenbarger was able to “direct traffic” even after her back surgery, and had plenty of help to do the heavy lifting.

Small Dinner Groups

The Small Dinner Groups, revived and organized by Marifran Bustion, are in the second rotation of groups. Groups of about 8 people, including couples and singles get together at each other’s homes for dinner about once a month until everyone has hosted. Comments have been very positive so far. I commend this activity to anyone who would like to feel more a part of St. Christopher’s—the groups are very enjoyable and a great way to get to know people beyond “Hi, how are you today?” Please contact Marifran if you’d like to be included in future groups.

Shrine Mont Parish Retreat

After missing it for a couple of years, we had an opportunity in November to schedule a weekend parish retreat Shrine Mont, but there was too little time to prepare for it. We now have a weekend scheduled for October 12-14, 2012, and will spend the time between now and then raising awareness, enthusiasm, and funds to enable as many people as possible to participate. A Shrine Mont page has been set up on the St. Christopher's website where information and registrations forms will be posted.

St. Christopher's continues to be a joyful family of Christ, and as we move forward with Father Peter at the helm, that sense of unity and love should continue to grow and flourish.

*Respectfully submitted,
Janet Bush
Parish Life Commissioner*

The Thursday Morning Women's Discussion Group

The Thursday Morning Women's Discussion Group is growing. We have welcomed five new members this year, and are delighted with the conversations - and the additional reasons for having donuts to celebrate birthdays! We have finished a video discussion about "Uppity Women", and have moved onto Psalms and how they assist us, and guide us, in our prayer. We begin each meeting with intercessory prayer, and have a brief time of visiting and coffee before we begin the Bible Study. So, join us at 10:00 on Thursday mornings for prayer, praise, coffee and conversation. *Helen Spence, Group leader of the Women's Discussion Group*

Book Discussion Group

The Book Discussion Group of St. Christopher's was formed in June of 2005. We have met regularly since then and we have read and discussed, to date, 41 books. Discussions are always lively and thought provoking.

We met five times during 2011. We discussed the following books:

Two-Part Invention: The Story of a Marriage by Madeleine L'Engle
Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand
The Collectors by David Baldacci
The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Sklott

At our October meeting Christine Meloni gave a talk on Nordic thrillers. She discussed the Stieg Larsson phenomenon (*The Millennium Trilogy*) and how it has stimulated worldwide interest in other Nordic mystery writers such as Jo Nesbø, Karin Fossum, and many others.

We will continue to meet in 2012. We have selected the following books although titles and dates are subject to change:

February: *Have a Little Faith* by Mitch Albom
April: *Heaven is for Real: A Little Boy's Astounding Story of His Trip to Heaven and Back* by Todd Burpo
June: *Angry Housewives Eating Bon Bons* by Lorna Landvik

Everyone is welcome to attend, men and women, young and old. Feel free to come regularly or occasionally. We meet in the afternoons, usually on the third Tuesday of the month. For more information, contact Christine Meloni at cfmeloni@hotmail.com or at 703-922-7142.

Christine F. Meloni, Facilitator

2011 Outreach Report

Saint Christopher's Outreach Program conducted another very successful Hypothermia Prevention Week the first week in February 2011. Led by Outreach Committee member John Quinn, and supported by dozens of Saint Christopher's parishioners, we housed, fed, and clothed 35 to 40 homeless members in Fairfax County for seven days. A few issues arose during the week, but were quickly addressed and solved. Under John's leadership the Hypothermia Prevention program has become one of the signature programs of Outreach. Two other members of Saint Christopher's, Bill Bruch and Susan Tilt, managed cooking duties for the week, and their contributions were invaluable. To all of the members of Saint Christopher's who donated their time and resources to this program, the Outreach Committee would like to send out a sincere THANK YOU.

Budget restraints in 2011 hampered some programs associated with Outreach. We were unable to conduct our Nurturing Parent Program, where we would host Fairfax county volunteers as they trained young parents with young children on child-raising and nutrition. We had asked this county program for assistance in sharing the cost for electricity and heat, and they instead found an alternative site. Donations to various charity organizations also had to be restricted because of lack of funds. This situation is only a temporary one, and Outreach fully expects to be active again in these programs in the near future.

Our other major event of the year occurred in late August with the Backpacks/School Physicals program, organized and conducted by Lynn and Don Knox. Together they have organized this event to be the success that it is. Lynn begins promoting the event in late July by asking for volunteers and school supply donations. Then there is an evening where volunteers pack the backpacks with the donated supplies and box them up to be delivered to the Cary building in Springfield. And finally there is the day when the school physicals are conducted by Dr. Knox on local children before their return to school. The gift of a loaded backpack, donated by Saint Christopher's, is the perfect send-off in beginning a new school year. To Don and Lynn, and to all the Saint Christopher volunteers who helped make this event so successful, thank you for representing Outreach at Saint Christopher's Episcopal Church.

