

 st.
christopher's



74TH
ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

Ministry

Feb | 22 | 2026

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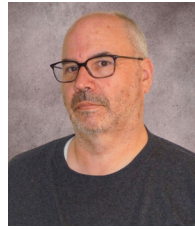
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Staff for the year 2025



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson
Rector



Chris Jones
Facilities Coordinator



Gloria Campbell
Open Doors
Clothing Store Coordinator



Brie Langs
Sound/Video Technician



Jasmin Elliott
Open Doors
Good Food Coordinator



Debra Peroune
St. Christopher's and Open Doors
Comptroller



Andy Elmhirst
Director of Music
& the Performing Arts



Shannon Shuell
Open Doors
Director of Outreach Ministries



Carrie Ford-Jones
Children's & Youth
Ministry Coordinator



Joy Thomson
Parish Administrator



Sam Gamage
Custodian

We bid farewell to these staff members during 2025



Rev. David Montgomery
Assistant Curate
1 May 2022 – 30 May 2025



Jonah Grigsby
Open Doors Summer Student
June 1-Aug 2



The Rev. Wojtek Kuzma
Priest Associate
26 May 2025 – 23 Nov 2025



The Rector's Charge



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson - Rector



Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' "

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. (Matthew 4.1-11).

Deep down, the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness is about Jesus choosing to be exactly who he is, while the tempter tries to get him to be someone he's not. Jesus has just been baptized. God's Spirit has rested on him. The voice from heaven has declared him beloved. Then, in Matthew's telling of the story, Jesus is led directly into the wilderness to be tempted. The movement is so sudden, Jesus' tunic may still be kind of clammy from being down in the River Jordan!

The story of Jesus' temptation asks, When things are hard, are you going to be true to your identity? In tough times, will you draw strength from the relationship you've built with God in the good times?

Open Doors

With members of the Open Doors Executive Committee, and in concert with staff, I devoted significant energy in 2025 to bringing our outreach ministries to a position of stability and charting a path to sustainability. Through this work we also achieved greater clarity around the core identity and our outreach ministries.

You may recall that we ended our relationship with our consultant part way through the year. The twelve months we spent working with Yellow Robot was time well spent, because it helped us find clarity on some important issues:

- Open Doors is our outreach ministry. Yes, there has been an "us and them" feeling at times, but those days are in the past. Open Doors is a critical part of the life of our congregation. We are stronger together!
- Food is central to our core identity at Open Doors – raising the dignity and wellbeing of our neighbours through free access to good food.
- We're changing our thinking around fundraising. Compared to a larger number of small fundraisers, we see that our return on investment will be better with a few larger fundraisers run offsite, so our staff and volunteers will be more able to focus on our core mission at Open Doors.
- Getting clear on Open Doors' core identity helps us to see

where partner agencies fit in providing wrap-around services to complement our work with food. For instance, we're partnering with the Burlington Food Bank to run the Community Garden, and Support House is offering medical supports to our guests on Tuesday evenings.

All of this work behind the scenes helped clear the way for the Corporation to appoint Shannon Shuell to the role of Director of Outreach Ministries for St. Christopher's last December. In her new role, Shannon will be responsible for overseeing the staff and programs of Open Doors. I value Shannon's leadership and her commitment to our outreach ministries. Please join me in celebrating Shannon and welcoming her to her new role!

Staff Members on the Move

Speaking of staff transitions, our congregation said farewell to two Pastoral Associates in 2025. After three years at St. Christopher's, Rev. David Montgomery left on May 30 to begin his new ministry at Grace

Anglican Church in Waterdown. And his successor, Rev. Wojtek Kuzma, left on November 23 for his new appointment at St. Barnabas in St. Catharines. I miss David and Wojtek, and I look forward to introducing you to a new staff member with responsibility for pastoral care in 2026!

Pastoral Care

Let me tell you how we are managing the pastoral care portfolio now that Wojtek has begun his new ministry in St. Catharines. The thirteen dedicated volunteers, who offer pastoral care in homes and hospitals and long term care facilities, are committed to continuing their faithful work. I will be working with retired colleagues Hollis Hiscock, Margaret Morrison, Sue Nicolls, Jim Sandilands and Grahame Stap to support the volunteer team and to respond to emergent pastoral care needs. We are here for you St. Christopher's!

Fundraising

I am full of gratitude for all the St. Christopher's people who create our many fundraisers through the year. You and I both know each of our sales and events depends upon a large team of committed people. I want to say something to everyone involved in any way with our fundraising efforts at St. Christopher's. But first, I want to single out a few people for their leadership. I want to thank Cheryl Goldring for her work on the Mother's Day Tea, Trudy Johnson for convening the Christmas Market, Joan LaSalle for all her work to launch the Maker's Market, and Stephen Gartshore for his cold-weather bravery as lead volunteer for Christmas tree sales.

Now to everyone who plans, and recruits volunteers, and bakes, and preserves, and makes beautiful things to sell, and moves furniture, and sets up tables, and handles cash and point of sale machines, and calls Penny Sale winners, and stands out

in the cold, and corresponds with vendors, and offloads trees from the back of a semi trailer: I see you. I see your commitment to raising money to support our shared ministry. I see the grace with which you welcome Burlington to our church. I see your faith and your love for St. Christopher's. I see you, and I am grateful.

The leadership team started a conversation in 2025 about focusing our energy on a few, larger fundraisers. We learned a lot launching our Christmas tree sale, and Christmas trees will be back, with a bit of fine tuning! Also, a small group began planning a golf tournament and dinner – watch for details later this year!

Finance

Church finance is almost always front of mind for me. You will recall from the budget we passed at last year's Annual Congregational Meeting that we expected to end the year with a deficit of \$41,741. The Corporation promised to take steps through the year to reduce this operating deficit. And, with your help and your generosity, we did. We ended 2025 with a deficit of \$33,766.

You will hear in my finance report that we trimmed the 2025 deficit by keeping spending under control, and by developing new sources of income, for example, by attracting more outside users to our space, and by launching new fundraisers like the Maker's Market and Christmas tree sales. Looking at the longer term, the Corporation also started a new investment fund which, as it grows, will generate income we can use to pay operating costs.

We know there is more work to do. The proposed 2026 budget includes a deficit. Obviously, we still haven't arrived at balance. If there's a bright light in our finances it's Open Doors, where we finished 2025 in a balanced position. As I say, more to come about our financial position

and our plans coming your way in the finance report you'll hear from the floor of our Annual Meeting.

