ST. CHRISTOPHER BY-THE-RIVER

December 2016 – January 2017

We are entering that time of the year in Northeast Ohio when time seems to behave in two contradictory ways at once. The days are shorter, colder, and darker; time drags. At the same time, the days are compressed and "revved-up" through the many cultural messages telling us how we should celebrate Christmas and the "New Year". Time drags and speeds past us with the result that we suffer from a kind of seasonal whiplash.

As with many aspects of being Christian, living in gentle opposition to our cultural norms provides a way through what, for many, can be a difficult and challenging time of year. Remembering "the reason for the season" provides a solid foundation for our journey through Advent, the twelve days of Christmas, and the season of Epiphany. Make use of the holiday lights to brighten the darkness and develop a daily practice of noticing and giving thanks for the blessings that fill our lives. Then be intentional about how you will celebrate God's gift of Himself to us through the birth of Jesus. Choose to continue the traditions that bring you joy. Let go of anything that leaves you feeling frazzled and irritated.

Remember that there are **twelve days of Christmas**. That's twelve extra days in which you might choose to send Christmas cards and notes, give gifts, volunteer, or spend time with friends and family. We can make this season a time of joy and wonder by being willing to let go of those things that do not point our eyes and lives toward Emmanuel, "God with us".

As the world resumes its daily grind, the Church enters the season of Epiphany. In 2017 Epiphany begins on January 6th and ends on February 28th. It is a season that celebrates the Divine Self-revelation that continues to this day. This Epiphany we will hear stories of Jesus' baptism, teaching, healing, acts of power, and the account of the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain top. But God's epiphany to us didn't end two-thousand years ago. It continues today with each moment of grace, beauty, forgiveness, and love that we experience in our daily lives.

Someone recently shared a poem with me found in a gift shop at Williamsburg, Virginia. The author is unknown but I would like to share the poem with you. It provides a lovely example of one way that God's love is revealed to us – even through the dark, long, snowy days of a Northeast Ohio season of Epiphany,

Every New snowflake comes to the earth, as a picture of our Savior's Birth,

because they are sent from up above and remind us of God's care and love.

Each one is so intricate and small because Christ sees the details of us all,

And just as two are never the same, the Lord knows and calls us by name.

Snowflakes gently cover the world in white and hide what's unlovely from our sight,

Showing how he covers our sin and gives us his grace when we come to Him.

So may every snowflake bring Christ to mind and in every bit of white may you find,

A reason to celebrate anew, and a reminder of His love for you.

With my prayers for God to be revealed to you each day,

Ann+

MINUTES & REPORTS

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT
SUBMITTED BY: JOHN IRWIN

With the commencement of a new church year, we have many things to look forward to in the coming months. Our Junior Warden, Mr. Marston and several other members of the congregation will be working on additional capital projects including a study of the possible addition of an elevator. There is much preliminary work to be done in regard to these projects to balance and prioritize and assess the feasibility of various proposals. The Wardens and the Vestry will keep everyone apprised of our progress. In the meantime, the Bylaws Committee of the Vestry is nearing the finalization of a proposed new Code of Regulations for the parish, to bring its legal and organizational structure up to date, to refine its operations and to facilitate an expansion of the participation of every member of this church.

The process of finalizing a new proposed Code entails several more steps over the coming weeks. When the Bylaws Committee has signed off on its recommended new Code, that will be presented to a special meeting of the Vestry for its review. If the Vestry approves the proposal then in relatively short order over the following weeks, a Special Meeting of the congregation will be called for on a Sunday during a 10:15 AM service to consider the adoption of the proposed new Code of Regulations sometime prior to the Annual Meeting of the congregation which is scheduled to occur at the 10:15 AM service on Monday, January 15. As soon as the Bylaws Committee finishes its work and presents its proposal to the Vestry and if the Vestry approves the proposal, special announcements will be made to the congregation containing details of the proposal including a summary of changes and additions from the current Bylaws as well as copies of the relevant documents.

The purpose of all of these efforts is to bring the organizational documents of the parish more closely into alignment with diocesan and national church rules and provide for a broader and more smoothly functioning Vestry and management structure. No obvious day to day changes in the life of the parish would be involved but broader participation in the life of the parish with greater cooperation and greater sharing of various activities between committees, parish organizations and parish members and administrative personnel have been among the goals in mind throughout this process.