And now my three year term on the vestry as Outreach commissioner has come to a close. It has been a very rewarding experience, made even better by friends on the Outreach committee and the volunteers of Saint Christopher's. Thank you all for your support, and best wishes on your future successes.

*Stephen McClaugherty
Commissioner of Outreach*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Formation at St. Christopher's is alive and well – though as with all ministries of the Church, there is always room for additional growth and participation!

We were involved and participated in a myriad of Christian Formation programs and activities over the last year – Sunday school for all ages, Vacation Bible School, Lenten series, both junior and senior high youth groups (meetings and activities), Intergenerational activities at Advent and Lent, Thank You breakfast – as you can see the list is endless and ongoing. We did add a new youth group this fall -- Club 45 for those in 4th/5th grades.

There is always a need for additional people to be involved with Christian Formation -- from teaching on Sunday mornings to working with the youth. Please prayerfully consider giving your time and talents to Christian Formation -- it's a win/win situation!!!

Thank you for your never-ending support through your participation, teaching, assisting, prayers – YOU are the ones who make Christian Formation at St. Christopher's what it is!!

*Respectively submitted,
Kellee A. Wattenbarger, Director of Christian Formation*

Children's Chapel

John and Marjorie Gray and Margaret Kirk facilitate Children's Chapel weekly for all children interested in attending a youth friendly group during a part of our Sunday Liturgy. The group is large this year averaging 12 children ages 2 to 12 with occasional assistance from teenaged children's chapel alumni.

Children's chapel includes circle time with shared dialogue about the readings or the children's sermon, prayers of thanksgiving/petition, story books related to the gospel and songs. Circle time is followed up with 'on your feet time' where the children say the Lord's Prayer, share the Peace and if there is time engage in some more movement based songs of praise. As always it is a privilege and a preference for our Children's Chapel team to serve the youth of St. Christopher's. We welcome guests and anyone interested in joining us on a regular basis in the Children's Chapel Ministry.

*Respectfully submitted,
John and Marjorie Gray
Margaret Kirk*

St. Christopher's Preschool

Saint Christopher's Preschool is a vibrant outreach to young children and their parents in Springfield and the surrounding community. In keeping with the Episcopal identity the preschool embraces a diverse group of ethnicities. Our motto, A Loving Place to Learn, is a true experience for all who enter. With the support of the church the preschool is able to offer some of the lowest tuition rates in the area making preschool affordable to more of the population. The preschool has served over 80 children this school year and is growing in popularity in the community.

The staff consisting of 7 teachers and 7 teacher assistants providing a variety of educational and social activities to promote learning, self-confidence and independence. All children attend chapel once a month with the rector, Father Peter, Story Land once a week with the director, Gayle Gregoire, and music class 2-3 times a week with a specialty music teacher, Michelle Grigg.

A majority of the staff has four year degrees and is provided additional professional development training by the preschool director and workshops and classes in early childhood development provided by the county and George Mason University.

This Fall the children enjoyed off site field trips to Burke Nursery Pumpkin Playground and the Tiny Tots Concert presented by the West Springfield High School bands. We had a visit from the Springfield Fire Station in one of their fire trucks and are looking forward to several on site activities in the Spring such as Bob Brown Puppets and a Petting Farm.

The preschool is a conduit to creating community among families and across cultures. This is accomplished through activities such as after school picnics and the International Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner.

The Preschool is governed by a Board of Governors consisting of seven members. The Rector, Preschool Director and Vestry Liaison serve as ex officio members and at least one Board member is a parent of a current or recent Preschool student. St. Christopher's Episcopal Church can be proud of the ministry it provides by opening its doors to teach children of all backgrounds in a nurturing, Christian environment.

In His Service

Gayle Gregoire, Preschool Director

Lay Committee, 2011-2013

St. Christopher's has for many years been active with the Virginia Theological Seminary's Field Education in supporting seminarians as they learn practical roles in parish life. Part of the parish's role is to provide a lay committee to meet with the seminarian monthly throughout the second and third academic years. For Beccy Smith, the lay committee includes Denise Braun, Marifran Bustion, Ernest Corea, Indra Corea, Rob Crowe, Jane Hinson, and Chris Lane. All members receive training from VTS and we use VTS' guidelines for topics to discuss during our meetings, such as sharing our spiritual journeys, responding to Beccy's sermons, supporting her role as a seminarian at St. Christopher's, and anything Beccy wants to discuss. Through tears, laughter, and much prayer, we grow closer to each other and to Christ as we help Beccy in this part of her journey toward priesthood.