Socials

This is the right moment to shout out the work Shannon Mac and members of the content team are doing on our social media accounts. St. Christopher's has something to offer a world where the U.S. administration floods our news channels with their point of view, and religious conservatives express their opinions loudly all over our media feeds. It is important for St. Christopher's to project our point of view into the public space. People need to see our inclusive and hopeful community in action. You can find us on Instagram and Facebook –

@st.christophers.burlington. Remember it helps us when you leave a comment, like and share our reels and our posts!

Accessibility

The St. Christopher's Accessibility Committee continued its work of elevating the conversation in our congregation around how accessibility relates to our core values as a church. At root, improving our education and our practices around accessibility is one way we signal the importance of inclusion at our church. In other words, accessibility is gospel work. We choose to make it possible for people with diverse abilities to be part of our community because God's good news is for everyone, and because God empowers us to live for others. As the Accessibility Committee continued to raise awareness around why we have a Sensory Room, we began an occasional education series with a workshop entitled "Holy Distractions! Let's Talk about ADHD." The education series continues in 2026.

Orange Shirts

You may recall that last September, at Burlington's observance of the National Day for Truth and



The Rector's Charge

continued



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson

Reconciliation, I was able to offer a gift of tobacco to local Indigenous leaders on behalf of St. Christopher's. In her remarks before she accepted our gift, WhiteEagle Stonefish talked about what a gift of tobacco means for her: Tobacco, she said, "is about acknowledging that we are equal. That no one is above and no one is below. No one stands in front and no one stands behind. That we are going to go forward as one."

That is a beautiful vision for the future of our relationship. At St. Christopher's we are committed to learning and action around the history of Indian Residential Schools, and the Anglican Church's role in the abuse suffered by generations of Indigenous children. We will continue on our path of listening and learning.

Welcome, Welcome, Welcome

I thoroughly enjoyed hosting two rounds of St. Christopher's Connects

in 2025. St. Christopher's Connects is a two-part introduction to who we are and how we do what we do. It's for people who have recently arrived at our church, and for people who want to find out more about how to connect more deeply with St. Christopher's people.

You know, we are all responsible for welcoming people who are trying out St. Christopher's for the first time, especially since we said our final farewell in 2025 to our greeter in chief. I have some simple advice: when you approach someone you think may be visiting, simply tell them your name and say, "I haven't learned your name." Once you have chatted for a bit, introduce them to someone else. That's it! Oh, and, always be your warm and interesting selves. You've got this St. Christopher's!

Matthew 4.1-11

Back to Jesus facing off with the

tempter. Back to the question, When things are hard, will you find a way to be true to your identity? In Matthew's telling of Jesus' testing in the wilderness, Jesus maintains his faithfulness by resisting the tempter and drawing strength from the scriptures. At St. Christopher's, we are finding ways for the ancient scriptures to speak into our own time. We are embracing our identity as a community that values inclusion and engages in social justice. We see that we are the sort of church where members embody our vibrant, attractive faith, and where people encounter God in tangible ways. We are supporting one another in living for others and, through our outreach ministries we are raising the dignity and wellbeing of our neighbours. Hungry people are being fed. We are growing. We are living with hope. Together, with God's grace, we are joining God's work in the world. Amen.





Corporate Reports



Paul Shelton

Wardens and Parish Council Report

by Paul Shelton – Rector's Warden

2025 has definitely been a year of growth and challenges. We have seen many new faces coming through our doors and who now consider St. Christopher's their home. We started the decade with a global crisis that affected everyone, everywhere. St. Christopher's was impacted, and though we managed by adapting to the challenges, it has been a slow climb back up. We have now passed the half-way point in the decade and I can see so many changes in our parish. We are becoming, once again, the vibrant place of worship and connection, for the community at large. St. Christopher's continues to grow and to demonstrate that we are a caring, vibrant and inclusive community, within our parish, and outside our doors.

The challenges that we face continue to be around our finances. Corporation and staff have been diligent in looking for ways we can be better financial stewards and at how we can increase opportunities to find new ways of funding all of the amazing work that takes place here. Staff have been attentively and successfully seeking ways to reduce our expenses ie. photocopying, postage, phone, equipment, repairs and supplies. At the same time, through the work of the church office and music department, we have drawn an awareness in the community at large, that St. Christopher's is an available and viable place for their meeting, music, and activity space needs. The result is that our space use has risen significantly over the last several years. This has taken time following the pandemic, when personal connections were disrupted and our spaces were forgotten. However, with dedication and creativity, we are making good connections in the community and increasing income from this source.

Other challenges that we faced

over this past year were in our staffing. In 2025 two Assistant Curates left that role to go on to run parishes of their own. This has placed added pressure on our Rector and, of course, the many people who had built relationships with these individuals. As well, our Rector assumed extra duties and responsibilities as Open Doors Director, along with sitting on the Open Doors Advisory Committee. In December, we successfully invited Shannon Shuell to the position of Director of Outreach Ministries.

We added two new fundraising events this past year that were welcomed by the community at large. The Makers Market event was organized for the end of November with a very successful turnout and with a significant number of vendors participating. We also saw the introduction of a Fresh Christmas Tree fundraiser. This was a tremendous effort by many, many volunteers and staff, and though it was our first year and we did have some challenges, we learned a lot and know that this is something that can only grow and become bigger and better next year. It was amazing to see so many volunteers sign up to stand out in the cold and help out. The support demonstrated was so wonderful to see and we are so very grateful.

Huge thanks to our staff team for the extra time and attention that these initiatives have entailed. We are truly blessed to have a staff team who care deeply about our shared ministry.

Our Social Media presence has been truly inspiring! We have seen so many St. Christopher's parishioners taking on roles to help increase our presence and build an awareness of who we are. We owe Shannon Mac much appreciation for her dedication to this ongoing work, however, she cannot do this alone. You don't have to be tech savvy to volunteer - we need writers,

photographers, and followers to help in this endeavour. The response we receive from the online community has been, overwhelmingly, very positive. St. Christopher's is one of the most followed social media platforms in the whole Diocese of Niagara!

As we move into 2026, it is with hope and confidence that we will continue to see growth in our church, in our outreach efforts, and in ourselves as individuals. As we recognize the impact we are having on so many lives in our community, it is my hope that we as parish members continue to be inspired and to inspire others, striving to fulfill our mission of being "a dynamic, inclusive, diverse community rooted in the life-giving, life-affirming, life-changing love of God, reaching beyond ourselves, caring for creation, making a difference with others."