Additional news and information about all of this will be forthcoming in the near future. In the meantime, I hope that all had a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration and looking forward to a Merry Christmas and with gratitude for all that the church does for us. I am.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT
SUBMITTED BY: CHARLEY MARSTON

"The ornament of a house is the people who frequent it".
Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882

The month of November has been quite routine; although this time of year it is always busy routine. We have been preparing for one of the most important periods in church life – Advent and Christmas.

Now that most of the renovation projects are complete, we are ready for the wreaths, the trees and plants, and the candles and Nativity scene. We are ready for the sheep, shepherds, angels, wise men and all other celebratory fixings to welcome the arrival of the Christ Child.

But please keep in mind that Ralph Waldo Emerson was right when he said that the true and best ornaments in our church are all of you filling the pews.

Sue and I will be departing December 19th to spend two weeks with our children and grandchildren in England, where they all live. Please be assured that while we won't be able to be with you, you will be in our prayers and best wishes.

MINUTES & REPORTS

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE VESTRY – OCTOBER 18, 2016
SUBMITTED BY: IRENE MCMULLEN

Present: Mother Ann, John Irwin, Charley Marston, David Dickenson (briefly), Elise Bennett, Mary Murray, Sean McMillion, Heather Daly, Irene McMullen

The meeting came to order at 6:00 PM. Mother Ann led a prayer.

The minutes for the September 20, 2016 were approved. John Irwin moved, Charley Marston seconded. All voted in favor.

Mother Ann distributed the Balance Sheet, as of September 30, 2016. She attended the meeting briefly, as she is having surgery on October 19, 2016. She can work an hour or two per day. A claim has been submitted to The Church Pension Fund for disability payment to the parish.

John Irwin reported that the Cub Scout Pack is being led by Mark Baxter, and is up and running.

The Bylaws Committee will try to meet in the next few weeks. The Women's Guild will be meeting tomorrow, and should have recommendations to report to the Vestry soon.

Regarding Mother Ann, her contract does not include sick leave. Leave is characterized as vacation (four weeks annually). The church continues to pay Mother Ann her salary and benefits, during her disability period, and is not counting this period as leave or vacation.

Mary Murray and John Irwin have met with Kurt Liljedahl to review the functions of the parish Treasurer. Kurt has been an outstanding Treasurer for ten years and we are grateful for his dedicated service.

Charley Marston and Mike Klinginsmith met with representatives of The Figgie Foundation. They would like a duplicate scroll certificate, which will be made.

Regarding the bathroom renovations, they are complete. Irene McMullen moved, and Charley Marston seconded an authorization to pay outstanding bills for the renovations. All voted in favor. Motion carried. The men's bathroom was $14,105.00 and the Guild Room bathroom was $14, 876.00. Both bathrooms came in under their original estimates. Many thanks to Sally Conley and the other parishioners who selected the beautiful finishes and worked diligently on the design details.

The carpeting has been installed. John Irwin moved, and Charley Marston seconded the payment of an outstanding invoice. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Thanks again to Sally for the fine work helping to select the vendor and overseeing installation.

The Stewardship Committee is working on the every member canvas. Mailings will go out in November.

CRWP assisted St. Christopher's in submitting the 319 Grant application. We will need to work on detailed engineering ideas in the next few months.

A Children's Chapel Committee has been formed. They are planning on beginning renovations during the Summer.

An Elevator Committee is forming. A proposal for an elevator will be presented to the Figgie Foundation.

Charley is looking in to replacing the lamp post by the sidewalk. It is rusting and showing wear.

The Stewardship Committee is working on letters to send out with pledge cards. They are trying to get letters together to send out next week. A draft letter was reviewed by the Vestry. November 20 will be a day to bless the pledge cards at the service.

The Clambake is planned for October 22. Parishioners may bring alcohol if they wish.

John Irwin led a closing prayer. The meeting concluded at approximately 7:05 PM.

PLEDGE UPDATE

Thank you to all who have sent in their pledges for 2017. This greatly helps the church with planning for the upcoming year. We appreciate your thoughtfulness regarding your dedicated support to St. Christopher by-the-River for 2017. We know everyone has many choices to make regarding where their money is spent and donated and it is with much gratitude that we express our thanks in keeping St. Christopher's in your plan.