Marifran Bustion, Convener

2011 Church Library Annual Report

The library is open and available any time the church is open and I encourage members to visit it and check out material and then return it to the library or book cart in fellowship hall in a timely manner. The church library is at the end of the hall in the education building.

Please always sign your name on the check-out card and put card in box. We have had 3 books taken without being checked out and I don't know who to call to find them and get them returned. Another problem is getting books returned in a **timely** manner. Too many books are overdue. Please look around your home to find books that are overdue and return them. Thank you.

Three books that are hopelessly missing are: "Welcome to Sunday An Introduction to Worship in the Episcopal Church by Christopher L. Webber (cost \$12.95)," "If Grace Is True Why God Will Save Every Person" by Philip Gulley & Mulholland (cost \$10.19) and "New Light on the Difficult Words of Jesus" by David Bivin (\$cost 12.95). If anyone would like to replace them it would be appreciated.

Barbara Barnhardt, Volunteer Librarian

WORSHIP ACTIVITIES REPORT

In addition to the Music, Flower Guild, Altar Guild, PAT team and Chapel prayer team, there are many other elements that combine to enhance and contribute to our worship services.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers:

There are 12 faithful men and women who are licensed as Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) at St. Christopher's. We serve at all services where Eucharist is distributed helping Father Peter and Father Michael and leading the Nicene Creed and the Prayers of the People at the 7:30 service. If anyone feels a call to this ministry, please contact Helen Spence (703) 249-9689, or speak to her at Coffee Hour (if you can catch her!).

Intercessors:

The Intercessors are called to lead the Prayers of the People each Sunday during our 10:30 service. We receive the list of people to pray for from Nina each week, and incorporate them into the appropriate form for the Sunday service. There are 9 individuals who participate in this ministry at this time, and we would love to welcome others into our ranks. You do not need a license to be an intercessor. Please contact Helen Spence for more information.

The Communion Bread bakers are a small but loyal group who prepare communion loaves for Sunday worship and other special services. Although we all follow the same recipe, the finished product does sometimes vary. New members are always welcome. Point of contact is Danny Gorham (703-451-0868).

Acolytes: Our acolytes are coordinated by Bob Wattenbarger (703-455-0027). Each year he trains interested rising 4th graders to participate in this ministry. It is a wonderful way for our youth to serve our congregation and strengthen their faith.

Greeters: Led by June Hoffman (703-451-3669), greeters are a dedicated rotation of friendly faces who welcome new and current worshipers every Sunday providing them with bulletins and directions.

Ushers: Richard Sellers coordinates our usher teams(703-455-0878). Seemingly invisible, this worthy group of men and women help guide us as we are seated in the worship spaces, count communicants, conduct our weekly collection, and help direct us to communion. New team members are always welcome. Training is simple and painless!

Lectors: Mary Johnson (703-830-6537) coordinates our lay readers who read our Old and New Testament readings as well as the psalm. Please speak to her if you are interested in serving in this capacity.

We are truly blessed as a parish to have so many people willing to participate and add to the richness of our worship services.

*Respectfully submitted,
Pam Osborn, Worship Commissioner*

Lector Ministry

The Lectors at St. Christopher's serve by reading the Old and New Testament lessons and leading the Psalm at Sunday services. St. Christopher's currently has 18 lectors each reading about six times per year. If you are interested in serving as a lector, please speak with Mary Johnson Lector Coordinator.

Other members of the parish, including children and youth, who are not regular lectors participate by reading lessons at various "special" services throughout the year. These services include the Chrismon Service during Advent, the Palm Sunday Passion Reading and the Easter Vigil service. Parishioners who read a foreign language are needed to participate in the Pentecost gospel reading. Please see Mary Johnson if you are interested in being a part of the readings for one of these services.

Sharing God's word and being an active participant in leading our worship is a moving experience. As I listen to our lectors read not only the printed words, but intone the meaning of those words, I feel a stronger sense of God's presence and a deeper appreciation for the Holy Scriptures. Many thanks to all of our wonderful lectors for participating in this important ministry.

Lector Ministry,

Mary Johnson

Altar Guild Annual Report

The Altar Guild is a group of caring, sharing, dedicated people who enjoy working together in service to God in His sanctuary. We currently have ten members and a Mistress of Linens.