As I end my four-year term as warden, particularly the Rector's Warden, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported me over this time. I have learned so much and have appreciated the opportunity to serve the parish in this way. I have enjoyed the opportunity of getting to know so many of you, whom I probably wouldn't have had the chance to meet, had I not taken on this role. Spending time on Sunday mornings in all three special and unique services has allowed me the chance to connect with many of you. This has been the best part of being a warden. I thank especially, Canon Penny, for providing such great leadership, support and encouragement to me. As well, thank you to my fellow wardens: Amy Collard, Carolyn Henderson, Al Nicolls, Shannon Mac, Mike Ravenscroft and Lisa Roussac-Kruitwagen – it has been a good journey together.

Thank you all for everything you do. Blessings to you all.



Corporate Actions Authorized in 2025

on behalf of St. Christopher's congregation

In addition to authorizing regular expenditures, the Corporation took the following actions in 2025 on behalf of the congregation of St. Christopher's:

- 1 Entered into a site use agreement with St. Christopher's Cooperative Pre-School, Community Development Halton, Fung Loy Kok Taoism, Burlington Civic Chorale, Dance with Candace.
- 2 Signed parish licensing agreements with AA Big Book Workshop, Al-Anon Morning Hope, Burlington Women's AA Group, Al-Anon Missing Link and AA Saturday Nite Live.
- 3 Verbally contracted with Chris Jones to provide summer maintenance of the property with weekly cutting, trimming and border maintenance from April 15 to November 15, 2025.
- 4 Contracted with Heritage Green Landscape Contractors to provide winter maintenance of the property including snow clearing of parking lots, driveways and sidewalks, salt applications, snow removal from January 1 - April 15, 2025 and November 15 - December 31, 2025.
- 5 Continued lease with Pitney Bowes for DM125 with 1kg scale and moistener postage machine for a 5-year term beginning March 18, 2022.
- 6 Continued lease with Canon Capital Inc. for imageRUNNER ADVANCE DX C7765i, begun Nov. 11, 2021 for a 5 year term.
- 7 Completed installation of additional front garden equipment with A-1 Security Video Surveillance Solution via Ontario Anti-Hate Security and Prevention grant.
- 8 Contracted with Yellow Robot for consulting services for Open Doors from January 1-August 31.
- 9 Continued with a maintenance block of Word Press (website) support and annual plug in updates for website security with Graphic Attic.
- 10 Continued lease with Bell Canada for 3 business lines December 2022-September 2025 (all lines now cancelled).
- 11 Purchased Voice Over Internet Protocol phone system from IPFinity with a monthly maintenance contract.



Fundraising Events



Trudy Johnson

Christmas Market

by Trudy Johnson - Christmas Market Convenor

Once again our building was bustling with the sights, sounds, and smells of the holiday season. It would be impossible to calculate the number of hours before, during, and after the Market, that are donated by so many willing hands. We do have a reputation for knowing how to do food, so let's start there. The Bistro offered amazing meals served by delightful staff, Open Doors made assorted pies, a small crew of volunteers made cabbage rolls, and then so many parishioners donated baked goods and preserves. No surprise - but things sold out! The All Things Christmas room was a total success, as was the Penny

Sale. So many happy shoppers and prize winners! Thanks to generous donations by parishioners we had a nice variety of items for a Silent Auction. As well as the beautiful decor around the facility, there were One of a Kind items to be purchased. They sold as fast as the cookies! Now that we have wintry weather, all those shoppers who purchased items from the Yarn and Textiles table are probably feeling very warm and cozy. In addition to these areas, we had several parishioners who are artisans and they offered a lovely variety of products to provide a fantastic shopping experience for all visitors. There was a nice consistent

flow of customers the entire time, and this gave us a net profit of \$15,564, so a little higher than last year. All those sales require a dedicated financial team working cash and card sales, as well as those in the office doing the tallies. Many thanks to all the area convenors and their work crews and volunteers. Special thanks to Carol and Susan for their invaluable assistance in so many ways. If you have ideas, questions, or suggestions, please contact me or the office. There will be planning sessions in advance of the 2026 Market - Saturday November 14!



Sandi Smith

Rummage Sale

by Sandi Smith

Sandi Smith, Joan LaSalle and many volunteers launched another spring rummage sale at St. Christopher's in 2025. In the week leading up to the Friday/Saturday event (May 2-3), a large variety and volume of treasures arrive on our doorstep. These previously loved items are sorted by our volunteers into tables

of like things and then marked with coloured stickers which are representative of various price points. The day itself also requires a lot of volunteers to be at each table to answer questions and specify prices. There is a financial team to check out customers and bags are supplied for each purchase. A kitchen crew is on

hand to make sure that the volunteers are well-fed. At the end of the day there is significant cleanup required and there are volunteer crews for this task too. Net sales for the event was \$2,946 which was split equally for St. Christopher's and Open Doors.



Joan LaSalle

Maker's Market

by Joan LaSalle

Last Fall, on November 29th, St. Christopher's welcomed our first ever Maker's Market. This artisanal/craft type sale included a great variety of local artists from food and baking, jewellery, fibre crafts, wood turning, cards, floral arrangements, paintings, pottery and more. For

a first sale we did well, with more than 300 people turning out for the event. As Christmas tree sales were happening at the same time the church was a bustling place and a good time was had by all. Our net proceeds for the day were \$2,087. Special thanks to those who stepped

in to make sandwiches and to sell muffins. We look forward to our next Maker's Market on November 28, 2026. If you are interested in becoming a vendor, sitting on the planning committee, helping to promote or volunteer at the event, please let us know at staff@stcb.ca.



Fundraising Events

continued



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson

Christmas Tree Sales

by Penny Anderson

In the spring of 2025, the Corporation searched for additional fundraising ideas - they decided upon Christmas Tree sales. Following interviews with several farmers, Penny decided upon Potter's Farms in New Brunswick. An order was placed with a delivery time scheduled for the week of November 24. Wooden frames were built to support the trees in the front garden. Prices were set for each size ordered. Stephen Gartshore volunteered to take leadership for the tree selling venture. The half load of trees arrived on Tuesday, November 25 with over 20 volunteers unloading, in rain and cold temperatures, including a group from our children's programs. All trees were Balsam Fir (this species is best known for its evergreen fragrance). Social media and our publications were all updated to list the trees for sale on each weekend beginning on Nov. 28. Several days before our first official day of sales, we received a call from Leon's Burlington, offering their staff to do 100 volunteer hours of work for us. They agreed to assist us with tree sales over the next three

weekends - and they came to many of our sales shifts.

