



ST. CHRISTOPHER BY-THE-RIVER

FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

The Visit by the Canon

On January 19, 2025 the Rev. Jessie Dodson, Canon to the Ordinary, came to St. Christopher. She celebrated Holy Eucharist with us, she preached and illuminated us, she then met with a standing room only crowd of parishioners in the Fellowship Hall to present to us an overview of Congregational Development and the Transition. After all of that, Canon Jessie met with members of the Vestry and the Search Committee to discuss the status of our Transition work. Needless to say, this was a wonderful experience. She is a great priest and an articulate and compelling preacher. Very much in the style and with the grace of our former Rector Ann Kidder.

Her presentation in the Fellowship Hall, which was video recorded and is available on the St. Christopher by the River YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/3OMspL4oRVg> was a lengthy discussion, highly interactive with parishioners about what may be referred to as the lifecycle of a parish, from beginning to end, as a parish is founded, grows, reaches a mature and stable stage and then, in some instances, proceeds to slowly pass away. As part of this discussion, all those present (I would estimate in the neighborhood of 50 or 60 people) placed stickers on a chart that Canon Jessie had prepared, indicating where each parishioner felt St. Christopher currently stood on this lifecycle.



Perhaps the most gratifying and comforting realization for me as Senior Warden, was to see that almost everyone indicated, by the placement of their sticker, that they felt St. Christopher was positioned in the "Healthy" or "Stability" cycle of life. I think all of this means that as a unified, healthy, and stable parish—something I also believe we heard last year from the Bishop herself—we are in an excellent position, not only in our search for the next Rector, but also for the growth and continued success of this parish.

The Rectory

Over the last several months, our Junior Warden, Charlene Currutt, has labored endlessly to manage the restoration of the Rectory. She has searched for, vetted, negotiated with, and recommended all of the many contractors who have been involved in this colossal project. We anticipate that the work will be finished by spring, and we hope it will be ready for any candidate who may serve as our next Rector to visit and tour, along with a tour of the church itself. We owe Charlene a huge debt of gratitude, and we will make arrangements to celebrate her accomplishments when we have completed everything.

Finances

Meanwhile, we remain financially sound, notwithstanding the significant expenditures already made for the Rectory project and ongoing routine maintenance and repairs. The generosity of our parishioners in their support of the church, as well as the generosity of many other donors, such as the Figgie Foundation and the Veale Foundation, are remarkable testaments to the affection that so many people and even institutions have for this church. We are in a good position right now, and we have a very bright future.

Thanks be to God.

Respectfully submitted

John R Irwin, M.D.

Senior Warden

Present: Ms. Charlene Currutt, Dr. John Irwin, Ms. Judy Holmes, Mr. Ron Lee, Mr. Richard Radis, Mr. Peter Thatcher, and Ms. Kitty Thomas.

Dr. Irwin declared a forum was present and opened the meeting with a prayer at 7 PM. Dr. Irwin served as Acting Clerk.

Previous Minutes

The draft minutes of the Vestry meeting on September 25, 2024, were then reviewed. Upon motion, the minutes were approved as drafted.

Financial Statements

Mary Murray, Treasurer, reported by email (one of this evening's exhibits) that the Audit was still ongoing and accordingly financial statements were not available for tonight's meeting, and such were deferred until the next meeting of the Vestry.

Ms. Murray also submitted her recommendation that we designate at least \$50,000 for capital items, given our expenditures for the Rectory and other capital needs. Following a discussion upon a motion to accept the Treasurer's recommendation, the Vestry approved a transfer of \$50,000 to the capital account.

Ms. Murray also presented an analysis of the cost of providing a 5% raise to our staff. Such a raise would cost approximately \$7,000 based upon the calculation methodology used for the last raise 18 months ago. On motion made and seconded, a discussion followed concerning the ongoing impact of inflation and the general cost of living for our employees, and the Vestry approved implementation of a staff raise of 5%.

Junior Warden Report

The Junior Warden reported that she is waiting for Bob McHugh, the plumber, to come to assess the drainage problem on the east side of the church, along the fire lane easement. We have a water intrusion problem on that side of the church and the concern is not only the water that comes in on the floors, but also water that comes through the wall upon which our electrical panels are attached. She is pressing Mr. McHugh to get this done.

