

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING JANUARY 23, 2022



The Report of Fr. Steve Karcher, Rector
To St. Christopher's Episcopal Church,
Killeen, Texas – Annual Meeting for 2021

Greetings All, in the Name of Our Lord!

The parish transition which began in 2019, continued through 2021. In that year we overcame many striking challenges, including Snowmageddon's infliction of \$170,000 in insured property losses as well as serious and continuing declines in attendance and financial support. While we have work to do, the property repairs are nearly complete, and we used the opportunity to improve our site's appearance ... it is more attractive and engaging than it has ever been. *All is well at St. Chris's.*

Life has changed with COVID, and things will probably not return to the way they were. But, your leaders at St. Christopher's are working hard to both embrace the new status quo and to continue with plans for improved outreach and visibility.

Historically churches largely measure their success by "Average Sunday Attendance" ("ASA"). Things have changed and how we measure success must change, as well. So, we develop a formula to measure success based on live and FB attendance; under that measure, we held our own.

This year we're going to start using a new measure of success, which is AWE (Average Weekly Engagement). Under that new measure things are already going well. We have, for example, recently agreed to share our space with Cub Scouts as well as Boy Scouts. As COVID has slowly morphed into an ongoing manageable issue, like the flu, rather than a killer of millions, we have begun to renew our Community outreach, with good success. Open doors and open hearts will bring new life to our parish.

In recognition of our technological limitations, last year we obtained a grant from the Diocese and bought a new electronic camera and other equipment, to further the growth and quality of our Sunday online presence. This year we will work on updating our aging office computers. *Anyone got an eye on any deals?*

The church bell – unused and broken for many, many years -- now rings each workday at noon and on Sundays! It says to the entire world: *We Are Alive and Thriving!!!* And we are!

Relations with our Preschool have gone well, and the school prospers. The Ed Wing and the acreage it uses look better than ever; a new fence has been installed, to allow for larger uses of the acreage by the students. A new playground is in the works.

While finances and cash flow continue to be very significant challenges, your vestry elected to reorganize our investments; as a result we are seeing considerable improvement in long term growth. I am working with Diocesan leaders to develop a plan for assistance with our annual assessment and other financial issues. So far, so good!

2022 will be a year of recovery, innovation and growth. We will overcome! Your thoughts and contributions are always welcome.

Respectfully submitted,

Fr. Steve Karcher, M.Div., JD,
Rector

The SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

2021 was an interesting year!

The year started with the annual Parish meeting on January 17, 2021, with the installation of new Vestry members and Diocesan Council candidates.

We welcomed our new bookkeeper, Sherry Hansen, of Texas Tax Angels to help with our payroll, financial records, and bills.

Then, the week of February 14-19 was when we were hit with the worst winter storm that Texas has ever seen. Our Preschool and Nave areas were flooded from broken pipes due to the extremely bitter cold temperatures and wind chills that week.

February was the 172nd Diocesan Council meeting, Feb 26/27, 2021. It was held virtually due to COVID. The IX Bishop of Texas, the Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle, delivered his address discussing the heart wrenching realities over the past year while offering hope and celebrating the great works throughout our diocese.

We began the Lenten season on February 17th with a virtual Ash Wednesday service from Fr. Steve's home due to the February freeze. We were not able to have a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper because of the freeze.

And due to the COVID pandemic outbreak along with the freezing weather, some of our services were virtual until we "thawed out". Some of our services were conducted in the Parish Hall due to the water damage in the Nave.

On March 6, 2021, we had our annual Vestry Retreat. We met in the Parish Hall at the church. Judy Van Riper, as our Sr. Warden, was able to produce a schedule for the meeting to help us plan out our agenda for the day. She brought pulled BBQ pork for our working meal. Many things were accomplished. We welcomed our new Treasurer, Luis Gonzalez, this year, who has been a tremendous help.

For Easter week services, we were able to have live services with Mac back playing the organ. We continued to stream LIVE on Facebook for those who were unable to attend the LIVE services whether due to health conditions or the limited seating.

Most of the year, we were able to get back to meeting LIVE with the Vestry while still social distancing and wearing masks. As people were getting vaccinated, we were able to meet more often.

