



ST. CHRISTOPHER BY-THE-RIVER

MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

I am presently traveling in the Carolinas on some business, but mostly personal, visiting family members in South Carolina, North Carolina where I am today and in Virginia for the next two or three days.

On this past Sunday, my brother and his wife who live in Black Mountain North Carolina took me to their Episcopal Church in a tiny little, terribly devastated town of Bat Cave, North Carolina. Fortunately, the small parish church was on high ground in a mountain valley that suffered truly unbelievable devastation from the hurricane last fall. The entire area around Western North Carolina, including Asheville and all the communities running up as far as I have gone so far on this trip more, than 50 miles north of Asheville have extensive damage. Roads have been washed away, houses have been washed away, untold millions of trees blown over. It will take years for all of this damage to be rebuilt. But there are crews at work everywhere and I am confident that it will be rebuilt.



On the drive from my brother's home up to the church was about 35 minutes, during that time all I could think of was the randomness of the devastation. I am sure that all of us have seen pictures of tornado damage where one house is totally demolished, and the next house seems fine. This holds true in North Carolina as well, where, just by whatever chance, one house will get flushed away down a raging river and a nearby house is perhaps a few feet higher on the bank of the valley and it escapes untouched. It certainly reminds us of the uncertainty of our lives.

At the Episcopal Church in Bat Cave, North Carolina, the service was absolutely wonderful. It is a small parish, very much like ours, in a beautiful little, traditional wooden structure. Every one of us would have felt perfectly at home, as I did. The parish had just gone through transition and one year ago had hired a young, married with young children, Priest who grew up in Hudson, Ohio as their new Rector. As did Ann Kidder for 10 years with us, Father John Roberts delivered his homily with no notes, while standing in the middle of the center aisle, speaking to and teaching the 60 parishioners in the pews the lessons of Scripture, focusing on the Gospel Story of Doubting Thomas, which we all heard on the Second Sunday of Easter.

Thomas had the courage to reveal his doubts, to say what was on his mind, and then after seeing the wounds, to exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"

And Christ replied, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

We must all believe, we must come to our church, which feeds our spiritual hunger in so many ways.

One other thing I believe and I know for certain, is that with the work and devotion of our entire Parish, our Vestry, our Search Committee, our Canon to the Ordinary, Our Bishop, and the Holy Spirit, we also will get a wonder new Rector, as did the Church of the Transfiguration in Bat Cave, North Carolina.

Respectfully submitted

John R Irwin, M.D.
Senior Warden

FLOWER DEDICATIONS

APRIL 2025

In loving memory of:

- Mark & Paula Ianni by Teri Ianni
- William Lorom Doerr, William Lawrence Doerr and Donald Charles Kinler Mitchell by Kathi & Jim Mitchell
- Joan, Arthur, John and Garrett Hellman by The Hellman Family
- Ron Miscko by his loving family.

Present: Dr. John Irwin, Ms. Judy Holmes, Dr. Bruce Long, Mr. Richard Radis, Mr. Larry Richmond, Mary Murray.

AI Summary of Meeting

Outline

Discussion on Choir and Church Activities

- John R. Irwin, M.D. notes the presence of a quorum and mentions waiting for Mary Murray to arrive.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. leads a prayer and introduces the agenda, focusing on the budget and financial updates.

Financial Overview and Budget Discussion

- Mary Murray provides an overview of the 2024 expenses, noting a \$50,000 surplus and the need to adjust the budget accordingly.
- Mary Murray explains the St Christopher's fund, its purpose, and the decision to reduce the withdrawal rate to 5%.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. and Mary Murray discuss the financial health of the church, including the balance sheet and available funds.