2017 Pledges Received

Allgood, Dwight M., Jr. & Mrs. Joan
Barnes, Mr. William, IV (Will) & Mrs. Anne
Bates, Mr. William S. (Stuart)
Bennett, Mr. Lawrence (Larry) & Mrs. Elise C.
Bixler, Charles F., III (Fred) & Mrs.Virginia (Polly)
Bole, Mr. Richard (Rik) & Mrs. Mary Wick
Boswell, Mr. Louis (Lou) & Mrs. Helga
Butler, Mr. J. C. & Mrs. Helen
Cicirello, Mr. Salvatore (Sal) & Mrs. Helen
Cole, Mr. Randall (Randy) & Ms. Deborah (Debbie)
Collister, Mr. Daniel (Dan) & Mrs. Lorinda (Rindy)
Conley, Mrs. Sally K.
Costello, Miss Linda M.
Cotton, Ms. Laura
Currutt, Mr. Dennis & Mrs. Charlene
Daly, Mr. Brendan & Mrs. Heather
DeBaz, Dr. Baz & Mrs. Mona
Dempsey, Mrs. Julia
Dickenson, Mr. David, II & Mrs. Frances
Doyle, Mr. William (Bill)
Eakin, Mr. Jeffery (Jeff) & Mrs. Judy
Everett, Morrie & Diana
Everett, Mr. Chandler P. & Mrs. Rebecca (Becky)
Foltz, Miss Suzanne E.
Frith, Ms. Sarita
Goss, Ms.Katharine (Kathy)
Hargrave, Miss Janet T.
Hauserman, Mr. David (Dave) & Mrs. Darlene
Henry, Mrs. Nicole (Nicki)
Holmes, Mr. Peter & Mrs. Judy
Holmes, Mr. Thomas (Tom) & Mrs. Mary
Irwin, Dr. John & Mrs. Nancy C.
Jones, Mr. Clarke & Mrs. Whitney
Kidder, The Rev. Ann & Mr. Theodore G. (Ted)
Klinginsmith, Michael (Mike) & Dr. Gretchen Fisher
LaMantia, Mr. James J. (Jim) & Mrs. Pamela (Pam)
Lee, Mr. Ron & Mrs. Cornelia
Liljedahl, Mr. Kurt & Mrs. Mary Anne
Lincoln, Mr. Russell (Russ) & Mrs. Connie
Marston, Mr. Charles S. (Charley) & Mrs. Susan C.
Marting, Mr. Michael & Mrs. Leslie
Matthews, Mr. Thomas (Tom) & Mrs. Paulette
McCoy, Mr. William (Bill)
McMillion, Mr. Sean M. & Mrs. Lindsey A.
McMullen, Mr. Daniel J. & Mrs. Irene H.
Meyers, Mr. Edward (Ed) & Mrs. Frances (Fran)
Miscko, Mr. Ronald (Ron) & Mrs. Carolyn E.
Morgan, Mrs. Shirley
Negrelli, Mr. Donald (Don) & Mrs. Virginia (Gini)
Pender, Mr. James (Jim) & Mrs. Katherine (Kathy)
Pistell, Mr.Timothy (Tim) & Mrs. Linda (Lynn)
Pucell, Mr. Anthony (Tony) & Ms. Christina (Chris)
Reynolds, A. William (Bill) & Mrs. Joanne (Jo)
Reynolds, Mr. Timothy M. (Tim) & Mrs. Mary
Richardson, Theresa
Rountree, Mrs. Mary H.
Sarkisian, Mrs. Francine (Fran)
Schmidt, Mr. Daniel & Mrs. Courtney
Scott, Mrs. Adrian (Tim)
Storer, Mrs. Delores (Dede)
Thatcher, Mr. Peter
Thomas, Mr. Bruce & Mrs. Katherine W. (Kitty)
Thorpe, Mr. Donald (Don) & Mrs. Susan (Susie)
Trebar, Mr. Robert (Bob) & Ms. Renee Kolecki
Treco, Mrs. Diana D.
Vail, Mr. Thomas V. H. Sr. (Tom) & Mrs. Iris
Vilas, Kathleen L. (Kathy)
Warren, Mr. Russell & Mrs. Doris
Webb, Ms. Linda
Weitzel Family Foundation
Weitzel, Mr. Robert (Bob) & Mrs. Jeanette (Jean)
Zimmerman, Mrs. Lydia