Judy met frequently with Fr. Steve to discuss and plan upcoming business.

In May, we had a planned workday/clean-up day for the parish. Pretty well organized with the help from the Judy and the vestry. The bell tower storage room was cleaned and organized, and we were able to give away or toss many items that we no longer needed. Also in May, we had our 50th anniversary celebration on Pentecost Sunday. We opened the time capsule that was buried 25 years earlier. Great reunions and Fr. Robby Vickery attended the celebration and made a few comments. Doris Bearden prepared a speech which included some of the history of St. Christopher's.

In June, Judy Van Riper resigned as Sr. Warden and we went without a Sr. Warden until the Fall, when Holly Smith Miller was appointed as Sr. Warden. She has been a big help with organizing our financial reports with our financial committee.

We lost several parishioners and former parishioners in 2021, either due to COVID or for other health reasons, including Pamela Cabana, James Conard, Paul Harris, Jeff Bodkin, Roy Smith, Janet Culver, and Joel Steine. Several parishioners have lost loved ones this year as well.

It has definitely been a year like no other. I am thankful I was given this opportunity to serve as St. Christopher's Senior Warden this year.

Holly Smith Miller
Sr. Warden

The JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Despite COVID continuing, 2021 was a busy year for Saint Christopher's!

In addition to the normal maintenance in repairing normal wear and tear issues, as the Junior Warden I helped orchestrate and lead efforts to improve and beautify Saint Christopher's building and grounds. Many projects were undertaken, completed, and still on-going from this past year. Many thanks especially to Barnett Carthey and to our parishioners who helped in these projects! In no particular order, we completed the following projects:

- Lighting repairs and improvements (Thanks to Larry!) made both outside and inside St. Christopher's. Floodlights were replaced outside, and several new lighting fixtures were replaced inside that had gone bad.
- Flood damaged areas in the Narthex, children's chapel, sacristy, St Chris Preschool, and bathrooms were repaired and restored.
- New Landscaping on grounds outside which removed dead trees and shrubs.
- New security camera system install for St Chris and Preschool.
- New water heaters installed in Men's Bathroom and Kitchen in Parish Hall.
- Dishwasher repaired in Parish Hall kitchen.
- Finalization of cabinet repairs and replacement ongoing.

In addition to the above projects, we helped in the awarding of two major service contracts for Saint Christopher's. A lawn service contract with Central Texas Home Lawn Transitions was re-awarded to provide yearly services for the church grounds to include the back field that the parish owns. The cleaning service contract was renewed in December 2021 to Susan Toutant who has been providing excellent cleaning services for both Saint Christopher's church and preschool buildings.

I would like to thank everyone who helped keep me abreast of needed repairs as activities in and around St. Christopher's has been curtailed this past year due to COVID.

Many thanks to Barnett for all the help in assisting me in my Junior Warden duties!

Thanks be to God!

Very Respectfully,

Michael Blomquist
Saint Christopher's Junior Warden

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

As I finished my third full year as parish administrator, I thank many of our parishioners for their support and I continue to have a very good business relationship with Fr. Steve. I have come to learn that there are many moving parts within the church, and I have taken on several tasks that I never knew I was able to do. I am the secretary, office manager, administrative assistant to the rector, the Safeguarding Administrator, the sound board and recording operator as well as filling in where needed.

I will continue to support the many activities of our parish through coordination, communications, scheduling, and record-keeping. I give support to and assist Fr. Steve and any supply priests as needed when Fr. Steve is out. We received many requests for monetary help from community individuals for food, rent, water, and gas assistance by phone. We referred these persons to our local outreach agencies for assistance. The number of requests has diminished from last year.

The Parish Directory is constantly getting updated and will be published and given out soon for the 2021 year. If you have a photo that you would like to have in the directory beside your name, please submit it to the office. If you have new information, any changes in addresses, phone numbers, emails, birthdays, anniversaries, etc., please let the office know as soon as possible. A form can be filled out with your new information, or you can email the office with the new information. Please be patient as we have many moving parts in the office, and it changes daily.

