



The Beacon

October 2015

St. Christopher's
Community Church

7902 Steamboat
Island Road NW
Olympia, WA 98502
(360) 866-2111

Sunday Worship and
Sunday School
10:30 a.m.

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Page 1

Did you Know? 2

Financial Update 2

Stewardship 3

Syrian Refugees 4-5

ELCA Update 6-7

Calendar & Vol-
unteer Schedule 8-9

Pastor's Page: Finding Community in a Disjunct Society

This month is Pledge Harvest, a time when we reflect on how God is calling us to give and make sacrifice in service to God's Kingdom especially lived out in and through our church. As your pastor and priest, I don't take lightly the gifts and support. So I've been asking myself to what are we asking you to pledge financial support? What is it that St. Christopher's stands for that warrants the bold request of giving?

Some congregations are known for their stance on social issues, theological convictions, spirituality, or worship. But from what I observe, St. Christopher's stands for *community*.

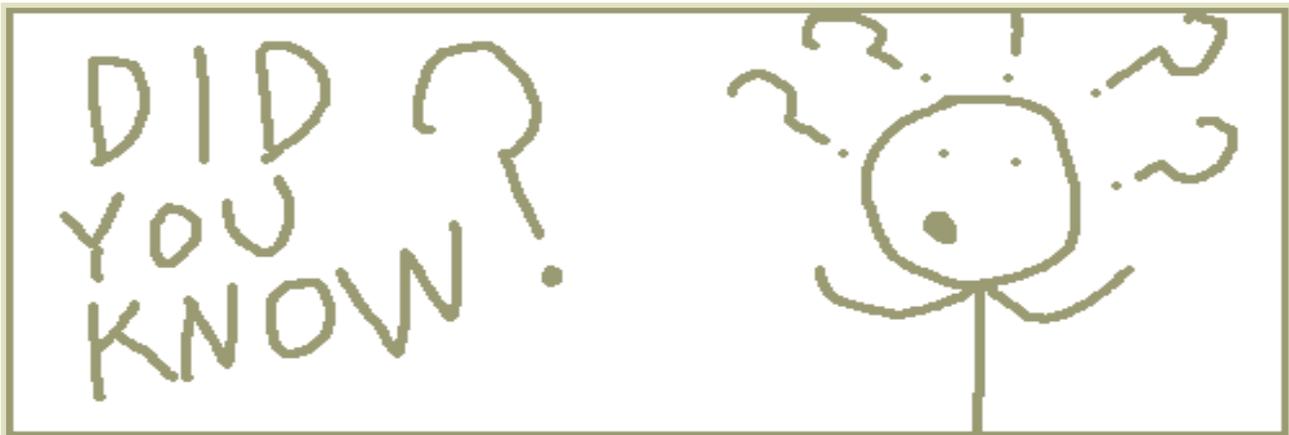
Community is difficult to define and sometimes contradicts itself. Community seeks harmony but knows harmony is the result of courageously and wisely living with tension, disagreement, or dissonance. It is characterized by a Godly love that is unwilling to write off others because God has never written us off ("I will never leave you nor forsake you." – Deut. 31:6 & Heb. 13:5). And yet community sometimes fails. When it breaks down it is renewed by humility, confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Community is gathering to share, encourage, listen, grow, laugh, change, give, struggle, and rejoice. In essence it is to live together in the ways God has intended for the benefit of each of us personally, for all of us as a group, and for the larger community of the World.

I personally want to live in that kind of Christ-like community and learn how to be a part of that kind of community. I want to share that kind of community with the wider world that is often disjunct and constantly torn apart by all sorts of things anti-Christ – greed, selfishness, pain, hatred, prejudice and so on. And that is a significant part of why we, the Thibodeauxs, contribute to St. Christopher's.

I believe in you. I believe in what God is doing right here in you and me through Christ's grace. I believe that living in true community, in Christ's Kingdom of Heaven, and taking that community into the world changes everyone for the better.

Let's pledge together to this kind of Christ-centered, God-given, grace-empowered community. Let's join together living in and supporting God's community, the Kingdom of Heaven, right here on the Steamboat Peninsula.

Fr. James +



- The Open Hands Foodbank Garden brought in 264 pounds of food?
- Over 20 St. Christopher's ministries were represented at the September Ministry Fair?
- Based on average income in our area, if every pledging household gave 10% of their income, we would have a budget surplus?
- We have had over 20 youth come to each youth group meeting in September?
- Kids from St. Christopher's participated in the Steamboat Neighborhood for Kids event, packing more than 200 bags of food for other kids through the Thurston County Food Bank?