Challenges of weather, internet connections and darkness were met with additional clothing layers, shared hats and mitts, coffee shop runs for hot chocolate for the Friday night crew, trips in and out of the church with our point of sale machines to make internet connections, trips to the store for additional lights and extension cords, donated lights and many jokes and laughs.

Family members and friends of the parish were pulled into the volunteer ranks and we had some wonderful times, meeting and reacquainting. Those in the community who came to purchase trees shared their St. Christopher's stories with us and more. There was some scrambling to cover additional shifts when each weekend there were still more trees to sell! The volunteers were so loyal and committed to this fundraiser - they filled in readily where needed. Leon's continued to send volunteers. Some volunteers donned costumes and began a special "tree dance" on

Guelph Line, which surely must have brought in many more customers. Others carried trees to the sidewalk and waved cars into our parking lot!

We sold about 266 trees with a net profit of \$4,379. A wonderful effort for our first year! Special thanks to the very small crew who moved our excess trees on December 24. Also, special thanks to the individuals who, over nine trips to the Royal Botanical Gardens, were finally able to dispose of our excess inventory. Thanks to Leon's Burlington for the many dedicated volunteers who braved the wet and cold in a very busy season. Thanks to all of our volunteers across the weekend shifts, giving your time and effort - we couldn't have done this without you! If you missed being involved this year, please plan to be a part of this special December project in 2026. It really is a great time to meet others, to practise your selling skills, to have a workout, to enjoy fresh air and to represent your church in its newest fundraiser!



From the 2025 Parish Register



Funerals

Jan	18	Roland Love
Feb	15	Dwayne Scott Vassell-Pittman
Mar	7	George Michael Fellowes
Mar	21	Sandra Frances Boyer
May	6	Shizuko Sherry Mototsune
May	4	Violet Milligan
Jun	14	Carole Jean Allen
Jun	21	Christopher Cameron Reeves
Jul	5	Judith (Judy) Jupp, O.N.
Aug	9	Edwin (Ted) Jeffrey Morris
Aug	27	Miriam Olive Alberta Miller
Aug	27	Thelma Rose Chapman
Oct	24	Justin Landers
Nov	22	Greta Barbara Ann Phillips

Baptisms

Apr	19	Wesley James DeGiuli Langdon
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Marriages

Jun	22	Connor Shane Lyons & JoAnna Michelle Klimczak
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Pastoral Care



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson

Pastoral Report

by Penny Anderson

The dedicated team of pastoral care volunteers worked with three different ordained leaders over the course of 2025. After they said thank you and farewell to Rev. David Montgomery on May 30, and to Rev. Wojtek Kuzma on November 23, the group began working directly with Canon Penny. Penny, in turn, called upon the clergy who call St. Christopher's their spiritual home to assist in supporting volunteer pastoral caregivers. The clergy team includes Rev. Hollis Hiscock, Rev. Sue Nicolls, Rev. Deacon Margaret Morrison, Archdeacon Jim Sandilands, and Rev. Graeme Stap.

Canon Penny also coordinates with the clergy team to provide care to people experiencing pastoral emergencies.

Generally travelling in pairs, members of the pastoral care team

visited people in their private homes, in hospital, in retirement homes, and in long term care facilities. There is also an active telephone ministry, which allows St. Christopher's to keep in contact with even more members of our congregation.

Volunteer pastoral visitors also take part in leading regular worship services at Billings Court, Christopher Terrace, Pearl & Pine, and Tansley Woods. Residents in these facilities regularly tell us how glad they are to receive Communion, and to spend time with the visitors and clergy who help make church happen outside the walls of St. Christopher's.

Members of the pastoral care team will be involved in the search for St. Christopher's Pastoral Associate early in 2026.

Pastoral visitors find their role interesting and fulfilling. We offer

training and ongoing support. If you think you might like to become a volunteer visitor, please speak to Canon Penny.

Our annual All Souls Service in November, and our "Blue Christmas" service in December were opportunities for St. Christopher's people to grieve together, and also to support one another as we carry losses new and old.

The Mental Health Care Partners met regularly through 2025 to share experiences and support one another in caring for family members who struggle with family and close friends who struggle with their mental health. The group also shares strategies for how best to help people navigate the health care system, how to be supportive to loved ones, and how to practice effective self-care.



Carole Caron

Mental Health Support Group for Care Partners

by Carole Caron

The Mental Health Support Group for Families and Care Partners started in 2019. Our goal was to create a supportive environment for parents, grandparents, partners, adult siblings and/or good friends who are caring/supporting loved ones struggling with their mental health.

Sylvia Phelps and Carole Caron have co-lead the group as both have lived experience as care partners and share similar journeys. The goal of the support group is to acquire and

develop healthy coping strategies based on self-care. We learn from each other's experiences to develop skills with resilience, tolerance and effectiveness as a care partner.

Over the last year our participants have shared their appreciation and gratefulness for what they have been able to share and feel supported within the group in our confidential space. They have shared that the support received has helped them to develop better coping skills and focus

more on their self-care.

We have had between 4-10 participants over the last year and plan to continue the resource for 2026. The sessions take place every first Monday of the month, 7.00-9.00pm, in the Family Room at St. Christopher's. There is no cost to attend and resources are shared with the group as they present.



Hilary Barber

Prayer Shawl Ministries

by Hilary Barber

It is my pleasure to submit this report on behalf of the members of the Prayer Shawl Group (PSG) who support Prayer Shawl Ministry at St. Christopher's.

Sadly, our founding member, Miriam Miller, passed in August of 2025. Miriam was generous, talented and dedicated to the Prayer Shawl Ministry mandate of providing warmth and comfort to those ill or in need and those celebrating major events such as baptisms. She shared her knowledge and skills with group members and in many cases yarn and patterns too. Since the inception of the group, Miriam has provided over 500 blankets and shawls. She is greatly missed at our meetings, visits to Swiss Chalet, phone calls and FaceTimes. Rest in peace, Miriam.

During 2025 St. Christopher's was able to gift many prayer shawls and blankets to those in need. Please

contact Dot Anthony or myself, through the church office, if you need a prayer shawl for a family member, friend or acquaintance.

We have also continued to support the three Shifra Homes in Burlington. These homes provide a shelter for young mothers during the final weeks of pregnancy and first months with their babies. We now expect to donate about 20 bundles per year. Thank you to Deb Portelli for assembling the bundles and delivering them.