PLEDGE UPDATE

2016 Close the Gap Pledges Received

Bennett, Mr. Lawrence (Larry) & Mrs. Elise C.
Collister, Mr. Daniel (Dan) & Mrs. Lorinda (Rindy)
Dempsey, Mrs. Julia
Dickenson, Mr. David, II & Mrs. Frances
Eakin, Mr. Jeffery (Jeff) & Mrs. Judy
Everett, Mr. Chandler P. & Mrs. Rebecca (Becky)
Hargrave, Miss Janet T.
Holmes, Mr. Peter & Mrs. Judy
Irwin, Dr. John & Mrs. Nancy C.
Liljedahl, Mr. Kurt & Mrs. Mary Anne
Lincoln, Mr. Russell (Russ) & Mrs. Connie
Marston, Mr. Charles S. (Charley) & Mrs. Susan C.
Marston, Mr. J. Tucker & Mrs. Jean
Matthews, Mr. Thomas (Tom) & Mrs. Paulette
McCoy, Mr. William (Bill)
McMillion, Mr. Sean M. & Mrs. Lindsey A.
Meyers, Mr. Edward (Ed) & Mrs. Frances (Fran)
Miscko, Mr. Ronald (Ron) & Mrs. Carolyn E.
Murray, Mr. Lawrence (Larry) & Mrs. Mary G.
North, Mr. William Jr. & Mrs. Nancy
Pucell, Mr. Anthony (Tony) & Ms. Christina (Chris)
Reda, Ms. Melanie
Reynolds, Mr. Timothy M. (Tim) & Mrs. Mary
Sarkisian, Mrs. Francine (Fran)
Schmidt, Mr. Daniel & Mrs. Courtney

PLEDGES can still be submitted. Contact Mary in the office for a pledge card or simply cut out and fill in this card and send it to the church

Every Member Canvas - 2017

The ***total*** amount I would like to ***pledge*** to

St. Christopher by-the-River for the 2017 calendar year is:

$_____

Enclosed is my additional gift to 'Close the Gap' in ***2016***:

$_____

Name: _____

The Bishop's Annual Appeal 2016

Love God. --- Love your neighbor. --- Change the world.©

The Bishop's Annual Appeal provides more than a quarter of a million dollars of critically valuable resources to ministries in congregations across the Diocese of Ohio. $100,000 goes directly to Episcopal Community Services for grants supporting parish-based outreach efforts. It provides formational positions for recently ordained clergy, supports youth and adult mission trips, and funds internships for high school and college students. The Appeal allows us to fund initiatives beyond the capacity of individual congregations.

Please make your gift today. Your participation is indispensable. Please make checks out to The Diocese of Ohio and mail to Trinity Commons, 2230 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115. Or click on the Bishop's Annual Appeal at www.dohio.org.

It is only through your continued support that we are able to make such a difference in the lives of so many, extending to them God's love and changing their worlds in ways that may most fully be measured by God's gratitude. I, too, give thanks for your generous spirit and your continued giving.

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.
Bishop of Ohio

FAITH FORMATION

Calling all angels, shepherds, sheep, Mary, Joseph, Jesus and narrators!

It's the best Christmas Pageant ever!!!

St. Christopher's By the River
7601 Old Mill Road
Gates Mills

Join us in telling the story of the birth of our Savior!

Mandatory Rehearsal:
Saturday, December 17th, 10-11:30 am
Pageant Performance:
Sunday, December 18th
(Arrival: 9:30)

Please sign up on the bulletin board at church or call Mrs. Peggy Reda at 440-773-2518 or email at prseverin@aol.com

FAITH FORMATION

Faith Development Program

SUBMITTED BY: PEGGY REDA, DIRECTOR F FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Greetings to all! Our Sundays have been busy. We have spent more time familiarizing ourselves with the Bible itself, the books and how to look up chapters and verses.

We have been practicing guessing whether the story is Old or New Testament and the order of the stories of God's people. The students are beginning to realize that as God's people, we seem to stumble and make so many mistakes, but that God loves us and forgives us over and over!

Beginning with the Book of Genesis, to Exodus and now Luke, we are beginning to recognize the kinds of unlikely leaders God choses, the incredible strength He gives us and the never-ending love we have in Him. There have been many moments of epiphany for the children as we read about Abraham, Joseph, Moses and others that seem to underscore the greater level of understanding they have achieved. That is to the credit of their parents and grandparents and also to Mrs. Debbie Cole, whom we hope to see in our classroom soon.