St. Christopher's Financial Update

(unaudited numbers)

	Annual Giving
September 2015	\$10,389.51
Year-to-Date	\$141,941.89
2015 Budget Total	\$181,299.00

October 1, 2015

October is our Pledge Harvest. This month we are taking the opportunity to revisit financial stewardship, an important element of our faith formation individually and as a congregation.

We have done God's work for another year. We have contributed to the community in which we live, to the vitality of our ministries and programs, and most importantly to the experience of Christ through Saint Christopher's Community Church.

And we give thanks throughout the year to all who give money and time to the church. During Pledge Harvest our recognition and practice of giving becomes a little more formal. And we hope also to say, "Thank You" with extra bravado, zest, and spirit for your support of God's work.

A few words about the annual pledge are in order here. Throughout October we will be asking you to complete a Pledge Card. You can pledge any amount with any frequency. A key to the vitality of our community is regular consistent giving. A pledge card is an intentional way of expressing heartfelt love and support for God's work through God's people in this community.

Scripture teaches us that our financial stewardship is characterized by giving freely, joyfully, and without reservation. "Celebrate the Abundance" has been a marquee phrase at Saint Christopher's. It is my hope and confidence that we will once again joyfully "Celebrate the Abundance" God gives us as a generous people, helping others, and giving to the work and worship of God.

In keeping with the celebration, nay, festive nature of this month of Pledge Harvest - our program will conclude on November 8th with a Celebration of Abundance. Father James will have more to say about the celebration in the weeks ahead. For now, thank you for giving to the church, and I'm hoping to see you at the banquet on the second Sunday of November.

Faithfully,

*Douglas P Smith
Treasurer*

Episcopal Presiding Bishop statement on refugees

[September 14, 2015] Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has issued this statement on the current worldwide refugee crisis:

The children of Abraham have ever been reminded to care for the widow and orphan and the sojourner in their midst, who were the refugees and homeless of the time. Jesus charged his followers to care for the least of these and proclaim the near presence of the Reign of God - in other words, feed the hungry, water the thirsty, house the homeless, heal the sick, and liberate the captives. We cannot ignore the massive human suffering in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, nor in Asia and the Americas. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and our lives are bound up with theirs. The churchwide ministry of Episcopalians has included refugee resettlement since the refugee crisis of World War II. It continues today through the leadership of Episcopal Migration Ministries, and I urge your involvement, action, and support. Read about their work below, and share these opportunities with friends and co-workers. You will discover anew the power of good news in the face of the world's tragedies.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church

Congregational and individual responses

The Syrian Civil War, now in its fourth year, has unleashed a humanitarian emergency in which severe war crimes - including indiscriminate massacres, persecution of religious and ethnic minorities, sexual and gender-based violence, and other humanitarian abuses - have become widespread. According to a recent UNHCR report, more than 4 million people (through the end of 2014) have fled their homes to escape the war in Syria, adding to a worldwide total of nearly 20 million refugees, half of whom are children. This is the largest and most widespread refugee crisis the world has known since World War II.

While record numbers of people are being forced to flee, powerful images of refugees fleeing Syria are compelling the world to action.