Capital Campaign and Investment Strategy

- John R. Irwin, M.D. inquires about the need for a new capital campaign, and Mary Murray suggests waiting until a new Rector is in place.
- Mary Murray explains the investment strategy, including the allocation of funds for capital expenditures and the importance of maintaining a cushion.
- The discussion includes the impact of market fluctuations on the fund's value and the need for flexibility in financial planning.
- Mary Murray highlights the importance of replenishing capital funds and the role of Charley Marston in managing investments.

Expenses and Operational Updates

- Mary Murray discusses the church's expenses, including the rector's discretionary fund and the allocation of funds for outreach and maintenance.
- The group discusses the importance of maintaining a balance between operating expenses and capital expenditures.
- Mary Murray mentions the need for a bookkeeper to handle payroll and other financial tasks, reducing the workload on the treasurer.
- The group considers the potential benefits of bringing payroll and accounting in-house to improve efficiency and oversight.

Transition and Succession Planning

- John R. Irwin, M.D. discusses the need for a successor for Mary Murray and mentions a potential candidate.
- Mary Murray expresses her willingness to help with the transition and suggests starting the search for a bookkeeper.
- The group discusses the importance of having a bookkeeper to oversee financial tasks and ensure accuracy.
- Mary Murray emphasizes the need for someone to take over the financial responsibilities to allow her to step down.

Approval of Budget and Meeting Minutes

- The group moves to approve the proposed budget for 2025, with a motion and second from the attendees.
- John R. Irwin, M.D. proposes a motion to approve the vestry meeting minutes from January 12 and 26, which are seconded and approved.
- The group discusses the need for a resolution to approve Father Richard Israel's housing allowance, which is approved.
- The group plans to reconvene after the annual meeting to elect new vestry members and discuss the transition of responsibilities.

Special Events and Social Activities

- The group discusses the importance of having special events throughout the year to engage the congregation.
- Speaker 8 suggests creating a calendar of events and invites suggestions from the attendees.
- The group considers the benefits of having a mix of on-campus and off-campus events to appeal to different members.
- The discussion includes the potential for a clam bake and other social activities to foster community engagement.

Final Remarks and Next Steps

- John R. Irwin, M.D. proposes a motion to thank Mary Murray for her service and discusses potential gifts to recognize her contributions.
- The group considers various options for a special gift, including a restaurant gift card or a personalized gesture.

- The meeting concludes with a prayer led by John R. Irwin, M.D., and a reminder to think about Mary Murray's future plans.
- The group plans to reconvene after the annual meeting to finalize the transition and discuss any remaining business.

There being no further business to come before the Vestry at this time, on motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned and Dr. Irwin led a Closing Prayer at 12:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted, John R Irwin, M.D., Acting Clerk.

VESTRY MINUTES

MARCH 02, 2025

By JOHN IRWIN

Present: Dr. John Irwin, Ms. Charlene Currutt, Ms. Judy Holmes, Mr. Ron Lee, Mr. Larry Richmond.

Dr. Irwin declared a quorum was present, and called the meeting to order.

Nominations of Officers

On motions duly made and seconded and discussed, Dr. Irwin was elected to serve as Senior Warden, Ms. Currutt was elected to serve as Junior Warden, Ms. Murray was elected to serve as Treasurer, and Dr. Irwin was elected to serve as Clerk *pro tem*.

Schedule for Vestry Meetings

On motion duly made and seconded and following discussion, the Vestry approved scheduling Vestry Meetings this year on the third Sunday of each month, at 11:30 AM, to follow the 10:15 AM Eucharist service.

Authorizations

On motion duly made and seconded and following discussion, the Vestry authorized the Senior Warden and the Treasurer to be signers on the church checking account.

On motion duly made and seconded and following discussion, the Vestry authorized the Senior Warden to sign contracts on behalf of the Parish.

St. Christopher Fund and Trustees

On motion duly made and seconded and following discussion, the Vestry appointed Mr. Richmond to serve as a Trustee of the St. Christopher Funds.