My assistant, Julia Adams, was a big help this past year. She came in on a weekly basis as needed to assist in any urgent matters in the office. She filled in when I was away from the office. She has stepped down as assistant to focus more on her job in the Preschool and will be moving at the end of the school year. We are currently searching for another part-time assistant.

Our office business is conducted between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Thursday. The church office is closed on Fridays and holidays. Please contact Debbie at st.chris.killeen@gmail.com or call 254-634-7474 and leave a message for times other than our office hours (for emergencies, follow message directions). If you have an urgent matter, you may call Fr. Steve at 254-383-0444 or email the office. Debbie monitors the office emails after hours as well.

Sincerely,

Debbie Hargreaves

Office Manager/Parish Administrator/Safeguarding Recordkeeper

Ministry Reports

Altar Guild

Altar Guild continues to do our service by setting the altar for all the Sunday services and any additional services we have. Service on the altar guild is open to anyone with a call to prepare and care for the items necessary for the celebration of Holy Communion or any of the other special services, such as weddings, baptisms, and funerals. The head of the altar guild, the rector, appoints a director who oversees setting up schedules for four rotating teams. Each team's service goes from the Saturday before their assigned Sunday until the Friday of the next week. Four Altar Guild teams rotate through the month setting the altar for services. All are welcome to join, so please contact any member for more information.

POC: Mary Wilson and JoAnn Carthey

Blooming Ministry (Flower Ministry)

Altar flowers were provided each Sunday throughout the year. Several church members requested flowers for a specific occasion. This is an option available to all for \$35.00 through the church office. Poinsettias for Christmas Eve services and Lilies for Easter services were ordered by individuals for \$10 each in Thanksgiving or in Memory of loved ones. They provided a simple elegance to enhance the church worship area.

-Pamela Gray

Bread Bakers

Prior to the COVID outbreak, we had nine bread bakers, for the Eucharist. We baked one batch of bread each week except for special days such as Christmas and Easter when we made two batches. We used the St. Gregory's Abby Altar Bread recipe for our communion bread. We have since suspended all bread-baking and use Communion Wafers for now.

A special thanks to all our bread bakers who gave of their time and providing the ingredients for the bread. Baking bread can be a prayerful service in its support of the St. Christopher's family. We hope to be able to bake bread in the near future. Until then, thank you.

-Linda Wood

Children's Chapel

Children's Church is on hiatus due to COVID and small numbers of school-age children. When Children's Church resumes, the Sermons 4 Kids curriculum will again be used. A copy of the weekly Children's Church activities are sent through email and some copies are available each Sunday for children to use while in church with their families.

The online site provides an easy-to-understand version of the Gospel lesson, as well as a variety of arts and crafts ideas for support. Old Testament lessons are also available. The printing of the lesson and materials for projects are provided for the teachers.

Teachers must have completed Safeguarding God's Children to help out in Children's Church. We welcome anyone wanting to participate in this ministry. This is a fun and easy way to help serve St. Christopher's Church.

-JoAnn Carthey, Mary Wilson

Cursillo

The Cursillo community is active at St. Christopher's. These weekends are designed to deepen one's relationship with Christ, experience the love of Christ, return with a renewed commitment and learn ways to nourish that commitment. Congregation Cursillistas encourage appropriate people to attend Cursillo or In-Step weekends. There are several different active Reunion groups. We also host periodic Ultreyas.

("Ultreya" is a Spanish word, derived from the original Latin, meaning Onward! It was in common use by pilgrims to greet and to encourage one another along the way. This word is now used by the Cursillo community to signify the meeting which is held after a Cursillo experience. This meeting may be between Cursillistas from one or several communities.)

Due to COVID, Cursillo weekends were not held during 2021 but two are scheduled in March and August 2022. Ultreyas were held by the Diocese through Zoom this year.

-Kathy Hull

Daughters of the King

Daughters of the King (DOK) supports our parish and its priest in prayer and the service of funeral hospitality. We have one prospective member going through the discernment process and classes. We restarted in-person meetings this fall and have been quite productive, supporting Central Texas Youth Option House for Homeless Teens, Angel Tree Ministry, and sending cards to members of our congregation. Of course, we are always available to pray. Service and evangelism as a group has been renewed with Prayer Groups and an active phone tree. We are conducting a study of The Goals of the Strategic Plan of the Order through the National Office. Hopefully, this next year will see greater visibility with the DOK's support around the church.