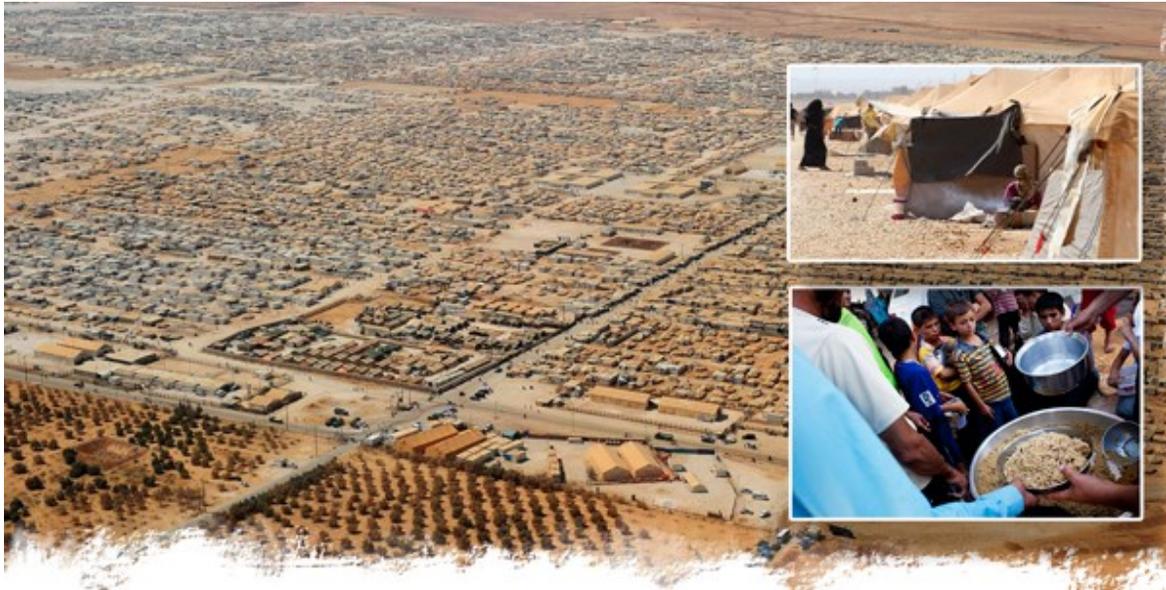
Learn

The media is publishing articles on a daily basis chronicling the most recent events and statistics. This crisis is complex geopolitically and historically. Find out more at www.unhcr.org. The [terminology](#) can also be confusing. Follow Episcopal Migration Ministries on Facebook and Twitter to stay up to date.

Act

In 2015, the United States is welcoming 70,000 refugees to our country as new Americans.

The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, through Episcopal Migration Ministries, works in partnership with its affiliate network, along with dioceses, faith communities and volunteers, to welcome refugees from conflict zones across the globe. Your local resettlement agency is always preparing for arriving families and in need of financial support, resources and volunteers. Contact an Episcopal Migration Ministries affiliate near you. You can find more information at episcopalchurch.org.



Advocate

As a global leader in refugee resettlement, the US can and must do all that it can to welcome Syrians to the United States. Reach out to your Senators, Representatives, and the White House and ask them to support a robust refugee resettlement program and significant increase in Syrian resettlement.

The Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) has written a sample letter you may send to your members of Congress urging them to support increasing the number of refugees resettled by the US in 2016. You can find this letter on the EPPN action center at advocacy.episcopalchurch.org.

Join the Episcopal Public Policy Network to receive updates and policy action alerts to your inbox. Follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Awareness

Follow Episcopal Migration Ministries on Facebook and Twitter. Share news articles and story online and through your social media networks. Generate discussions in your community about the issues refugees are facing.

Join the **#RefugeesWelcome** global social media campaign urging governments to welcome refugees to their countries.

If you're a teacher, use UNHCR's [toolkit](http://www.unhcr.org) (www.unhcr.org) for teaching young people about migration and refugees.

If you are in a congregation, use the [Prayer for Syria](http://episcopalmm.org) (episcopalmm.org) as part of your Sunday or daily worship.

For additional information, contact Allison Duvall, Manager for Church Relations and Engagement for the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, [212-716-6027](tel:212-716-6027)



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

ELCA bishop joins North American heads of churches for annual meeting

CHICAGO (ELCA) – The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), is gathering with North American Lutheran and Episcopal leaders in Washington, D.C., Sept. 24-25 for the annual heads of church meeting. Joining Eaton are the Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and National Bishop Susan Johnson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

The heads of church meeting takes place as U.S. Lutheran and Episcopal church leaders are in Washington, D.C., for an advocacy convening. During the convening, church and community leaders from across the country will meet with more than 60 congressional offices to advocate for federal funding for environmental protections, emphasizing the impact climate change has on the most vulnerable. Discussions will also focus on increased resources to address humanitarian crises around the world.

Prior to the Sept. 24 visits with congressional leaders, the ELCA hosted a prayer brunch attended by convening participants, members of Congress and leaders from Lutheran partner organizations. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., and Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, served as honorary hosts for the event.

In welcoming the group, Eaton told those gathered that this week's advocacy convening provides an opportunity for faith leaders and others to help impact policy decisions by shedding light on the impact of climate change and the effect it has especially on those who experience poverty and hunger.

"Climate change is not the boutique issue of the few but a faith issue of the many," Eaton said.

Speakers during the brunch included Brown, Whitehouse and Rep. Lois Capps, D-Calif.

During the event, Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., honored the Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin, who is retiring after serving six three-year terms as bishop of the ELCA West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod. The Rev. Matthew L. Riegel, who has served as chaplain of Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University in Morgantown since 2000, will be installed as bishop Sept. 26.