The duties of the Altar Guild include, preparing the altar and sanctuary for all regularly scheduled services, as well as any special services such as weddings, baptisms and funerals. The Altar Guild is also responsible for: caring for the altar linens and hangings, clergy vestments, silver, brass and crystal; and ensuring the purchase of sacramental wine, wafers, candles and other worship related items as needed. We work in pairs and are scheduled to serve about every six weeks.

We would like to extend an invitation to anyone who might be interested in learning about this very special ministry. No experience is required and training will be provided for all new members.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Pam Branstetter, vice-chairperson; Marifran Bustion, Mistress of Linens; and all of the members of the Altar Guild for giving so lovingly of their time and talents this past year.

Yours in Christ,

Debbie

Debra R. Harris

Altar Guild Chairperson

Banner Committee

Like our stained glass windows, our banners tell our story. Most of our banners visually reflect the Gospel lesson, the message of the liturgical season or a particular feast or service.

Our banner collection includes a series of banners for the Advent and the Epiphany Seasons, and the “I Am” series which tell who Christ told us he was. Banners for Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and Ascension are used regularly. The Easter Banners are also hung for funerals and memorial services and the Baptism Shell banner from the Epiphany series is placed behind the font for baptisms. Our newest banner, part of the Epiphany Series, “Consider the Lilies of the Field” was made in 2011. We also made a smaller version of our original St. Christopher’s Banner which given as a gift to Peter at his Celebration of New Ministry. Our St. Christopher’s parish banner has represented us at Ordinations and Diocesan Council.

Having no formal committee membership, those interested meet only to create and construct new banners. and make repairs as needed. We are also responsible for hanging the banners for the appropriate week, season or special service except for the banners for funerals, memorial services and baptisms, which are hung by the Altar Guild. Funding for banners has been met through gifts of memorials, from bazaar proceeds, from banner makers and interested others.

A Banner Scrapbook containing photographs of the banners which we use on a regular basis as well as those which have been “retired” or occasionally displayed, also includes the date each banner was made, the names of the designer/s and sewers, fabric and construction details and how each is, or was used.

Your ideas for additional banners to enrich our worship or decorate the Fellowship Hall or other locations in our buildings are encouraged Please call me if you have any suggestions or would like to be involved in any way. Ideas and offers of help to create or sew are always very welcome.

*Lynn Knox, Chair
Banner Committee*

Chapel Prayer Team

The Chapel Prayer Team began in the summer of 2003. The team consists of members of the congregation who are called to a ministry of praying for the needs of others. Members of the team are available in the chapel during the celebration of the Eucharist at the 10:30 AM Sunday service and on Christmas Eve. Anyone who wishes prayer may enter the chapel for the intercessors to pray with them, or may write prayer requests and put them in the box at the chapel entrance. If you feel called to this ministry or wish additional information, please contact Barbara Johnson at (703) 941-4825.

Flower Guild

Currently, the Flower Guild has 20 active members who faithfully operate and decorate the altar, St. Francis Statue, St. Christopher's and Children's Chapels every week.

We take turns weekly working in teams of two as scheduled. In addition to the weekly flowers that are done the entire Flower Guild decorates the church for Christmas and Easter. At confirmation, corsages and boutonnieres are given to the confirmands and those who are received into the church. There are occasions when we do flowers for a funeral service. At special receptions requests are often made for a flower arrangement to be made for the reception table. The Flower Guild is an active, important ministry that faithfully provides flowers throughout the year. We are able to do this ministry through contributions by you who donate money to the guild in Thanksgiving or in memory to whoever you request.

We invite anyone who is interested in doing flowers or helping us at Christmas or Easter to join us in an important part of our church tradition. We help those who join us by training and working with newcomers.

Thank you all for all of the generous contributions to the Flower Guild.

June Hoffman & Ruth York (co-chairmen)

Greeters

We have 12 greeters, at present, who are at the front door of St. Christopher's every Sunday. We work in teams of two as scheduled. Greeters are there to pass out the bulletins and any other information as needed. We ask guests and newcomers to sign our guest book. We make sure to help anyone needing direction to the church and other facilities.

Being a greeter is a joyous ministry and does not require any training as newcomers greet with a experienced greeter. Come join us and be a part of a ministry that represents St. Christopher's friendly parish. Thank you from your greeters.

June Hoffman (Chair)

Prayer/Healing Shawl Ministry 2011 Annual Report

The Prayer/Healing Shawl Ministry of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church was formed in September 2003 to knit or crochet shawls for distribution to those undergoing a difficult period in their lives, such as the illness or death of a loved one. In late 2007, we began to make baby shawls, both to celebrate the birth of a child and to wrap the newest members of our parish family in prayer and in love.