-Pam Clancy, President

Deployment Care Packing

We have sent roughly one to two boxes in the average month in 2021. Boxes go to church members, preschool parents, or friends of church members who are deployed overseas. The average box contains snacks and treats, toiletries, books and magazines, and entertainment items. Sometimes the families will provide a list of the service member's favorite items and we do our best to include some of those requests. Around the holidays, we make sure to include festive items like holiday decorations, games or treats.

Usually, the Preschool and Vacation Bible School provide some handmade cards for each soldier, and we also include a personal, handwritten note. The number of soldiers deployed overseas has diminished somewhat, so not many boxes have gone out this past year. We are going to resume the packing in the next coming months. Come join us!

-Barnett Carthey

Education for Ministry

EfM Report 2021

We ended the year in May by resuming meeting in person after meeting through Zoom most of the year. After a difficult summer of recruiting, we started the fall year with six students. We have 1 student in Year One, 1 student in Year Two, 1 student in Year Three, and 3 students in Year Four. We changed our meeting time to after church on Sundays, and that seems to work out for all attendees. Things are progressing very well with very good discussions!

-Beth Bodkin

Extended Family

Extended Family met once a month (3rd Sunday) at various homes beginning at 6:30 pm and ending around 8:30 pm. All adults were welcome to join in a pot-luck meal, followed by singing and sharing prayer concerns. **This ministry is currently on hiatus due to COVID.**

-Kathy Hull

Lay Eucharistic Visitors

The work of bringing communion to the homebound is a holy task. We continued to suspend visitations in 2021 due to COVID. This is an extension of the sacraments we've received at Jesus' table. If you feel you may be called to this ministry, contact our office. We are hoping to resume this ministry sometime in 2022.

-Debbie Hargreaves

Lectors

Each week, our lector teams speak the lessons of the day during our services. This ministry is open to each of us. If you would like to become a Lector/Reader, we can schedule a short training for those not familiar with how it works. Scheduled a month in advance, our office is happy to add you to our list. Just fill out a ministry card, leave a note on the desk in the office, or email/call the office.

Thank you to all the readers who have filled in during this continued COVID era.

-Debbie Hargreaves, Keeper of the schedule

Men's Prayer Breakfast

The Men's Prayer Breakfast: P.O.C. is Barnett Carthey

MPB has been in existence since 1984. Two male parishioners started it to form a closer bond with the men of the church. We started with 35-40 men when St. Christopher's was on Massey Street in Killeen. Over the years, there have been many cooks, but three men have taken the lead position. Currently Barnett Carthey is the primary cook with Steve Bodkin and Scott Kroeger also prominent in preparation of breakfast.

The men of MPB also take the lead in the preparation of the Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper as well as any other meals that need to be prepared for the church community. Presently there are a core of 12-15 men, but we are also looking for more men to join our group. All men of the church and their friends are invited for breakfast. We meet every 2nd and 4th Saturday from 8-9 am. There is no charge for breakfast, however, some usually pitch in a few dollars each time we meet. Don't let that be the reason for not joining us. You can spare an hour twice a month. Everyone has to eat.

In Christ, Barnett Carthey

Music Ministry Report

This past year of 2021 was another difficult year for the church and the general public. Problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the variants made a regular music program somewhat impossible. Once again this year, the choir program was put on hold.

I had several medical problems arise during the year.

March - Double vision in my close-up vision- Corrected with new glasses for music reading.

April - Cervical spine surgery (neck) to correct loss of control in arms and hands.

Summer - leave of absence.

September - Stroke (TIA), I found out there were two previous strokes.

My surgeon had told me that it would take six months to a year for my nerves in my neck to mend.

In December, I noticed that the strength in my hands and arms was returning. So, I called Father Steve and said that I would like to return and play for Christmas Eve.

I was thankful that I had made CD's for approximately an entire church year.