Ms. Currutt reported on the arrangements being made to clean the gutters of both the church and the Rectory. This is scheduled for November.

She further reported that last year we had hired a contractor to plow the driveway of the Rectory but since the Rectory is now not occupied the Vestry decided to forgo the cost of snowplowing that driveway.

The Junior Warden has made arrangements for window cleaning of the Rectory in those areas where painting of the windows will be necessary, and the Vestry agreed to those plans.

The Junior Warden further reported that we have paid \$700 to have the three chimneys of the Rectory tuck pointed and we have also paid \$1700 to have repairs made to the ventilation stacks on the roof of the Rectory.

The Junior Warden then presented information regarding the bids that have been received for painting the interior of the Rectory. This is a major job and after extensive discussion, the Vestry approved moving forward with the quote from Best Buy painting. That company had painted the outside of the church in the past and had done a very good job. They had also painted the sanctuary and again did a good job and accordingly she recommended that we utilize that company to paint the Rectory interior at a cost of \$24,000, which includes a \$1000 discount for being a return customer. The only other bid was slightly higher at \$25,000, without any type of discount available. Upon motion made and seconded, the Vestry approved this expenditure for Best Buy painting.

Lastly, the Junior Warden reported that our Sexton is making arrangements to purchase and install two replacement doors at the rear of the Rectory garage. These doors will be bought from Home Depot at a cost of about \$160 each.

Senior Warden Report

The Senior Warden began his report by addressing the proposed agreement with the Search Consultants, Anne Schmidt from Albuquerque and Nora Smith from New York. On motion made and duly seconded, that contract at the estimated cost of \$5000 at a \$100 an hour fee was approved.

The Senior Warden then reported on the charge to the Search Committee, a diocesan document which is an outline of what the Search Committee will be doing during its work to identify and recommend a candidate to become our next Rector. Following an extensive discussion, the Vestry agreed that the charge letter will be provided to the Search Committee as written.

The Senior Warden then commenced a discussion of a replacement to fill the vacancy on the Vestry as a result of the resignation by Mr. Vazanna. The Senior Warden recommended that Mr. Larry Richmond be asked to serve on the Vestry and if appointed he has indicated his willingness to serve. The Vestry concurred with the recommendation of the Senior Warden and on motion made and seconded, Mr. Richmond was appointed to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting, in accordance with the Bylaws.

The Senior Warden then discussed the commissioning liturgy as part of the formal commencement of the operation of the Search Committee. The commissioning will be scheduled and conducted in accordance with the diocesan guidelines and will be done as soon as arrangements can be made.

The Senior Warden then reported that the Annual Giving Campaign under the direction of Becky Everett is going very well, and we can anticipate a good final conclusion to the campaign.

Lastly, there was a discussion of the donation from Addie's Cup to the church of nearly \$600. Addie's Cup has a tip jar at the coffee shop and that money is donated each month to various community services and charities. A very gracious gift to say the least. After a lengthy discussion, Vestry determined that the best use of this donation is to provide it to the Guild for their fund to replace the carpeting in the Guild Room. On motion duly made and seconded the gift from Addie's Cup will be transferred to the Guild.

The last item discussed at this Vestry meeting was the status of the Security Review which among other things involves replacing the cylinder locks on the exterior doors. This will allow us to issue new keys to those people who need access to the church and will allow us to keep accurate records henceforth of who has those keys.

There being no further business to come before the Vestry this evening, Dr. Irwin offered a closing prayer, and on motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

The next meeting of the Vestry will be determined at a later date, depending upon the scheduling of the Commissioning of the Search Committee.

VESTRY MINUTES

NOVEMBER 24, 2024

By JOHN IRWIN

The Vestry of the Church of St Christopher discussed several key issues. They reviewed the need for a diocesan audit and approved the minutes from the last meeting. They approved transferring \$50,000 to business investment accounts and initiated a voluntary retirement plan for part-time employees. The nominating committee was formed with members including Judy Holmes, Larry Richmond, Debbie Cole, Neil Lee, and Charley Marston. They also discussed the need for a bookkeeper and the potential costs associated with it. The Figgy Foundation grant application for church repairs was reviewed, and the group considered security updates and the timing of future vestry meetings.