Rectory Project

Ms. Currutt presented a proposal for the replacement of the windows on the first floor of the Rectory, with the exception of the Dining Room windows and some small windows on the first floor that do not require replacement. The upstairs windows have been replaced and in order to minimize the loss of heating throughout the winter and cooling throughout the summer seasons, these very old windows on the first floor also need replacement. After obtaining multiple quotes, the Junior Board recommended that we proceed with the purchase and installation of these downstairs windows with the same company that has provided the replacement of the upstairs windows, namely Progressive Supply at a cost of \$18,000. On motion duly made and seconded and following discussion, the Vestry approved this expenditure.

There being no further business to come before the Vestry at this time, on motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned and Dr. Irwin led a Closing Prayer at 12:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted, John R Irwin, M.D., Acting Clerk.

VESTRY

Treasurer: Mary Murray

Class of 2025

Larry Richmond

Judy Holmes

Rich Radis

Class of 2026

Charlene Currutt (Junior Warden)

John Irwin (Senior Warden/Clerk)

Ron Lee

Class of 2027

Hayley Kosmatka

Bruce Long

Kitty Thomas

NEMAC Representative

Laura Cotton

Linda Sylor

JUNIOR WARDEN UPDATE



Your dedicated parishioners have been busy this past month!

Thank you, Bruce Long for securing new locks for our Church. The Gates Mills Fire Dept has placed an emergency access box next to the fire lane door.

All three bathrooms in the rectory have been expertly painted by our talented Larry Richmond.



Under the direction from Luis, several members spread 80 bags of Bark mulch.

Who knew Larry was a landscaper too?!? A huge thank you to some of our teens... Charlie Broom, Peter Mitchell, and Luke Mitchell(not pictured).

We cannot forget GIRL POWER...Hannah Adrian and yours truly still have muscles!



This past month our Pella Windows (installed in the 1950's) on the rectory sun porch have been given the love and attention they much needed by Dukes Home Repair.

The final installation of the downstairs Rectory windows is complete! Again, thank you Progressive Windows from Chagrin for such a great job!



HE IS RISEN!!!! Happy Easter Season...

Thank You for another successful Egg Hunt, Mary Podwoski! This year not just the "littles" had fun but also our "Teens". The Bunny made it quite challenging for them!

The Rectory renovations are almost completed! Weather permitting, we plan on having an OPEN HOUSE and COFFEE HOUR on the Rectory patio, May 25. We have much too be thankful for and are pleased to have Cannon Jessie here as our Supply Priest that day!

*Respectfully submitted by your "exhausted" Junior Warden,
Charlene Currutt*

AGAPE SUPPER

We had a very delightful Agape supper. Thank you to Debbie and Nancy for your hard work



OUR DECORATORS



Thank you to the women who made our church look so beautiful for Easter.

Carolyn Misco

Sally Conley

Sue Marston

Lucy Calvo

Neal Lee



CHOIR

I would like to thank our choir members for their great singing on Easter Sunday, and for the fantastic Easter breakfast that we enjoyed between the services. You are the BEST!



If anyone would like to consider joining the choir, please let me know. We have fun!