I thank Debbie Hargreaves for putting services together during this time of my absence with music selections from the CD's. Various genres of music were used during worship and came from the 1982 Hymnal, Wonder Love & Praise, Lift Every Voice & Sing 2, Maranatha, and Songs Of Praise.

I am thankful to be playing for services again. I want to thank Father Steve, Debbie Hargreaves and the congregation for all of the thoughts and prayers sent my way. I also want to thank my wife, Sue, for all of her support and care during my time of surgery and stroke recovery.

The future is somewhat unknown due to the continuing pandemic. But, with God's help, the church and the music program will remain strong.

Sincerely,

James A. "Mac" McLendon
Organist / Choir Director

Newcomers, Greeters, and Ushers

This ministry is going well. We try to meet and greet every person who comes to the church on Sunday morning - new and old. We have combined this ministry along with the Lectors/Readers in order to have enough people to help. The Newcomer bags were given to any Newcomer or visitor with some information on the Episcopal Church, devotionals, and an information card to fill out. The ushers and the Vestry on Duty or anyone usually stepped in to help greet this past year. We could use more volunteers to help greet newcomers and visitors. This is a rewarding ministry, and this is one way to get to know your fellow members better. We will continue to greet newcomers on an as needed basis.

Thank you for your service!

Debbie Hargreaves

Nursery

We had 2 employees in our Nursery beginning in 2021. Our nursery employees work in the nursery on Sundays and will work as well for other events when those events resume. They are very happy to be caring for your children. Each employee has had the Safeguarding God's Children training and have been through a background check with the Diocese. We are advertising for extra help in the nursery and will continue to recruit for extra help in the nursery when the regularly scheduled workers cannot help. We always need 2 workers in the nursery at all times due to the safeguarding requirements. If we have only 1 nursery worker, they either have to relocate to the worship area, we recruit a church member to fill in, or we would have to close the nursery. Please consider filling in if we need an extra person in the nursery until we recruit a few more employees.

-Debbie Hargreaves

The Order of St. Luke

Our Community of Healing of the Order of St. Luke is called to help our community as his followers and engage in healing and prayers. For 2021, due to COVID concerns, the group had decided in 2021 to hold off on any meetings until later in the year as we had finished the introductory book on the 26 healing lessons of Christ.

We started up again later in August of 2021, with the next book in the series “Going Deeper Book 1”. As of the end of the year, we have completed through lesson 5 by meeting at the parish hall on the first Saturday of each month.

The members have included:

Katrina Stone, as convener,
Doris, a founding member,
Barbara Prall, a founding member,
Karla Faulkner,
Bethalee Bodkin,
Pamela Clancy.

At the last month of this year we resumed the practice of healing prayer during Sunday worship.

If you would like to see what we are about, you are welcome to attend one of our meetings. All are welcome!

-Kathy Stone

Outreach Ministry

During the year we designate a Mission of the Month and support Outreach ministries by providing volunteers and/or items needed by the organizations.

The ministries we support are the Mission Soup Kitchen, Honduras Good Works, Killeen Food Care Center, Habitat for Humanity, Families in Crisis, Christian Assistance Network, Hope Pregnancy Center, the Killeen Community Clinic, Aware Central Texas, and Indian Oaks BINGO in addition to the community Fall food drive and Angel Tree.

In addition, we raise money at our annual Fall Outreach Action for designated organizations. If you would like to help out with one of our organizations or fill a vacancy, don't hesitate to let the office know or fill out a ministry card.

The St. Christopher's points of contact for the organizations are:

- Jan - Mission Soup Kitchen: Janet Stein
- Feb - Honduras Good Works Education: Andy Heinchon (or Don & Bobbi Hopkins)
- Mar - Food Care Center: John Ott
- Apr - Habitat for Humanity: Vacancy – NEED A POINT OF CONTACT
- May - Families in Crisis: Mary Wilson
- Jun - Christian Assistance Network: Judy MacWillie
- July - BINGO at Indian Oaks Nursing Home – Kathy Hull
- Aug - Killeen Community Clinic: Lenna Barr
- Sep - Hope Pregnancy Center: JoAnn Carthey
- Oct - Aware Central Texas: Beth Bodkin
- Nov - Killeen Food Drive/Food Care Center: John Ott
- Dec - Angel Tree: Mary Wilson

-Kathy Hull

Outreach Organizations

- **January – Mission Soup Kitchen**

The Soup Kitchen serves a hot meal to those in need. Volunteers and donations are needed to sustain this non-profit organization. If you would like to help, please contact Kathy Hull at 254 368-3175. We collect donations each January for needed items such as food and personal care items.