I would like to thank Penny for her continued support of our program, attending meetings and blessing shawls, Ken for printing cards for us, on request, and of course Joy, who keeps us on track, forwards calls and is an invaluable resource. Also, we thank those members of St. Christopher's who have seen a need and asked for blankets and

shawls to donate.

A huge thank you to all the members of the group. Your skills are invaluable and your generosity in making and donating the blankets and shawls is immense.

Although many members of our group enjoy the fellowship at our meetings, one does not have to attend the meetings, about ten per year, in order to be part of the group and donate to the Prayer Shawl Ministry. If you can knit or crochet and would be able to make any shawls, blankets or especially baby blankets, we would greatly appreciate them. We can provide sizes, patterns and yarn, if necessary. If you do wish to attend our meetings, we meet on the last Thursday in the month at 1.00pm in the Family Room. To reach me with any questions, please contact the church office at 905.634.1809 or staff@stcb.ca.





Ministry Support



Joy Thomson

Administration

by Joy Thomson - Parish Administrator

The St. Christopher's community is one that I am proud and thankful to call home, on both a professional and personal level. This is a place where questions are encouraged, learning is available in many different directions, connections have many different looks, welcomes are warm and action is a part of the everyday mantra. We are made up of different cultures, races, backgrounds, strengths, ages and carry quite varied stories and dreams. Yet under this umbrella of diversity, we find common ground, love, acceptance and vision. We recognize that we have a purpose, larger than ourselves, in this place and time. We realize that none of this purpose happens, if we as individuals stop doing the piece that is uniquely ours. In other words, we are each a part of something alive, healthy and positive in the midst of a world that currently carries undertones of violence, uncertainty and fear. You make a difference with your contributions of time, effort, ideas, donations, thoughtful actions and presence.

Debra Bishop-Peroune, brings accounting education, experience and expertise to the position of comptroller at St. Christopher's. It is a pleasure working with Debra, who has strong analytical skills and who produces clear and concise monthly financial statements for the corporation's information. Deb handled our first year with new auditors (Jan. 2026) with professionalism and finesse.

Who makes up our valued Volunteer Teams (the ones who make the job of Parish Administrator look easy)? Ken Beeby is our every day volunteer, with an office (shared with Chris Jones). Ken has a sound knowledge of InDesign and Canva plus slide and front lawn sign software. He navigates through these programs, transforming any

picture to perfection and providing all graphics for posters, promotions, publications, worship and funeral bulletins, occasion and thank you cards. He provides support in these programs to staff and volunteers. He is at the centre of the action, with keen analytical wisdom and valued problem solving capabilities. His vast array of stories and humour bring levity to the otherwise detailed and sometime heavy parts of our day. Carol Henley is also a regular volunteer in our office. Her knowledge of people and how they are connected, programs and when they began, equipment and when it first came to us, clergy and when they were with us, and so many other things, are important facts in our day to day tasks. Carol also has a vast knowledge of InDesign and is readily able to produce and edit bulletins, newsletters and other publications. Carol updates our website with special events announcements. We value Carol's gracious wisdom in all things, especially as she attends to phone calls with pastoral needs, people arriving at the desk with a jumble of questions and the ebbs and flows of a busy office environment. Carol brings a calm in the storm.

Our office volunteers include Tricia, Gloria C., Sandi, Marva, Wendy, Dianne, Judy Jank, Gloria M. and Fran. We said goodbye to Bonnie in 2025 and welcomed Sandi and Dianne. It has been very hard to experience Tuesdays in the office without Judy Jupp - we miss her very much! It is not uncommon, in most conversations, to hear her name mentioned, at least once. She put so much of herself into her role as office volunteer and she leaves a lasting presence. Our reception desk is covered by Lynda, Pauline, Mary Ann, Hope, Liz, Sandra, Tricia, Anne and Jan. Each one brings their own special sparkle and warmth

for those wandering through our doors. Deidre and Laurie continue to hold the positions of Envelope Secretaries. Deidre does most of the data entry into our Church Windows database software. Laurie produces the required reports and performs trouble-shooting conversations with the software company, where necessary. Amy has had a challenging two years in these economic times to hold the position of treasurer. She has adapted to so many changes, watched for positive financial opportunities and worked hard with wardens and our finance team to produce the best financial results possible. Tom arrives faithfully each week to assist the office administrator with deposits. He prepares our annual Charitable Return and works on the finance team in most fundraisers. His attention to detail and overall understanding of St. C. and Open Doors as a previous treasurer is so valuable. Thank you to these dedicated and hard working volunteers - it is fun and a pleasure to work alongside each and every one of you!

How was our space used in 2025? It has been another busy year!

Musicians using our space over the year include the RCCO (potluck social), Lakeside Ensemble, High Rendition Band, New Horizons Band, Rhuhana Sardigova and the Burlington Welsh Choir. The Ontario Registered Music Teachers' Association hosted a Bach workshop in the Great Hall in November.

Penny hosted a congregational meeting on January 18 entitled "Facing Disparity" with many in attendance. A "Liveable Income" conversation followed on February 2. Penny and the liturgical team led a 4-part Lent Study in the spring and a 3-part Advent Study in the winter. These studies are offered Wednesdays on Zoom and Thursdays in person. Services were offered daily through

Holy Week, culminating in the Easter Vigil (held partially in darkness) and with liturgical dancers on Saturday night and Easter Sunday services. Other special services throughout the year include Ash Wednesday All Souls, and Blue Christmas. Our annual congregational meeting was held on February 23, with only one service on this day. Penny also offered two St. Christopher's Connects events, one in March and one in November. The staff hosted Volunteer Appreciation in April with a Murder Mystery theme this year. With Penny's demise, it had all of us guessing, and only one successful team was able to determine "Whodunnit"!

Our MAP team hosted various events throughout the year. You will see all of the detail in other places in this report. We greatly value the work that this team does in gathering parishioners for celebration and also reaching out into the community to tell our story and to listen to the stories of others.

In May, members of St. Christopher's and friends met in the front garden to raise the flag, with prayers spoken by Rev. David, in honour of International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. St. Christopher's also attended the September Burlington event in honour of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with a walk, fire and traditional tobacco ceremony at Beachway Park. Penny presented a gift of tobacco to WhiteEagle Stonefish on behalf of St. Christopher's.