Eaton also honored Jefferts Schori for her “remarkable service and witness” as presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church. Jefferts Schori will retire after serving a nine-year term. Her predecessor, the Rt. Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, will be installed Nov. 1.

The four heads of church will participate in two interfaith events sponsored by Coming Together in Faith on Climate. The events, one tonight and one tomorrow morning, will be held at Washington’s National Cathedral.

In a Sept. 23 opinion piece published in USA Today, the four leaders called for politicians, churches and society to take action on climate change.

“Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. We witness in too many instances the Earth’s natural beauty, a sign of God’s wonderful creativity, being defiled by pollutants and waste. With this reality, we question humanity’s willingness to answer God’s call to care for the well-being of God’s good creation. With our faith at the forefront, we must do what is necessary to protect and care for creation,” the leaders wrote.

“Right now, faith communities around the world are coming together in energetic ways to call on world leaders to address the impacts of climate change on our most vulnerable brothers and sisters, and to protect God’s creation as part of a new global agreement on climate change.”

The article urged world leaders to support an agreement at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris in December. “We must protect those living in poverty by protecting the climate,” the leaders stated.

“The stakes are high, but the opportunities for cooperation among individuals, churches and governments are significant. Over the past century, we have burned fossil fuels with little concern for their impacts. This moment is a critical one so we must act together in solidarity with God’s good creation and in hope for our shared future.”

October Event Calendar

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1 Men's Group Breakfast (7:30am) Choir Practice (7-8pm)	2	3 Safeguarding God's Children at St. John's (8:30am-12pm)	4 Education Hour (9am) Family Service (10:30am) Blessing of the Animals (11:45am)
5 Vestry Council Meeting (7- 9pm)	6 Home Bible Study 6:30-8:30pm	7 AA (8pm)	8 Choir Practice (7-8pm)	9	10	11 Education Hour (9am) Worship (10:30am) Worship Commit- tee Meeting (12pm) Youth Group 5pm & 6:45pm
12 Vestry Council Meeting (7pm) Young Life at Capital High 7:27pm	13 Home Bible Study 6:30-8:30pm	14 AA (8pm)	15 Men's Group Breakfast (7:30am) Choir Practice (7-8pm)	16	17	18 Education Hour (9am)
19 Sr. High Fries & Floats 6:30pm	20 Home Bible Study 6:30-8:30pm	21 AA (8pm)	22 Choir Practice (7-8pm)	23	24	25 Education Hour (9am) Worship (10:30am) Youth Group 5pm & 6:45pm
26 Young Life at Capital High 7:27pm	27 Home Bible Study 6:30-8:30pm	28 AA (8pm)	29 Men's Group Breakfast (7:30am) Choir Practice (7-8pm)	30	31	

Office hours are every week on Mon. & Wed. 8am–12pm, and Tues. and Thurs., 2:30–5:30pm.
[Click here](#) for the most current events calendar. [Click here](#) for our Youth Calendar.

October Sunday Service Volunteer Schedule

	Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Oct. 18	Oct. 25
Greeter	Maggie Rydman & Nancy Sachs		Sherry Christian- son	
Acolyte	Tyler Settle, Gage Plughoff, John Michel Merchant			
Chalice Bearer	Sharon Parker	Lee Murray	Cindy Goldsmith	
Reader	Audrey Kirsop	Becky Finn	Linda Schart	Bruce Whitehouse
Coffee Hour	Kathy Haller, Leslie Merchant	Valinda Morse, Annaka Thibodeaux	Annaka Thibodeaux	Natasha Ash- enhurst
Altar Guild	Sherry Christian- son, Bonnie Finn	Lisa Andrew	Cindy Goldsmith	Cindy Pitcher, Annette Edwards
Altar Flowers	Finn Family for Wesley's birthday	Munoz Family for Alfredo's birthday	Walther Family for Marty's birthday	Soetenga Family for Sydney & Mark's birthdays

Contact Volunteer Connections at stchristophervolunteers@gmail.com to help fill in the rest of this schedule!

If you are unable to provide service on the day scheduled, please make arrangements to find a replacement or trade places with someone. Thank you!



St. Christopher's Community Church
(Episcopal/ELCA)
7902 Steamboat Island Road NW
Olympia, WA 98502

St. Christopher's Community Church

Office Hours

Mon. & Wed. —8:00am–12pm

Tues. & Thurs. —2:30-5:30pm

or by appointment

360-866-2111

office@stchristopherolympia.org

Pastor & Priest

Fr. James Thibodeaux

Sunday Worship Hours

Worship and Sunday School

at 10:30 a.m., with nursery

care