- **February - Honduras Good Works**

2021 Annual Report for Honduras Good Works

We support this ministry by collecting hotel/travel size soap, shampoo, toiletries, hair "pretties", combs, grooming items, etc. We also collect any school supplies, pens, backpacks, scissors, etc. These are then used for the "packing party" once a year so the items can be sent to Honduras during the medical mission.

They have increased the number of Honduran physicians and dentists invited to join the brigade. In 2021, Honduras Good Works (based in Austin) held a successful fundraiser online and in person.

In 2020, Honduras Good Works was going to place water filters with 225 families. From 2019-"The American members of the team were uniformly impressed by the passion of the Honduran providers. The Honduran doctors, dentists and pharmacists worked hard and were so pleased to be able to offer their services AND our medicine to their rural poor. More often than not, medicines are too expensive or are not even available to these villagers, and dental care is not even an option. We brainstormed with the Honduran team to come up with ideas that will allow even more Honduran providers and translators to join the team, and they volunteered to try to raise money towards this goal.

The engagement of the Honduran team with HGW is representative of how HGW is furthering its mission to equip Hondurans to care for their people."

Submitted by Debbie Hargreaves

From last year's report-via Bobbi & Don Hopkins, who retired from Honduras Good Works-Former Liaisons to Honduras Good Works

- **March - Killeen Food Care Center**

During 2021, The Food Care Center received over 800 lbs. of donations from St. Christopher's Preschool from parents during their annual Christmas program. John Ott picked up from the church several hundred pounds of food that he then delivered to the Killeen Food Care Center. The food care center director, Raymond Cockrell, is doing a fantastic job. In 2021, the Food Care Center have distributed over 3 million pounds of food to over 100,000 people in need. They provided Christmas baskets to families in need. Their volunteers provided many hours of service each month to help distribute food.

They have been able to keep their shelves full and maintain their normal hours of operation despite dealing with COVID.

Thank you for all your help with donations to the Killeen Food Care Center.

For updates, you can go to their website www.foodcare.org or to Raymond L. Cockrell's Facebook page.

We have done an amazing job with donations this past year!

- **April – Habitat For Humanity**

We gladly accept donations of napkins, paper towels, hot and cold cups, paper plates, and plastic flatware. They use these items when they provide lunch to work crews building homes. Other opportunities to serve include donations of building supplies you might have left over from a project, volunteering in the Re Store or helping on a work crew. Kathy Hull is our contact person at St. Christopher's.

- **May – Families In Crisis**

Families In Crisis is a non-profit organization that supports and empowers victims of family violence and sexual assault. It provides emergency shelter, food, clothing, personal items, and transportation for about 80 people a day. There are many volunteer opportunities that can be found at www.familiesincrisis.net. We have a wish list posted during May of items needed by the shelter.

- **June - Christian Assistance Network aka C.A.N. (Front Door Killeen)**

Along with collaborating partners, CAN assists individuals and families to become self-sustaining through direct assistance in obtaining IDs, birth certificates, replacement social security information, prepare resumes and job placement. Along with this, they assist those without housing to get into apartments. This work is done in a Christian environment. CAN is one of the Outreach organizations St. Christopher's supports.

-Kathy Hull

- **July - Indian Oaks BINGO**

St. Christopher's organizes a BINGO game at Indian Oaks nursing home on the third Monday of each month. The games run from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Anyone at the center is welcome to attend and we often see familiar faces each month. Usually about 6 or 7 volunteers help with calling bingo, assisting residents, passing out snacks and distributing prizes. Average attendance is about 20 residents. Indian Oaks bingo is a ministry of the month and items needed for prizes were collected during Vacation Bible school. We always welcome donations especially stuffed animals and food snacks.