In May Rev. David offered a two-part Pastoral Care Workshop for those wishing to take an active role in this ministry. This group led worship in a number of long term care facilities in our community and also take Easter and Christmas communion to those unable to attend worship services in person. They also visit those in hospital, as needed. These visits are vital

for those receiving this care and attention.

Shannon Mac was able to offer Instagram workshops for the parish on dates in May and June. In these spaces, Shannon is able to answer any question, at any level. If you have never been to one of these workshops, plan to be at the next!

Fundraisers throughout the year included the spring Rummage Sale, the Mother's Day Tea (hosted by Open Doors and Cheryl Goldring) and the Christmas Market in November. In later November, the first Maker's Market was launched, under the direction of Joan LaSalle. Fresh Christmas trees were unloaded from Potter's Farms, New Brunswick, in late November and sales ran through the December weekends running up to Christmas. All of these projects take special leadership, many volunteers and much effort! It is a wonderful way to build lasting relationships with people in the parish and beyond, perhaps without knowing them previously. Fundraising has a beginning and end, with a measureable goal and it is more and more necessary in the lives of churches and not-for-profit organizations. So, consider which of the one(s) you would like to support and plan for that in the coming year. If you have a new fundraising idea, have a chat with one of our wardens.

We were able to introduce a new group this year. Burlington Mindfulness, under the leadership of Carole Caron and Sandi Amodio, emerged in January 2025. The group gathers on the second and fourth week of the month on a Wednesday evening.

Our space has been used in a variety of different ways to outside users over the year. We provided space to families who hosted birthday parties for two 90-year-olds and one 100-year-old. Beta Sigma Phi held regular and planning meetings here. Local condominium associations led their annual meetings here. Open

Doors worked with Sheridan College students to host an Eco Day in March. In November, BurlingtonGreen held a Clothing and Toy Swap. Angelika Baum held a two-day workshop in April. Little Taste of Heaven hosted a cookie decorating class in the spring. The St. Christopher's PreSchool executive held board meetings monthly. Rotary District #7080 led an intensive student training event in September. In the fall, a children's birthday party happened. In December Celerosft hosted a children's Christmas party. There were baby showers in November and December (welcome to baby Harley) and a family Christmas celebration in late November.

In 2025 we welcomed Repair Café to St. Christopher's. They run a monthly service in our Great Hall, repairing small appliances. Dates are posted in our Messenger and Eblast. A reservation is required prior to attending at burlingtonrepaircafe@cogeco.ca. This group of dedicated seniors has been taking care of Burlington in this way for six years and we are thrilled that they have chosen to consider their base shop to be at 662 Guelph Line.

The Burlington Civic Chorale, under the direction of Gary Fisher, meets every Tuesday evening for practise from September to November and then January to May. They host three concerts per year in November, February and May. Community Development Halton has one of their offices on our premises. They also host a number of events in our spaces including Volunteer Appreciation, Teen Training and Housing Forums. We are thankful for these partners.

In 2025, a Book Club of 12 participants began to gather in our space for their monthly meetings. One of the members volunteers regularly in Open Doors on Thursday mornings.

The Burlington Women's AA Group joined us in March of this year. This



Ministry Support

continued



Joy Thomson

is a growing and enthusiastic group. They have almost outgrown their current space. This brings us to three AA groups and two Al-Anon groups who meet at St. Christopher's weekly.

Elections Canada ran a number of polls for the spring election in our Great Hall. The movie "Radical" used our church for their lunch and costume locations.

Fit for Service has been a loyal group in our spaces for many years. In 2024, Funk Loy Kok Tai Chi began their classes on Wednesday evenings, with several Open Houses during the year. Dance with Candace happens on Monday nights with line, latin and various partner dances for groups, plus some private lessons. Social dance evenings are offered two to four times per year.

So, we are using our spaces as often as we can and encouraging relationships and partnerships as we go. We currently have the right people in the right places. Our staff have built a strong base and continue

to reach forward into new avenues. We ask one another, is this the best way to do it, or is there a better way? Our volunteer base is expanding with a renewed sense of energy and belonging. Creative ideas are coming from within the parish for new fundraising events. The MAP team is revitalizing the parish with numerous social opportunities. All we need is you! and your talents, skills and passions. Please consider where you would like to connect and we look forward to seeing you there! This is the best place in Burlington to be. Jump in now with both feet and we will thrive together!



Sandi Smith

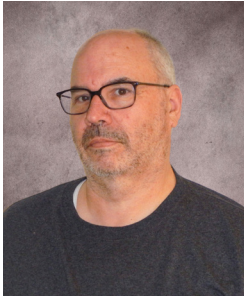
The Garden Group

by Sandi Smith

Thank you to Ewa Jacobs, David Little, and Joan LaSalle for their dedication to making our gardens look cared for in 2025. We were a small group but we were able to do a good job of the basic maintenance. Summer, if you recall, was very hot. We did our best

to weed and deadhead in the mornings mostly, or when time allowed. I believe keeping our parish home looking its best is important not just for ourselves but also in welcoming others from our community. My hope for 2026 is to grow this group so we can do more

than just basic maintenance. If you enjoy gardening, like getting together with great people and enjoy a flexible schedule, keep us in mind! Spring is coming!



Chris Jones



Joy Thomson

Property Report

by Chris Jones, Facilities Coordinator, and Joy Thomson

Our building, equipment and property are gradually aging and our demands on all of these things are increasing so it is good that we have a Facilities Coordinator on our staff dedicated to the care, repair and maintenance of all of these things. Chris Jones has just passed his two-year anniversary with us and we are thankful for his presence. Chris is a problem solver and an analytical thinker, with a vast knowledge of systems - plumbing, electrical, HVAC, small engines, irrigation and more. Chris considers his role here with a reverence for this place and its people. He attempts to anticipate problems before they happen. He is called in many different directions when things break down or need attention. His fifteen hours per week sometimes stretches across emergency situations and special event requirements. Chris frequently moves around the property, inside and out, which enables him to spot things and people that need attention in the moment. Chris deals directly with technicians, service companies, police services, and municipal representatives. He is a wonderful resource for staff, volunteers and partners of the parish.

On any given Wednesday throughout the year, Mike Peroune may be found walking beside Chris working on a project together, or separately. Mike tests our emergency lights and fire alarms every month and keeps a hard-copy record on site.

Mike and Chris may be found with a paintbrush, screwdriver or hammer in hand at any given time. Mike keeps an eye on equipment and furniture within the building and brings required repairs to the "to do" list for the team to tend. Mike is a tremendous asset to the team and we appreciate his weekly commitment to all things property at St. Christopher's.