Please support the faith of the children and our community by bringing them to Church School as often as possible. Their time together has formed a togetherness that today's world makes difficult to maintain. Their Sunday fellowship strengthens them and is more meaningful than we can sometimes imagine. We wish you all a healthy and Happy New Year! We would welcome you into our classroom and nursery at any time.

Nursery

Nursery continues to be a vibrant place! Miss Melanie's kids have a special bond with her that sometimes requires her to accompany the little ones to the car seat to go home! We have purchased some new toys that keep up with the growth of the children. Our goal is to provide a home for them at St. Christopher's, a place to play, learn and feel safe.

Donations of apple juice, small water bottles and animal crackers would be much appreciated!

VESTRY NOMINATIONS 2017

At our Annual Meeting we will be voting to fill the following positions:

Three (3-year term) positions on the Vestry.

One (1-year term) position as Representative to the Northeast Mission Area Council. (NEMAC)

One (2-year term) position as Representative NEMAC

Please contact any member of the nominating committee with any suggestions. Members of this year's Nominating Committee are: Charley Marston(Chair), Charlene Currutt, Chandler Everett, Mary Murray

NEWS, NOTES & EVENTS

ANNUAL MEETING

January 22, 10:15AM

One Service to follow.

THANK YOU!

We raised $540.99 during our fall campaign.

Looking for Photos!

We are looking for pics for the newsletter and the website. Some Christmas Choir and Pageant photos would be most welcome.

THE KINGS BRASS
December 4th 7:30 PM
Federated Church
76 Bell St., Chagrin Falls

Food Pantry

In ***DECEMBER***, we are collecting:

Chocolate
Cookies
Nuts
Cake/brownie mix
Frosting
Powdered milk
Graham crackers

Food Pantry

In ***JANUARY***, we are collecting:

Canned meats
- Ham
- Chicken
- Stew
- Chili
- Tuna
- Salmon

Beans
Jerky

GUILD PROGRAMS

Sign up on the bulletin board or call the office to RSVP.

December 6th
10:00 AM
"Turmoil in the Middle East"
Mona DeBaz, Speaker
Lunch to follow at noon.

December 14th
9:30 – Guild Meeting
10:00 AM - Make Table Arrangements for Holly Hill & Pleasant Hill Home
Bring clippers! Lunch provided by Laura Cotton to follow.

January 11th
Attention all you 'History Buffs'!
The women's Guild will peruse our Church files for Church History
9:30 – Guild Meeting
10:00 – Investigating our History
12:00 – Lunch to follow
(AND STORIES TO TELL!)

NEWS, NOTES & EVENTS

Trinity Cathedral Events (2230 Euclid Ave)

Dec 2nd 7:30PM	Quire Cleveland
Dec 7th 12PM	Brown Bag Concert – A Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten
Dec 7th 6PM	Choral Evensong: Ambrose
Dec 14th 12 PM	Brown Bag Concert – Annual Messiah Sing – soloists + you as the choir!
Dec 14th 6PM	Choral Evensong: Juan de la Cruz
Jan 21st	MidWinter Feast – A Masquerade in Scarlet. A benefit for Music and Art at Trinity. www.MidWinterFeast.org

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

If you would like to remember someone special this Christmas season, consider donating to the Christmas flower fund. The suggested donation is $25. The form can be found on our website.

SUNDAY, December 11th

Fair Trade Holiday Sale following both services.

SANTA & BONFIRE

Polo Fields (Epping Road)
4:30 PM, December 24th

Thank you to the 40+ families who donate Altar flowers each year. This is a wonderful ministry. Not only does it save the church the cost of flowers weekly, but it also provides flowers to those who are sick, hospitalized, homebound or suffering. Each Sunday, Janet Hargrave either delivers or arranges for delivery of the altar flowers to someone in need. It is wonderful to provide a smile to someone's face!

If you are interested in providing flowers for 2017 and did not do so for 2016, please contact Mary in the office. The requested donation is $75. Those that have provided flowers in 2016, please return the postcard that was sent to you in order to confirm your commitment for 2017. Thank you!