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/TE4WuxE4BhahqBF9oCTvk46qHSU?view=transcript>

Action Items

- [] Email John R. Irwin with contact information for potential bookkeepers or accountants.
- [] Reach out to the diocese for recommendations on a bookkeeper.
- [] Organize the 12th Night party.
- [] Schedule vestry meetings on the third Sunday after the 10:15 service.

Outline

Financial Review and Minutes Approval

- John R. Irwin, M.D. declares a quorum and opens the meeting with a prayer.
- The agenda includes financials and a review of the previous meeting's minutes.
- The audit is not yet completed, and John R. Irwin, M.D. discusses the need to speed it up.
- The minutes from the last meeting are reviewed and approved without any corrections or discussions.

Financial Recommendations and Retirement Plan

- Mary Murray recommends transferring \$50,000 from the general accounts to the business investment accounts.
- Several part-time employees express interest in participating in a retirement plan.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. supports the idea and mentions that the national church offers a voluntary retirement plan.
- The employees understand the need to stay under 1000 hours per year to avoid full-time benefits.

Senior Warden Report and Nominating Committee

- John R. Irwin, M.D. appoints a nominating committee to nominate new vestry members for the March annual meeting.
- The committee should have five to seven members, with no more than two vestry members.
- Judy Holmes and Larry are appointed to the nominating committee, and suggestions for additional members are discussed.
- The group discusses potential candidates for the nominating committee, including Debbie Cole, Neil, and Charlie.

Annual Giving Campaign and Search Committee

- The annual giving campaign has stalled, and efforts are made to encourage more donations.
- The search committee is commissioned and ready to start working on finding a new rector.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. reassures that the search committee will operate independently and will come to the vestry if they need assistance.

Treasurer's Retirement and Bookkeeping Needs

- Mary Murray wants to retire as treasurer after 10 years of service.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. discusses the need for a bookkeeper to handle rudimentary tasks like check writing and payroll.
- The group discusses potential candidates for the bookkeeper position, including someone with a bookkeeping background and a CPA.
- The diocese is considered as a potential source for recommendations on bookkeepers.

Figgy Foundation Grant and Security Review

- Charlene Currutt provides an update on the Figgy Foundation grant application, which includes major repairs and updates for the church.
- The group discusses the importance of having a professional and detailed application for the grant.
- Dr. Long provides an update on the security review, including the need for new keys and cylinders for the church and rectory.
- The group discusses the number of keys needed and the importance of having non-duplicatable keys.

Floor Project and Winter Preparations

- Charlene Currutt reports a hiccup in the floor project due to a broken radiator, causing flooding in the restroom.
- The group discusses the need for windows on the upper floor windows to prevent heat loss.
- The group considers the timing and cost of installing windows, depending on the amount of money received from the Figgy Foundation grant.
- The group discusses the importance of sealing windows during painting to prevent heat loss.

12th Night Party Planning

- Charlene Currutt suggests organizing a 12th Night party, which was a big success last year.
- The group discusses the timing of the event, with suggestions to hold it on the weekend before January 6th.
- Ron is appointed to take charge of organizing the event, and the group discusses the need for invitations and announcements.
- The group considers the cost of mailing invitations and decides to use the church's post office to save money.

Vestry Meeting Schedule

- The group discusses the timing of vestry meetings, with suggestions to hold them on the first Sunday after the 10:15 service.
- The group considers the variability of meeting dates due to holidays and adjusts the schedule accordingly.
- The group agrees to meet on the third Sunday of each month, starting in December, to ensure consistency.
- The group discusses the importance of having financial statements available for the meetings and adjusts the schedule accordingly.

Meeting Conclusion and Final Remarks

- The group discusses the importance of in-person meetings for better communication and decision-making.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. expresses a preference for in-person meetings over Zoom for more effective communication.
- The group concludes the meeting with a prayer, expressing gratitude for the accomplishments and discussions.
- The meeting ends with a sense of accomplishment and a plan for future meetings and projects.

Annual Meeting

MARCH 2

ONE SERVICE: 10:15

**ANNUAL MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
PLEASE JOIN US!**

Thank you to our outgoing Vestry Members, Peter Thatcher, Bruce Long and Kitty Thomas for their years of service. Though we will welcome Kitty and Bruce back pending congregational voting at the annual meeting!