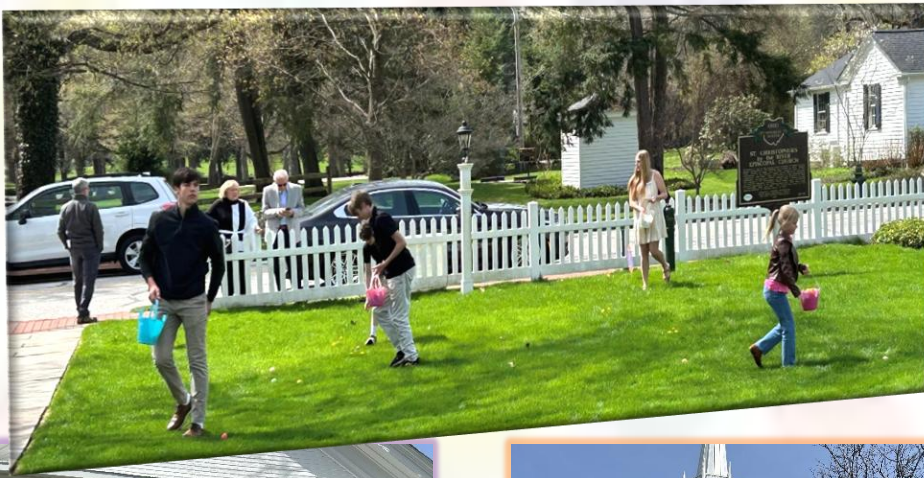
Yuri



BARGAIN BOX

Another VERY successful Bargain Box is under our belts!! We raised over \$8,000 to support our OUTREACH. Thank you so much to ALL who played any part, big or small in its success.





MINUTES - NEMAC (Northeast Mission Area Council) Meeting - April 8, 2025 Respectfully submitted, Andrew Spiesman, Secretary, NEMAC

ATTENDING: Grace Church: Harry Dodds; St. Hubert: Rev. Mikayla Dunfee, Diane Hunt; Church of the Epiphany: Nancy Geiger; St. James: Phyllis Harbor; St. Andrew: Rev. Lisa O'Rear, Andy Spiesman, Chris Whitaker; St. Christopher: Linda Saylor; St. Peter: Ellice Nielsen

OPEN: Meeting opened with prayer at 6:17 PM due to an issue with Zoom (As a result, no Zoom was available.)

MINUTES: January 13, 2025 Meeting. *Move for Approval:* Nancy Geiger (Epiphany) *Second:* Diane Hunt (St. Hubert). Minutes were approved as submitted.

FINANCE REPORT: Unavailable for this meeting. No new disbursements since January.

WELCOME NEW REPRESENTATIVES: Phyllis Harbor, St. James; Rev. Mikayla Dunfee, new Rector at St. Hubert; Ellice Nielsen, St. Peter.

NEW BUSINESS

- **NEMAC Potluck.** This is planned for Saturday, May 3rd at 5 PM at St. Andrew, 7989 Little Mountain Rd., Mentor. A sign-up sheet and flyer with more details will be forwarded to members after Easter. NEMAC Representatives are encouraged to invite members of their congregations.
- **NEMAC Event Calendar.** An event calendar for NEMAC churches to post parish events has been created, but has had technical difficulties. We are working on resolving issues and members will be notified when it is available.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Neighbor to Neighbor.** This program is no longer being funded due to cuts in Federal funding. Discussion was held on church outreach programs impacted by cuts in Federal funding and immigrant neighbors we serve. Information on ICE is available at the diocese of Ohio website, dohio.org under the "Peace and Justice" tab.
- **Funding Requests.** The group discussed how to request funds to use for collaborative projects. The funding request form will be sent with minutes.

PARISH UPDATES

Epiphany. Embarking on a shared ministry with St. Andrew beginning on Easter. The church is collecting food for the Hunger Center in Euclid.

St. James. The St. James Feeding Ministry has hired a volunteer coordinator. Daughters of the King Raised \$600 for End 68 Hours of Hunger. They have a new organist, Davis Badaszewski.

St. Christopher. The Bargain Box sale is on Friday, April 25th from 9 to 4 PM. The giant rummage sale features a wide variety of household items. (7601 Old Mill Road, Gates Mills). Donations for the sale are still being accepted. The search for a new Rector continues.

St. Hubert. Welcomes new Rector Mikayla Dunfee. The church has restructured their outreach program to benefit one organization each month.

Grace. Served 60 children with their "Little Feet" program that buys shoes for elementary students in need. Their search for a new Rector continues.

St. Peter. They are concluding a Lenten program in conjunction with local Baptist churches. The church will be hosting a Mother/Daughter/Friend program soon.