Sam, our custodian, continually cleans the spaces where we congregate, creating a welcome for the next group to arrive, cleaning, sanitizing and freshening. There is a lot of repetition to his role and Sam never complains about the state in which he finds things. He pays attention to changes in the building and works with Chris to keep everything in its best repair. Sam takes care in removing garbage and other hazards from our walkways. Sam and Chris worked on stripping and waxing the Atrium and hallway floors in the spring. Our tile floors are showing their age and this special care brings them new life, for awhile.

Stan, our volunteer Property Coordinator, has worked hard this year in looking after our outdoor spaces. He has tended trees, researched plant material, discovered plant diseases, connected with municipal representatives and organized two volunteer teams for spring and fall cleanup. Stan has filled this position with passion, energy, strength and experience and we are thankful for his presence on the team. There is always room for volunteer members on the Property Team. If you love exercise, fresh air, working with your hands, problem solving, working on projects, we have a place for you!

Throughout 2025 there were many repairs completed. Here are some of the things we have been doing...

In the parking lot, Chris mended the severest pot holes on several spring days. Chris and Mike repainted the lines in the north parking lot. Mike painted the concrete markers and railings at the north entrance. (Thank you Shannon and Lindsay for decorating our north entrance with colourful chalk for Pride Month.)

For the first time, there were nine parking spots reserved in the front north lot for local professionals who prepaid for their parking spots

through the work week.

We successfully received another grant from Ontario Anti-Hate Security and Prevention. We replaced upper and lower smoke detectors in the Sanctuary through the services of Active Electric. A-1 added surveillance equipment to the exterior front of the church. New exterior doors were purchased and installed by Wollin Improvements in the Clothing Store and Youth Room. New and additional lighting was installed at the Community Market, on east and west sides of the building by Active Electric. New lighting was also installed over the Youth Room and Clothing Store access points. Four staff and two volunteers attended an online mental health first aid course offered by the Canadian Mental Health Association. All of these costs were covered with the money received.

Active Electric also installed a receptacle on the exterior front of the building and relocated two receptacles in the Sanctuary bump-out from up-wall to ground level. This work enabled a seamless Tree Lighting event, aided our Christmas Tree sales and enabled the removal of a series of extension cords used by the 11.30 band. Active Electric also installed a digital time clock on the pole light over the garden, parking lot and Community Market. This enables the Property Facilitator to make changes to this light from a cell phone and negates the complicated process of changing the timer on an old timer in the basement.

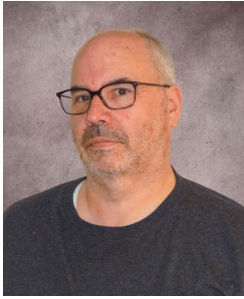
Bill Carey replaced a condenser fan in the Air Conditioning unit at the north door entrance in the spring. Chris and Mike do biannual HVAC maintenance on the property. Filters are replaced and units checked.

Kitchen repairs during 2025 were frequent. In April one of the



Ministry Support

continued



Chris Jones

freezers was running warm because the main control was not sending a message to the compressor. A new controller was installed by Norsworthy Refrigeration, when the part finally arrived. This company also found a leak in the condensate line of the main fridge and installed an electronic leak detector. In September another two door freezer required repair and Chris hired Beechwood to do this work, in a timely manner and with cost savings.

Harb's Plumbing was called to repair a kitchen sink in January. They replaced a residential with an industrial toilet in the men's washroom. They replaced a faulty grease trap in the southeast corner of the kitchen. A toilet was also replaced in the preschool washroom.

RGH Equipment performed repair work on the warming oven in May.

Sanicare provided a thorough cleaning of all corners of the kitchen in December. (This must be done annually.)

JP Grease cleaned all grease traps twice during 2025.

Troy provided an external inspection of our emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and kitchen hood.

Chris replaced a faucet in the women's washroom.

Chris and Shannon travelled to Barber's Equipment for coffee machine repairs.

Chris organized an offsite repair for the auto-scrubber in December. It was the wrong time of year for this to happen but it needed a battery replacement and though very inconvenient, the cost was reduced with a new service company.

Mike repaired tables and several more were added to the inventory.

Chris purchased a new leaf blower and performed an annual service on the lawn tractor himself.

Chris, sometimes with Mike, hauled numerous loads of outdoor waste and garbage to the transfer station during the year.

Chris also decided to change

suppliers for all paper products and cleaning materials; he now picks up supplies at A1 Cash and Carry in Burlington.

A Tip Tap machine was installed in the Atrium. This board allows a \$25 donation, with a tap of your credit card. Donation receipts are available by scanning the QR code beside it. Penny identified the need for a new projector and purchased an Epson smart streaming laser projector. It is now available for use in the Great Hall, just under the screen, with no need for dangerous cords in the middle of the room.

A new VOIP phone system was installed over the summer. Chris did most of this installation work himself. It was a complicated process. Now our costly and antiquated Bell phone system has been cancelled and our fees are approximately 50% of what they were.

Chris and Mike began a project in early 2025. They have made a way from our attic to the upper furnace room. This endeavour removes the need to carry a tall ladder to the back corner of the Great Hall, open a heavy trap door and carry cumbersome boxes up and down the ladder, placing them into this storage space. Chris identified this activity as

dangerous and precarious. The new system works very well. Also, Carrie was able to remove some unneeded items from Children's programming that were stored on the shelves in this back room so now the shelves can hold Christmas Market and other event storage boxes, reducing the number of things stored up in this furnace area.

Chris provided our turf maintenance from April through November.

In November, Chris built a number of wooden stands to hold the fresh Christmas trees. These were placed in the front garden. Chris also organized some outdoor lighting to illuminate the area where trees would be stored and sold. Chris, Mike and Eric Henley moved all excess trees to the RBG in early January.

The question has become, "Is there another, better way to do it?" Our financial statements have captured the answer in the affirmative - many of the endeavours to get the job done, with the most economic solutions, are paying dividends. Thank you to this special team!



Joy Thomson





Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson



Joanne Vassell-Pittman

Accessibility Committee

by Penny Anderson and Joanne Vassell-Pittman

As you may recall from last year’s Annual Report, the St. Christopher’s Accessibility Committee had returned in late 2024, after a hiatus of several years, with the mandate of offering leadership in the congregation around accessibility and inclusion.