Pending a vote at
**The Annual Meeting of
St. Christopher by-the-River
on March 2, 2025,**

the Following Qualified Electors have been nominated to
serve in the following positions:

Vestry, 3-year term: **Hayley Kosmatka**

Vestry, 3-year term: **Bruce Long**

Vestry, 3-year term: **Kitty Thomas**

Vestry, 1-year term: **Larry Richmond**

This is to complete a vacant position expiring in March 2026.

NorthEast Mission Area Council Representative
(NEMAC), 2-year term: **Linda Saylor**

Please thank the members of the Nominating Committee
for their faithful work.

Neal Lee
Debbie Cole
Charley Marston
Judy Holmes
Larry Richmond

Posted January 15, 2025

VESTRY

Treasurer: Mary Murray

Class of 2024

Bruce Long
Peter Thatcher
Kitty Thomas

Class of 2025

Larry Richmond
Judy Holmes
Rich Radis

Class of 2026

Charlene Currutt (Junior Warden)
John Irwin (Senior Warden/Clerk)
Ron Lee

NEMAC Representative

Laura Cotton

FLOWER DEDICATIONS

DECEMBER 2024

In loving memory of:

- Linda Matthews Costello by Cindy & Ted Mandes
- Joyce & Dick Williams and Quarrier Cook and Robert Jones by Clarke & Whitney Jones
- George & Eleanor Pesuit, Marion Scobee, Karen Vaccariello by Barb & Craig Pesuit
- Mark & Paula Ianni by Teri Ianni

JANUARY 2025

- William & Eleanor Calfee by Brian & Cindy Murphy
- Sarah C. Dickenson and Jeffrey R. Cudlip by Frances a& David Dickenson
- Charles Klinginsmith by Anna & Lily Klinginsmith
- Bruce W. Thomas by Kitty Thomas



THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO 2025

~Becky Everett

We did it! Thanks to all of your efforts and the “love you gave from your heart” in the form of pledges, we have reached our 2025 Annual Giving goal of \$185,000!!!! I am overjoyed, and so very blessed to be a member of a parish that loves and cares for its church home as much as you do! In case you’re not

aware, this makes **THREE YEARS** in a row that we have met or exceeded our annual giving goal! It has been my honor to have been involved with the campaign for two of those years, with my sister, Lucy Lytle, leading us in the third. There is absolutely no doubt that our church family knows how important it is to “love your neighbor as yourself”, always look to “the dawn of a new day”, and to give “from our hearts, with love”! God Bless you all, and God Bless this parish!

JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT

RECTORY RENOVATIONPhase TWO completed!

Best Buy Painting has done a marvelous job. The ceilings, walls, closets, bookcases, all the trim, and even radiators have a fresh new look!

Phase III Is in the works now. we are in the process of refurbishing the three bathrooms. Soon there will be new windows in the upstairs bedrooms. And a much needed garage door will be installed.

Respectfully, and thankfully submitted,
Charlene Currutt, Junior Warden




Food Pantry
Kids snacks


- 100% juice boxes
- Granola bars
- Pretzels
- Raisins
- Goldfish
- Individually packed snacks

february BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Mona DeBaz
Dixon Morgan
James Richmond
- 4 Marshall Rankin
- 6 Michael Marting


- 7 Rebecca Wolf
Peter Thatcher
- 8 Anne Lammers
- 9 Karee Weikel-Broome
- 11 Thomas Bailey
- 12 Olivia Misco
Barb Pesuit
- 24 Anna Klinginsmith

| SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2 -- Fr. Richard Israel | | MONDAY - 3 | TUESDAY - 4 | WEDNESDAY-5 | THURSDAY-6 | FRIDAY- 7 | SATURDAY-8 |
|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| 8 am Holy Eucharist | 10:15 am Holy Eucharist |  | 9:00 Staff | | | | |
| EM: Charley Marston | John Irwin | | | | | | |
| LECTOR: John Irwin | Fran Sarkisian & Brian Wright | | | | | | |
| ALTAR: Sue Marston | Leslie Marting | | | | | | |
| USHERS NA | Brian Wright & Gabe Brachna | | | | | | |
| HOSTESSES | Neal Lee | | | | 8:00 AA | | |

| SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9 -- Fr. Richard Israel | | MONDAY - 10 | TUESDAY - 11 | WEDNESDAY-12 | THURSDAY-13 | FRIDAY- 14 | SATURDAY-15 |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|---|-------------|
| 8 am Holy Eucharist | 10:15 am Holy Eucharist | | 9:00 Staff | 10-12 PRESORT | |  | |
| EM: Charley Marston | Hayley Kosmatka | | | | | | |
| LECTOR: Kathy Pender | Lucy Lytle & Ron Lee | | | | | | |
| ALTAR: Teri Ianni | Lucy Lytle | | | | | | |
| USHERS NA | Ron & Neal Lee | | | | | | |
| HOSTESSES | Elise Bennett | | | | 8:00 AA | | |

| SUNDAY FEBRUARY 16 -- Fr. Richard Israel | | MONDAY - 17 | TUESDAY - 18 | WEDNESDAY-19 | THURSDAY-20 | FRIDAY- 21 | SATURDAY-22 |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 8 am Holy Eucharist | 10:15 am Holy Eucharist | Vestry Mtg | 9:00 Staff | | OFFICE CLOSED | | |
| EM: Charley Marston | Brian Wright | | 10-12 PRESORT | | | | |
| LECTOR: [REDACTED] | Becky Everett & Judy Holmes | | | | | | |
| ALTAR: Sally Conley | Alison Wolf | | | | | | |
| USHERS NA | Leslie Marting & Judy Holmes | | | | | | |
| HOSTESSES | Larry & Gayle Richmond | | | | 8:00 AA | | |

| SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23 – Morning Prayer | | MONDAY - 24 | TUESDAY - 25 | WEDNESDAY-26 | THURSDAY-27 | FRIDAY- 28 | SATURDAY-1 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 8 am | 10:15 am |  | 9:00 Staff | | | | |
| EM: J. Irwin & K. Thomas | John Irwin & James Gallagher | | | | | | |
| LECTOR: [REDACTED] | Chandler Everett & Neal Lee | | | | | | |
| ALTAR: Sue Marston | Leslie Marting | | | | | | |
| USHERS NA | Ron Lee & Peter Thatcher | | | | | | |
| HOSTESSES | Pancake Breakfast | | | | 8:00 AA | | |

| SUNDAY MARCH 2 -- Fr. Richard Israel | | MONDAY - 3 | TUESDAY - 4 | WEDNESDAY-5 | THURSDAY-6 | FRIDAY- 7 | SATURDAY-8 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------|--|------------|-----------|------------|
| 8 am Holy Eucharist | 10:15 am Holy Eucharist |  | 9:00 Staff |  12:00 7:00 | | | |
| EM: NA | John Irwin | | | | | | |
| LECTOR: NA | Fran Sarkisian & Judy Holmes | | | | | | |
| ALTAR: Sally Conley | Laura Cotton | | | | | | |
| USHERS NA | Brian Wright & Nancy Irwin | | | | | | |
| HOSTESSES | Judy Holmes | | | | 8:00 AA | | |

ST. CHRISTOPHER BY-THE-RIVER
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
www.stchrisbytheriver.org

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

Sunday Services

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I

10:15 AM Holy Eucharistic Rite II

Childcare available at the 10:15 service.

Exceptions:

February 23 Morning Prayer

Find our weekly worship on [YouTube](#).

Parish Office

Mary Zup

Staffed T-W-Th 8:30-2:30

440-423-4451

stchrisbytheriver@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2025 Newsletter

St. Christopher by-the-River



PANCAKE BREAKFAST

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23



MARCH 5

12:00 PM

7:00 PM

**Holy Eucharist
Imposition of
Ashes**

12:00

**EM: Kitty Thomas
ALTAR: Sally Conley**

7:00

**John Irwin
Sue Marston**

ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 2nd -11:00 AM

8AM LECTORS & FLOWER DONORS

Please contact the office to be a reader or if you can donate flowers for one of these Sundays:

- March 23 (Greens)
- May 4
- June 15
- August 31