2016 Flower Donors

Connie White (Christmas)
Brian and Cindy Murphy
Frances and David Dickenson
Michael Klinginsmith & Gretchen Fisher
Bruce & Kitty Thomas
Linda Costello
Thomas & Mary Holmes
Gladys Loth
Janet Hargrave
Lawrence and Elise Bennett (greens)
Dede Storer (greens)
Sally Conley (greens)
Linda Webb (greens)
Jean Ramsey (greens)
Peter Hellman (Easter)
Paulette & Tom Matthews
Diana Treco
Ronald & Carolyn Miscko
Beth & Jim Miller
Fran & Ed Meyers
Hal Jones (Peter)
Harriet Veale Leedy
Tucker Marston
Darlene & David Hauserman
Helmut & Marcia Alpers
Scott Broom & Karee Weikel-Broome Donald & Gini Negrelli
Tim Scott
Randy, Debbie & Whitney Cole
Sal & Helen Cicirello
Jane and Ramon Battles
Stuart Bates and Family
Tim & Lynn Pistell
Ralph & Rosalie Della Ratta
Bob & Tille Malm
Larry & Mary Murray
Polly & Fred Bixler
Baz & Mona DeBaz
Jeff & Judy Eakin
Kurt & Mary Ann Liljedahl
Charley & Sue Marston
Anne Feller
Ron & Carolyn Miscko
John & Nancy Irwin
Thomas & Iris Vail
Dan & Courtney Schmidt
Jim Pender
Peter & Judy Holmes
Kathy Vilas
Sarita Frith/Bonnie Humphrey

FAITH FORMATION

ADVENT ESSAY- Reprinted from The Christian Century, Dec. 2016

SUBMITTED BY: THE REV. DEACON LYDIA BAILEY

Episcopal deacon on staff at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry's Men's Shelter at 2100 Lakeside Avenue

I saw it in the rearview mirror while headed to serve as a deacon at the 5 p.m. Christmas Eve service last year.

The full moon was rising over a hill, light spilling into the atmosphere, though the sky was still bright. Was it the moon's enormity, or its silence? Something was changing. The houses began to look tiny while tall grass flared up yellow from the fields. The din of humankind was but one part of a larger landscape presided over by moon—the ducks on the pond already knew this. Stillness was setting in.

Unexpectedly, I sensed something, a quality to things we passed. The words of the Jewish theologian Abraham Heschel clicked: "Awe is an intuition for the dignity of all things, a realization that things not only are what they are but also stand, however remotely, for something supreme." Perhaps I was primed for this on Christmas Eve, when Christians are tuned to the mystery of God not as an abstract concept but as a babe in a manger within the ordinary, earthy, created world.

At church we had incense and candles pointing to an experience larger than words, symbols, or creeds can contain. God was coming close.

Inside the church, lights were darkened, making me only more aware of what was happening outside. Far to the west, a wall of clouds was approaching, the last light of day streaking from behind. Here was this quality again that I could not name in this church and outside, "things not only are what they are but also stand … for *something*… supreme.

Driving home, the moon was squarely over the road ahead. At a traffic light a man leaned out his driver's window to snap a picture of the moon on his phone. Later, I noticed people were posting photos of the moon on Facebook from all over Ohio. There was a hint of the comical to this moon portrayed beside houses like some friendly giant visiting for the holidays. But it couldn't be contained.

For moonlight highlighted seemingly mundane scenes on our route home. A nearby spruce tree was now a statue of frost. The lonely gas station with an empty lot beyond had a sense of the beautiful. Moonlight was running along telephone lines, sweeping aluminum siding of houses. All these things, rather than being dissolved in this light, were radiant in their individual ways. Is this not what Advent is about? God is coming to reside in the intimate particularity of our everyday lives.

Standing on the porch at home, my mind went to other settings: the bitter lot of Syrian refugees—they were under this moon. I thought of those at the homeless shelter in Cleveland where I work, having one last cigarette outside before lights off. Moonlight was touching their foreheads in a tender way. Beyond them were empty warehouses; moon defining the scarred rooftops of the city before reaching the expanse of Lake Erie, and then shining brilliantly on waves.

My entire family went to the 11 p.m. service. We were a tiny cluster leaving the church, walking to our car and driving home with moonlight enveloping us. After everyone had gone to bed, I stood out in the backyard. No wind, not a sound, except something like the sound of the ground absorbing moisture. This was not an empty silence but the quiet being of rocks, ferns, moss, the roots of trees.

Now the moon was very high and small. The cloudbank I'd seen earlier was almost upon us. At a still higher level, a second layer of clouds was advancing like rivers in the sky. Far below, there I stood with the smell of incense on my clothes and in my hair.