-Kathy Hull

- **August – Killeen Community Clinic (formerly Free Clinic)**

The Killeen Community Clinic had an overabundance of hand sanitizers and reached out to us if we wanted several boxes. They gave us 12 boxes of 12-8oz bottles! Very generous! They have more if we need them. The clinic provides medical care for those with limited access to health care services. They ask for donations of copy paper, toilet tissue, paper towels, tissues, post-it notes, hand sanitizer, and other office supplies.

- **September – Hope Pregnancy Center**

The center provides compassionate care, practical help and accurate information to pregnant women. They provide confidential and free pregnancy testing, counseling, parenting classes, ultrasound imaging and mentoring. You can help by providing maternity clothes and baby items such as formula, diapers, wipes, baby clothes to 18 months and baby food. Volunteer opportunities are available. Please contact JoAnn Carthey, for more information.

- **October – AWARE Central Texas**

ACT focuses on the prevention of child abuse and family violence. AWARE needs you! If you would like to volunteer, refer struggling families and victims, get help for your own family, attend a workshop or just need more info, go to www.AwareCentralTexas.org or speak to Beth Bodkin

- **November – Food Care Center Food Drive**

St. Christopher's was given the opportunity to be a designated collection center for the 2021 November Fall Food Care Drive and was in the top 4 of most collections received in the Bell County area! We will be a designated collection point for 2022 as well! Bring in your canned goods and other non-perishable items during the month of November. They will gladly accept monetary donations as well!

- **December – Angel Tree Ministry**

It is with a grateful heart that I thank everyone for their support of our annual Angel Tree Project. This ministry provides gifts for prisoners' children. Each child in the program receives both a clothing item and a toy. KNCT takes care of organizing all the paperwork. We had extra families this past year and St. C's generous parishioners took care of all! Thanks to Daughters of the King and Men's Prayer Breakfast for helping with delivery.

-Mary Wilson

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry does not meet as a group anymore but anyone who knits, or crochets can make prayer shawls from home. We welcome all who are interested in this ministry. We have a cabinet in the parish hall that has yarn to mix or match. The shawls are given to those in need of comfort, and we have shawls available at the church. This is a rewarding and heartwarming ministry. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Joan Ott at 254-833-4413 or the church office.

-Joan Ott

Preschool

St. Christopher's Episcopal Preschool has had a very different year than previous years. We have continued to be impacted by COVID-19 and the February 2021 freeze and reconstruction of some of our classrooms and floors took time and affected us both financially and with the changes in routine. The students and teachers adapted well through the reconstruction. We now have beautiful new flooring, new cabinets in 4 of the classrooms, and updated bathrooms with improvements to the other classrooms coming up.

We were able to modify our routines while the reconstruction was going on and the workers were able to work around our school schedule.

We are thankful for an anonymous donor who gave us a fenced-in area which was put up at the back of the Preschool. We are now able to have an area for the students to safely play and have lessons outdoors.

The Preschool thrived in the Spring semester of 2021. Enrollment was up and we were able to maintain our enrollment into the new school year in the Fall. Our enrollment through December 2021 was about 79 children with more prospective students and their parents taking tours of our facility. We had two 3-week sessions for the summer with a 4-day Vacation Bible School in between, which included children and adults from St. Martin's in Copperas Cove.

It is our plan to continue with two 3-week summer sessions with a 4-day VBS in between. We will continue with the same curriculum for VBS this year, with more information to follow.

We completed our re-accreditation process, and are operating in the black as of December 2021. We have good collaboration between the Church and the Preschool. We have had several fundraisers at Freddie's Frozen Custard in Harker Heights and at McAlister's Deli, which helped raise money so we can use to improve our playground. More fundraisers to come in the new year!

We currently employ a staff of 21 this year and have hopes of maintaining our enrollment for 2022-2023. 72-79 students is a suitable number to maintain each year.

The Preschool Office Hours are: TWTH 8:45am-2:15pm Ph: 254-526-8380

Email: stchristopherps@gmail.com

Safeguarding

We have two trainers for our Safeguarding classes. They are Judy Harris and Carla Heinchon. Jayne Doxsey is getting trained as a trainer and will be available soon. All Preschool teachers, assistants, substitutes, and volunteers are safeguarded.