Each shawl serves as a reminder of God's love, and each is blessed by our priest before it is delivered. Many notes have been received that attest to the effectiveness of these small tokens of our love and compassion. As of January 3, we have made 769 shawls. Most have been distributed but a couple are available.

The shawl group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7:30 to 8:30 pm in the library to pray together as we make shawls for those in need of healing prayer. All are welcome to join us. If you do not know how to knit or crochet and would like to learn, someone will teach you. We have on hand an abundance of yarn, thanks to several generous gifts, so it is not necessary to purchase additional yarn.

If you wish further information, please contact Harriet McCollum (703) 866-6155) at harriemccollum@verizon.net, or Mary Andrews (703) 719-0596 at marandart@cox.net, or Barbara Milton (703) 922-7710 at bwmilton@cox.net.

Pastoral Assistance Team Ministry January, 2011

The Pastoral Assistance Team was developed to assist the priest in the pastoral care ministry at St. Christopher's.

The following are some of the ways in which members of this team are available to all members of the parish:

- To visit at home or in the hospital
- To be a quiet, listening presence
- To be a prayer partner
- To be an intercessor for special concerns
- To rejoice with good news
- To be a friendly voice on the phone
- To be present when you want or need someone

Each Sunday, one team member is identified in the bulletin as the PAT minister of the week. That person will be the primary team contact during the following week. Current team members are: Barbara Johnson, Lynn Knox, Ruth Meagher, Linda Murphy and Helen Spence.

Usher Guild

Ushers serve at any service requiring direction, collection of offerings and when needed. The primary purpose of ushers is to insure the service flows evenly in line with the wishes of the celebrant. St. Christopher's Usher Guild consists of 20 dedicated men and women who serve every fourth week at the 10:30 am service and evening services for Christmas, Holy Week/Easter and Thanksgiving. Each team has a captain, and the team is responsible for serving at any incidental services during the week of the team's assignment, such as for funerals, weddings or other services. At the early Sunday service, ushers come from the congregation.

Ushers insure that parishioner's comforts are met during services by providing service leaflets after the greeters have joined the congregation; collecting offerings; ushering during communion and cleaning up after each service. The usher captain also counts the participants at each service to provide to the celebrant for the Parish Register and records the sermon each Sunday on a CD. If you are interested in serving in this ministry, please contact the Usher Coordinator.

*Richard Sellers,
Usher Coordinator*

Music Ministry Report

2011

The Music Ministry at Saint Christopher's Episcopal Church continued in its role assisting leading worship through music. Three groups led worship throughout the year, The Adult Choir, The Brass Ensemble and the Children's Choir. In addition, guest musicians enriched worship for Christmas, Easter and Memorial Day.

The Adult Choir continues to be the cornerstone for music leadership at Saint Christopher's. The choir sings each Sunday for the 10:30 service, including services during the summer. This year the choir welcomed two new members with its total membership now being 17 members. They enjoyed many exceptional music moments including leading an evensong service for the Good Samaritan Ministry, Good Friday Tenebrae service, Memorial Day weekend and Christmas Eve. The choir sang for several funerals during the year. From the director's perspective, the choir is an exceptionally dedicated collection of singers who on a regular basis make Saint Christopher's a priority in their lives. The choir is able to sing at a consistently high level in large part due to this commitment they each have made to Saint Christopher's. I thank each of them for their service to the church and pray that each of them will continue to share their gift of song with the people of Saint Christopher's.

For special services during the year the Brass Ensemble adds to the worship experience. The ensemble willingly commits to extra rehearsals and practice to prepare for services. The Children's Choir continues to participate in services as well. This year three violinists from the choir played for the Christmas Eve Service. We are also indebted to instrumentalists from the congregation who played during the year, enhancing worship for all of us. Lastly, I am indebted to Marifran Bustion for agreeing to substitute when asked.

Lastly, in July of 2011, I attended the Sewanee Church music conference. For 7 days I studied choral conducting and music leadership with Dale Adelman, Organist and Choirmaster at Saint Phillip's Cathedral in Atlanta, and Todd Wilson, Organist and Choirmaster at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, Ohio. I cannot say enough how thankful I am for the opportunity to attend this conference. The impact it had on me has helped me be a better musician today. I give our Rector, Peter Ackermann and the Vestry a hearty thanks for their support in attending this conference.

Submitted by,

Joseph Gabalski