I imagined the ducks on the pond now – had they drifted to the shadows of an island? -Imagined the streets of Cleveland, of those taking shelter in shadows. -And the refugees, there on the far end of this hemisphere. I was longing to understand these lives in all their particularity, just as the moon delineated yet unified everything in its path.

Standing on the grass, I noticed a new sound, when had it arrived? So fine, like a tapping on the dry oak leaves around me. A moment later it entered the woods beyond, sighing in and out of the branches. The smallest drops of rain had begun, now touching my nose.

It was Christmas, ushered in by the slightest *ssshhhhhh* of rain; the moon all but smudged out. In a few hours would be dawn with a steel-gray sky.

THOSE WHO SERVE

December 2016 ROTA

DECEMBER 4TH

8:00 EM: Fran Meyers
LR: Kitty Thomas
AG: Rosalie Della Ratta

10:15 EM: John Irwin
LR: Heather Daly/Elsbeth Daly
AG: Nicki Henry/ Loni Todd-Lorenz
Ushers: Rik Bole/Brian Wright
Hospitality: Fran Meyers/Nancy Irwin

DECEMBER 11TH

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Judy Eakin/Laura Cotton

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Jean Ramsey
Ushers: Brendan Daly
Hospitality: Laura Cotton/Betsy Wright

DECEMBER 18TH

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Sue Marston

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Carolyn Miscko
Ushers: Kurt Liljedahl
Hospitality: Elise Bennett/Nicki Henry

DECEMBER 24th - CHRISTMAS EVE

3:30 AG: Sally Conley

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Mary Murray/Marcia Alpers
Ushers: TBD

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Jane Battles
Ushers: TBD

DECEMBER 25TH – CHRISTMAS DAY

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Set up after Christmas Eve Service by Jane Battles

Volunteer Opportunities

Blessed Are We Dinner

Friday, December 16th & January 20th
Meet at St. Christopher's at 4PM
Contact the office if you plan to help out.

Food Pantry

Saturday, December 17th & January 21st
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Call the office if you wish to volunteer.

January 2017 ROTA

JANUARY 1st

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Jane Battles

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Marcia Alpers
Ushers: Rik Bole/Brian Wright
Hospitality: Happy New Year!

JANUARY 8TH

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: TBD

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Laura Cotton
Ushers: Brendan Daly
Hospitality: Rosalie Della Ratta

JANUARY 15TH

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Sue Marston

10:15 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Jean Ramsey/Neal Lee
Ushers: Kurt Liljedahl
Hospitality: Mary Holmes & Mary Reynolds

JANUARY 22ND

8:00 No Service

10:15 ANNUAL MEETING
EM & LR & USHERS: TBD
AG: Nicki Henry/Loni Todd-Lorenz
Hospitality: Janessa Thirion & Courtney Schmidt

JANUARY 29TH

8:00 EM & LR: TBD
AG: Sue Marston

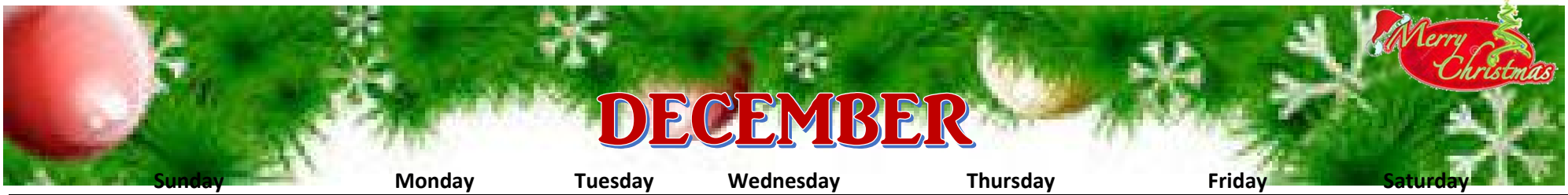
10:15 EM & LR & USHERS: TBD
AG: Mary Murray
Hospitality: Sandy Batcheller & Linda Webb

Vestry 2016

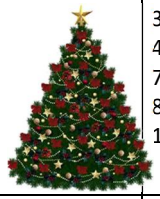
John Irwin	Senior Warden
Charley Marston	Junior Warden
Irene McMullen	Clerk
Kurt Liljedahl	Treasurer

Class of 2018
Elise Bennett, Charley Marston, Sean McMillion
Class of 2017
Heather Daly, David Dickenson, Mary Murray
Class of 2016
Mary Holmes, John Irwin, Irene McMullen

