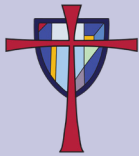


ST. CHRISTOPHER'S NEWSLETTER

spring 2024



**ST. CHRISTOPHER'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**
EMBRACING GOD'S EXPANSIVE LOVE



HIGHLIGHTS from the annual meeting

PARISH STATISTICS 2023

- 60 new members
- 233 average Sunday attendance
- 203 Pledges for 2024 totaling \$724,998

MINISTRY PLANS FOR 2024

- Investment in Staffing: adding quarter-time communications position and half-time children and youth position
- Continue growing North End Neighbors ministry, LGBTQ+ ministry, robust adult formation, and 'Space to Create' Sabbatical for Rector and Congregation during Summer of 2024



Newly Elected Vestry Members

Alison Tierney, Chris Jacobs, and Liz McKechnie

LITANIES

Great, Penitential, and otherwise...

During Lent, the Episcopal Church enters a season marked by introspection, repentance, and spiritual renewal. At St. Christopher's we incorporate several unique liturgical practices both ancient and modern.

Each Sunday in Lent we begin the service with a different 'Litany' - or a series of prayer petitions with repeated responses. The 'Great Litany' holds a special place in Episcopal Lenten worship. It is a solemn supplication and a communal prayer dating back to the early church. Through its poignant petitions, this extended prayer invokes God's mercy and compassion by acknowledging our faults and sins. We also use a modern adaptation, 'The Penitential Litany' (Hold us in your mercy) which follows a similar pattern of petitions and responses but with contemporary harmonies, melodies, and language. The 'Decalogue', or Ten Commandments, is used on another Sunday, chanted as a series of petitions with a congregational response 'Amen. Lord have mercy.' These Litanies (*Great, Penitential and otherwise*) set the tone for our worship, helping us focus on our spiritual journey towards Easter.

During Lent, Episcopalians often engage in various spiritual disciplines including prayer and fasting. These practices are mirrored in our worship space with the lack of altar flowers. Similarly, our music is typically more

subdued than during other seasons. In some traditions, only unaccompanied acapella singing is used with the organ and other instruments silent during the entire season!

In our liturgy another important change is the exclusion of the acclamation 'Alleluia'.

The use of the color purple for our altar frontal and vestments also marks a visual cue that this season is set apart for this time of preparation.

Lent is not just a season of deprivation or sorrow. It is a time of spiritual growth and transformation. Through the use of ancient rituals such as the Great Litany and the use of symbolic practices, we can journey alongside Christ towards the cross. These practices make the contrast of Easter Sunday even more meaningful for all the senses, for example with the smells and bright colors of the flowers adorning the altar.

As we walk this Lenten path together, let these litanies and other liturgical practices help you prepare for the joy of Easter!

-Robert Richter
Director of Music



SPACE TO CREATE

Sabbatical Summer 2024



The word “sabbatical” has its roots in the Hebrew word “shabbat” which means “rest” or “cessation.” The importance of rest - stopping work on a regular, intentional basis - is one that Scripture lifts up in the creation story and the Ten Commandments.

For the last few decades, the Church has recognized the importance of an extended time of rest and rejuvenation for clergy and the positive impact it has on the life of the congregation.

My first sabbatical was in the summer of 2016 while I was serving another church. I called it my “do-nothing” sabbatical. I didn’t have a big project or a big trip – just a few continuing education things I was finishing and extended time with my family. Still I found it to be transformative. Because of my “do-nothing” sabbatical I am more self-aware and less anxious today as a priest. It also sent me down a path of exploring Ignatian prayer that fed me, and my congregations through sermons and teachings and pastoral care, in the years that followed.

I share this with you because as you hear about my sabbatical you may think 1) this isn’t religious education and/or 2) it must be nice to have three months paid off.

You are correct on both points, and at the same time, I expect the activities that I do to renew and refresh my spirit will make me a better priest to serve this

church upon my return.

I received a Lilly sabbatical grant that is funding both my activities and activities at the church in my absence. The theme is “Space to Create” and I am embarking on some creative endeavors in community. In May, I will be traveling to North Carolina for a 9-day Tiny Home Class where I will camp and build along-side a few dozen people – the tiny home we build together will stay there. Then, I will head to the John Campbell Folk School for another week of camping and learning a new craft in community. In June my family and I will embark on a cruise through Alaska. In July I plan to take several creative classes with my husband and teens – cooking, cheese-making, knitting – so that we have space to create together. I will return in mid-August.

Meanwhile here at St. Christopher’s we have a great team of leaders who are making plans. Lay preachers and supply clergy will assist on summer Sundays, alongside Rev. Chana. The grant has provided funds to provide “Space to Create” here through community art nights, and a group is planning them now.

Finally, the grant will support our congregation coming together at the family weekend at Waycross Camp on Labor Day weekend. I look forward to being there, and hope that many of you will join me. It will be a wonderful time to celebrate our summer where we took “Space to Create.”

- The Rev. Cara Spaccarelli
Rector



UPCOMING EVENTS

THE COMMUNITY OF TAIZÉ



Wednesday March 20, 7:00pm

The Daughters of the King sponsors a presentation by Robert Richter about the Community and Monastery at Taizé followed by a worship experience in the style of Taizé. Come learn more about the founder Br. Roger, the monastery and community's daily life, and explore the music and it's use in the monastery's daily prayer.

AFTER SCHOOL ART CLASS



Mondays, 4:15-5:45pm
April 15 - May 20

Made possible by a grant received from the diocese, we are offering an art class to middle schoolers this spring taught by local artist, Kevin Wilson. Registration is now open and friends are welcome. Only 15 spots are available, early registration is recommended.

[Art Class Registration](#)

LABOR DAY FAMILY CAMP



August 30 - September 1

Join our parish at family camp weekend! Waycross staff will facilitate a variety of camp activities, and there will also be plenty of time for rest and relaxation. There's something for everyone. Financial assistance is available for those who need it through the sabbatical grant.

ST. CHRIS CROPS

Planting Day is just around the corner - Saturday, May 18.

Help is always needed to tend to the gardens, primarily on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from May to September. All ages welcome.

For more information contact:

Jeremy Bell:

jeremybell870@gmail.com

Barbara Needleman:

bsneedleman@gmail.com



HOLY WEEK & EASTER

AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PALM SUNDAY | SUNDAY, MARCH 24

8:00am Liturgy of the Palms
10:00am Liturgy of the Palms and Passion
Procession meets at 9:45am by Wild Eggs

HOLY WEEK EUCHARISTS | WEEKDAYS, MARCH 25-27

Noon Spoken Eucharist in the Sanctuary

MAUNDY THURSDAY | THURSDAY, MARCH 28

6:00pm Potluck Community with Interactive Service
8pm-11am Prayer Vigil

Sign up for a one hour prayer time slot during our overnight vigil. During your hour, you are invited to pray, journal, walk the stations of the cross, or just be awake with Christ

GOOD FRIDAY | FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Noon Good Friday Service
3:00pm Stations of the Cross

Walk and pray the Way of the Cross, with visual and spoken meditations exploring Jesus's journey along the Via Dolorosa and our own faithful journeys in a world yet groaning for God's healing.

EASTER SUNDAY | SUNDAY, MARCH 31

7:30am Sunrise Service (Outdoors in the Columbarium Garden)
9:00am Holy Eucharist with choir & brass
11:00am Holy Eucharist with choir & brass