St. Andrew. A combined St. Andrew and local Lutheran churches Easter Vigil will take place on April 19th at 7 PM at Celebration Lutheran Church, 10621 Auburn Rd., Chardon. Excited to be entering in to shared ministry with Church of the Epiphany

DIOCESAN COUNCIL REPORT: (Sent via email from Rev. Chris McCann) Council covered the following:

- Continuing discussion on the R2 resolution concerning racism
- Diocesan staffing issues, including finance
- Update on JIF disbursements and oversight
- The remaining time was spent in discussion and development of core values for the Diocese along with assessment of the values and their effect/effectiveness going forward
- A presentation on short, medium and long term planning for St. Luke (formerly known as the Episcopal Westside Shared Ministry) was given.

CLOSING PRAYER: From *Thoughts in Solitude* by Thomas Merton **MEETING ADJOURNED:** 7:16 PM

NEXT MEETING DATE: Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 6 PM

2025 LMM Shelter Monthly Lunch Overview

Notes from Becky Everett who served as meal coordinator 2018-2024:



February, April, June, August, October are the months we bring casseroles/cookies and serve lunch. In December we provide & serve a Holiday dinner. St. Christopher's is responsible for making 6 casseroles and bringing 12 dozen cookies while St. Paul's Episcopal brings 8 casseroles. I always lined up the casserole and cookie volunteers 2-3 weeks before the lunch service date. St. Paul's meal coordinator, Adam Blackman, sends a casserole recipe at least two weeks ahead of time to St. Christopher's so volunteers have plenty of time to get ingredients etc. There is a black cart that Bargain Box ladies use in the basement. I would use that to bring all the casseroles up in the elevator at one time for delivery to the shelter. In the past I asked volunteers serving lunch to be at the church at 11AM to carpool to the shelter or meet us at the shelter by 11:45AM. The *alternate* months, we serve lunch only- no cooking. I usually asked for 2-3 volunteers to serve each month as St. Paul's Episcopal has many volunteers who come each month to help.

Notes from Deacon Lydia Bailey:

Lunch takes place the 2nd Wednesday of every month, 12:00-1:00, arriving early to get set up in the kitchen. Location of LMM Men's Shelter is 2020 Lakeside Avenue, Cleveland, 44114. Parking for volunteers and staff is in a lot opposite the front door. Lydia is on hand to meet you at the entrance and introduce you to the shelter and kitchen. Working with kitchen staff, you will serve 180-200 shelter residents at lunch. Lydia's cell: 440-525-3219, work 216-649-7723, lbailey@lutheranmetro.org You would also be working with parishioners from St. Paul's Episcopal and their coordinator, Adam Blackman. The kitchen staff prefers that casseroles are *frozen ahead of time* which they will reheat on day of service. The shelter kitchen supervisor & staff are great to work with, Leon Geraldo, cell: 216-507-9228, gleaon@lutheranmetro.org and are on hand for the smallest of questions.

Please let Deacon Lydia know if you have any questions or thoughts of how you may want to be involved in this ministry, whether being on hand to serve lunch occasionally, or tag-teaming with others in coordination of lunch.

Thank you for your open-hearted way, St. Christopher by the River. Like me, you have discovered that in the life of service is the love of Christ – always new and always renewing!

Deacon Lydia Bailey +

*"I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not
perceive it? I will make a way in
the wilderness and rivers in the
desert." -Isaiah 43*




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1 Finley McMillion
4 Larry Smith
5 Bridget Manning
Jean Ramsey
Denise Weber
6 Whit Champ
8 Charlene Currutt
9 Jennifer Blossom
11 Nancy Clark

13 Renee Kolecki
14 Whitney Cole
Glady Loth
15 Teri Ianni
16 Russ Lincoln
17 Brandon Gray
19 Ryan Zittkowski
20 Stella Schmidt