Northeast Mission Area Council Representatives
Peter Batcheller, 2015-2016
Nancy Irwin, 2016-2017



DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Food Pantry Donation this Month: s Chocolate, Cookies, Nuts, Cake/Brownie Mix, Frosting, Powdered Milk, Graham Crackers				**1** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**2**	**3**
4 II Advent 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist	**5** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**6** 10:00 AM Mona DeBaz 'Tumoil in the Middle East'	**7**	**8** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**9**	**10**
11 III Advent 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery ***10:15 am Lessons & Hymns*** 11:30 am Junior CHOIR Rehearsal **Ten Thousand Village Holiday Sale**	**12** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**13**	**14** 10:00 AM Guild Mtg & Greens Workshop	**15** NO Evening Prayer Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**16** St. Andrews Blessed Are We Dinner Meet @ 4PM WEDDING REHEARSAL 4:30 PM	**17** PAGEANT REHEARSAL 10-11:30 Our Savior Lutheran Food Pantry WEDDING 1:30 PM
18 IV Advent 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist + ***Pageant*** 11:30 am Junior CHOIR Rehearsal	**19** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**20** 6-8 PM Vestry	**21**	**22** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**23** 	**24 CHRISTMAS EVE** 3:30 pm – Family/Children's Service 4:30 pm – Santa at the Polo Fields 7:30 pm – Musical prelude 8:00 pm – Holy Eucharist 10:00 pm – Holy Eucharist
25 CHRISTMAS DAY 8 am Holy Eucharist Rite I	**26**	**27** OFFICE CLOSED Mary on Vacation	**28** OFFICE CLOSED Mary on Vacation Private Music Concert	29 OFFICE CLOSED Mary on Vacation Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	30	31 New Years Eve!

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 II CHRISTMAS 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist 	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**6** Epiphany Open House at the Rectory 5-7PM	**7**
8 I Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist 11:30 am Junior CHOIR Rehearsal	**9** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**10**	**11** 10:00 AM Guild Mtg & Historical Document Review	**12** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**13**	**14**
15 II Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist 11:30 am Junior CHOIR Rehearsal	**16** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training 	**17** 6-8 PM Vestry	**18**	**19** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**20** St. Andrews Blessed Are We Dinner Meet @ 4PM	**21** Our Savior Lutheran Food Pantry
22 III Epiphany 10:15 a.m – Annual Meeting Holy Eucharist Rite II to follow 	**23** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**24** February Newsletter article/information deadline	**25**	**26** Evening Prayer 5PM Riverside AA AlAnon 8 p.m.	**27**	**28**
29 IV Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist 9 am Forum, Church School & Hand Chime 9:30 am Adult CHOIR Rehearsal 10 am Nursery 10:15 am Holy Eucharist 11:30 am Junior CHOIR Rehearsal	**30** 9-11 AM Stephen Ministry Training	**31**			Food Pantry Donation this Month: Beans, Jerky, Canned Meat: chili, stew, chicken, tuna, ham, salmon 	

ST. CHRISTOPHER
BY-THE-RIVER
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

7601 Old Mill Rd.
PO Box 519
Gates Mills OH 44040

The Rev. Ann Kidder, Rector
stchris.motherann@gmail.com

Sunday Services
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:00 a.m. Nursery Care for 10:15 service
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Parish Office: 440-423-4451
stchrisbytheriver@gmail.com
stchrisbytheriver.org

December 2016 – January 2017 Newsletter

St. Christopher by-the-River

We welcome you to join us on:

Sunday, December 4th – Advent II
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 11th – Advent III
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 18th – Advent IV
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II + Pageant

Saturday, December 24th – Christmas Eve

3:30 p.m. Family/Children's Service
7:30 pm. Musical Prelude
8:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:10 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II

Sunday, December 25th – CHRISTMAS
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

SUNDAY MORNINGS FOR KIDS 5-14

9 -10 am	Church School Class, (Upstairs)
10-10:15 am	Break & Snacks in the Nursery (1st floor)
10:15-10:30am	Worship in Sanctuary with class
10:30 -11:00am	Children's Chapel
11:00-11:30am	Worship in Sanctuary with families

NURSERY CARE

10 am-11:30 am for Ages 0-4

Office/Church Open

T-W-TH 8:30-2:30

440-423-4451