Our vestry members are all safeguarded in God's Children and God's People. Those nominated for vestry positions were safeguarded or in the process of being safeguarded before being placed on the ballot. I will continue to notify those who have expiring safeguarding certification to renew before that time. I am in the process of updating everyone's safeguarding.

-Debbie Hargreaves, Safeguarding Records System Administrator

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Vacation Bible School

Organized for 2021 by Becca Davis, Head of the Preschool

June 28, 2021- July 1, 2021

VBS was a four-day session for children 15 months through fifth grade.

The Preschool children, siblings, and former students participated in 2021. We had over 50 children attending our Rainforest themed events. Leaders for each of the class sessions were members of St. Christopher's, teachers/assistants at the Preschool, and St. Martin's Church in Copperas Cove. They were each trained in Safeguarding God's Children.

This year, the VBS dates are June 20-June 23. We will once again reach out to St. Christopher's and St. Martin's for volunteering opportunities. We will be doing the Rainforest theme again this year. Please watch for additional information as plans are finalized.

-Becca Davis, Head of St. Christopher's Preschool

Vestry

The Vestry has functioned well throughout the year despite many changes due to COVID, meeting by Zoom, and the February freeze and damage to our property. We worked together to support each other, and Fr. Steve Karcher has done an excellent job with keeping the Vestry members in the loop on daily needs for St. Christopher's.

The Vestry meets, usually, on the 3rd Monday of every month at 6:30pm. If you would like to be placed on the agenda for a concern, accomplishment, or prayers, please let the office know a week before the Vestry meeting.

We held the vestry election on December 12-23, 2021. We extended the voting due to limited attendance because of COVID.

Your vestry for the 2022 year will be Holly Miller, Sr. Warden, Michael Blomquist, Jr. Warden, Barnett Carthey, Jr. Warden Assistant, Beth Bodkin, Steve Bodkin, Pam Clancy, and Jayne Doxsey.

Diocesan Council Delegates for the 2021 Diocesan Council are: Beth Bodkin, Steve Bodkin, and Debbie Hargreaves. Council will be held in The Woodlands on February 25/26.

We also have a Finance Committee within the Vestry to help support our bookkeeper, Sherry Hansen with Texas Tax Angels, and our Treasurer, Luis Gonzalez.

- Debbie Hargreaves, Clerk of the Vestry

Vintage Hearts

Vintage Hearts is an adult fellowship group. We gather once a month for fellowship usually at somebody's home. Other times we meet at the Parish Hall for game night. We meet the third Saturday at 6pm. Our parties are potluck – everybody brings something – examples: wine to share, food from appetizers to desserts. What do we do? Fellowship - we get to know each other better. Scott Kroeger manages the Vintage Hearts Calendar (526-0524 or skroeger2011@gmail.com).

The year 2021 was another year of challenges due to COVID. We held our first Vintage Hearts meeting on June 26 in St. Christopher's Parish Hall. We had four Vintage hearts meetings at individuals' homes and two at the Parish Hall. Instead of meeting in September, we all attended the annual Outreach Auction held on September 25th.

Our Vintage Hearts calendar for 2022 is:

2022

Jan 15: Lathrop/Ott's House

Feb 19: Game Night at Church - Gillespie

Mar 19: Albert Hernandez's home

Apr 30: Scott & Clare Kroeger's home (5th Saturday because of Easter-April 17 and two Outreach Auction dinners)

May 21: Game Night at Church – Barnett & JoAnn Carthey

June 18: Open

July 16: Kathy Hull's Home

Aug 20: Scott & Clare Kroeger's Home

Sept 17: Silent Outreach Auction this month, so enjoy the Silent Auction.

Oct 15: Janet Stein's Home

Nov 19: Open (Saturday before Thanksgiving)

Dec 17: Kathy Hull's Home – Christmas Party

-Scott Kroeger

Treasurer's Annual Report

A separate report will be distributed by our Treasurer when it is available.

Prepared for the Annual Parish Meeting, January 23, 2022

By Debbie Hargreaves, Office Manager/Parish Administrator/Clerk of the Vestry