SUNDAY MAY 4 -- Fr. Richard Israel		MONDAY - 5	TUESDAY - 6	WEDNESDAY-7	THURSDAY-8	FRIDAY-9	SATURDAY-10
8 am Holy Eucharist	10:15 am Holy Eucharist		9:00 Staff				
EM: Kitty Thomas	John Irwin						
LECTOR: Michelle Brockett	Fran Sarkisian & Dixon Morgan						
ALTAR: Teri Ianni	Neal Lee						
USHERS NA	Brian Wright & Nancy Irwin						
HOSTESSES	Larry & Gayle Richmond				8:00 AA		

SUNDAY MAY 11 – Morning Prayer		MONDAY - 12	TUESDAY - 13	WEDNESDAY-14	THURSDAY-15	FRIDAY- 16	SATURDAY-17
8 am Holy Eucharist	10:15 am Holy Eucharist		9:00 Staff				
EM: Charley Marston	Hayley Kosmatka						
LECTOR: Teri Ianni	Fran Sarkisian & Judy Holmes						
ALTAR: Sue Marston	Carolyn Misco						
USHERS NA	Charlene Currutt & Alison Wolf						
HOSTESSES	Nancy Irwin				8:00 AA		

SUNDAY MAY 18 -- Fr. Richard Israel		MONDAY - 19	TUESDAY - 20	WEDNESDAY-21	THURSDAY-22	FRIDAY- 23	SATURDAY-24
8 am Holy Eucharist	10:15 am Holy Eucharist	 Vestry Mtg Last Choir	9:00 Staff				
EM: Chandler Everett	John Irwin						
LECTOR: Dan Petrov	Lucy Lytle & Chandler Everett Sr.						
ALTAR: Michelle Brockett	Linda Saylor						
USHERS NA	Leslie Marting & Judy Holmes						
HOSTESSES	Larry & Gayle Richmond				8:00 AA		

SUNDAY MAY 25 – Rev Jesse Dodson		MONDAY - 26	TUESDAY - 27	WEDNESDAY-28	THURSDAY-29	FRIDAY- 30	SATURDAY-31
9 am	11 am	 Join us at the Rectory	9:00 Staff				
EM: Kitty Thomas	James Gallagher						
LECTOR: Michelle Brockett	Ron & Neal Lee						
ALTAR: Sally Conley	Ginny & Chandler Everett						
USHERS NA	Ron Lee & Peter Thatcher						
HOSTESSES	Becky Everett				8:00 AA		

SUNDAY JUNE -- 1		MONDAY - 1	TUESDAY - 2	WEDNESDAY-3	THURSDAY- 4	FRIDAY- 5	SATURDAY-6
8 am Holy Eucharist	10:15 am Holy Eucharist		9:00 Staff		OFFICE CLOSED SUMMER HOURS START		
EM: Kitty Thomas	John Irwin						
LECTOR: Kathy Pender	Brian Wright & Dixon Morgan						
ALTAR: Sally Conley	Ginny & Chandler Everett						
USHERS NA	Brian Wright & Leslie Marting						
HOSTESSES	Kathy Pender				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:

May 11 – 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

MAY 2025 Newsletter

St. Christopher by-the-River

Food Pantry

Peanut Butter	Jelly (preferably no glass)
Honey	Crackers
Bread	Biscuit & Pancake Mixes

CHURCH PICNIC!

COMING JUNE 8th

Mark your calendars for our Annual Pentecost Picnic at Marston Park after the 10:15 service.

If you would like to help out, please contact Ron Lee!



MAY 25
Holy Eucharist
8:00 AM
10:15 AM

**With The Rev Jesse
Dodson**



MAY 25 @ 11:15
**Enjoy coffee hour on
the Rectory patio.**

**On May 25, come take a
tour of the newly
refurbished Rectory!**

Charlene, our Junior Warden, has been working tirelessly and has done an ABSOLUTELY AMAZING amount of work restoring and updating our beautiful Rector's Home.