By means of the Messenger, sermons, announcements and conversations around the caffeine stations, the Accessibility Committee has been helping the people of St. Christopher’s see that accessibility means more than making sure people who use wheelchairs, and/or other mobility devices, can safely enter and move about our building.

Accessibility is really about building a culture of inclusion so that we can be true to our core identity in all we say and do. That’s why working with the Corporation to transform the Quiet Room into the Sensory Room was so important and necessary. We are so happy that the need expressed by neurodivergent members was identified, and that many people

have been making use of it.

In 2025, we continued to educate people about the Sensory Room, what its purpose is, and who finds it helpful. If you have used the Sensory Room, and find it useful, please let us know. If you have used it, and believe that adding one more thing would help your experience be that much better, please let us know. If you would like to make a donation towards its betterment, we won’t say no.

The Sensory Room is just the starting point towards full access and inclusion. The Accessibility Committee has been having a lot of conversations lately with people who are neurodiverse, as well as with others who have less-visible disabilities, concerning their needs and wishes for inclusion. To that end, the committee has taken it upon itself to keep these conversations going, using an educational lens.

The Accessibility Committee’s plan for 2025: to launch an

occasional education series, not only for our congregation, but for our surrounding communities as well. The first workshop in this series, “Holy Distractions! Let’s Talk about ADHD,” was very well received.

The AC will be continuing to host these occasional education workshops in 2026 and beyond. We hope that you will join us at future workshops as we target full accessibility and inclusion. Do you have any ideas for workshop topics that you would like to learn more about, or topics that you would like our community to learn about? Please feel free to tell us, or let staff in the office know.

If this committee sounds awesome, and you wish that you could be on it, guess what? You can! The Accessibility Committee is open to anyone who wants to work on inclusion at St. Christopher’s. New members are always welcome!



Robert Taylor

Stewardship

by Robert Taylor - Stewardship Committee Chair

At our first meeting in January we had an open discussion focused on the financial shortfalls at the church. Coming out of this we agreed on the following:

- reduce the deficit for 2025 to under \$50,000.
- develop more fundraising opportunities
- focus on expense control
- communicate the need
- provide monthly reports of the financial condition to members
- change meeting times to the evening to allow wardens to attend and get on board
- prepare a 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting message communicating the situation

- approach members who contribute by PAG to consider increasing their contribution throughout the year
- members of the committee will prepare articles around stewardship for the Messenger including why we have pledge campaigns, value added provided by the diocese, planned giving and stewardship and faith.

Penny’s address to the Annual Congregational Meeting, a letter to members who use Pre-Authorized Electronic Giving in the winter, a letter to all identifiable givers in the fall, and articles and information contained in Messengers through 2025 reflect our action plan. Members

of the congregation responded with generous donations, and rallied to launch two new fundraisers, the Maker’s Market and Christmas tree sales.

How did we do?

St. Christopher’s people responded with generous gifts to our church. We supported both new fundraisers. Christmas tree sales raised \$4,379 and the Maker’s Market raised \$2,087. The Corporation worked diligently to control expenses.

The year end deficit came in under \$50,000 at \$33,766.

We start 2026 with a sense of optimism that we will reach a balanced budget soon.



Ministry Support

continued



Shannon Mac

Social Media Communications Team (SMCT)

by Shannon Mac, Social Media Coordinator

2025 marked another significant year in the growth of St. Christopher's Social Media Communications ministry, building on the new, engaging style initiated in July 2023, particularly our intentional focus on reels for Instagram and Facebook, this ministry has continued to gain momentum, much like a snowball rolling steadily downhill.

Inspired by St. Christopher's MAP initiatives, I initially extended an invitation to Penny to take on the task of managing St. Christopher's Instagram and Facebook accounts. The original mandate continues to be central to our work today: to increase our online presence by diversifying content, connecting with a younger audience, and sharing the many good things happening at St. Christopher's well beyond the walls of our church.

Our early years were a time of learning, experimenting with new approaches, discovering what resonated most, and paying close attention to how we could best engage those I affectionately refer to as "non-locals," people who do not regularly enter our building.

By the beginning of 2025, it was clear that this ministry had become something both meaningful and effective. Our accounts continued to grow, with Instagram followers increasing steadily and the average age of viewers trending exactly as hoped. Within the parish, enthusiasm remained strong, supported by ongoing encouragement, positive feedback, and a shared sense that this online work is an important extension of our life together.

Following the formation of the Social Media Communications Team (SMCT) in August 2024, 2025 saw this team fully come into its own. The SMCT now consists of a leadership team, a group of writers, and the "showtime" team – those willing to appear on camera. Our focus has been to continue strategies that were already working, while also

becoming more intentional about content creation with the people on the other side of the screen in mind.

Ongoing series such as JJ the Church GG, Ministry Moments, and invitation-based reels encouraging people to join us on Sundays have continued throughout the year, many aligning closely with Penny's call to action during our Stewardship Campaign. Our content has aimed not only to inform, but also to speak to the personal and spiritual needs of those engaging with St. Christopher's online.

As we conclude 2025, we continue to share the voice of St. Christopher's with those near and far who are seeking a message of God's love and acceptance in an uncertain world. Our Facebook following is now over 800, an increase of almost 200 since the beginning of this work. Our Instagram following is now the larger of the two accounts, starting at 269 and rapidly approaching a new milestone of 1,000. If you are not following yet, please help us reach this new target!

With continual content we consistently reach 20,000 – 30,000 people per month, with engagement continuing to rise. Thank you to everyone who follows, engages with, and encourages this ministry. Through these efforts, we continue to demonstrate that there is a community here in Burlington that is unapologetically inclusive, welcoming, and committed to walking faithfully together.

In her charge this year, Penny reflected on our online presence, saying, "It is important for St. Christopher's to project our point of view into public spaces." This has proven true throughout 2025 as we have produced reels and content that reflect our values of inclusivity, justice, and rigorous engagement with faith, as well as local and global events. Together, we are projecting a compassionate and intellectually

responsible expression of Christian faith into the wider world.

We also pause this year to remember and give thanks for Judy, who passed away in 2025. Judy was a beloved and influential presence on our social media channels, particularly through her weekly "JJ the Church GG" series. Her warmth, wisdom, and consistent reminder at the end of each reel that you are loved, touched many people well beyond our parish. We have been overwhelmed by the messages of those near and far that often start with, "I never met her but". She is deeply missed, and her voice continues to echo through this ministry and through the buttons that so many of us proudly wear.

Recruitment & Participation

I wish to conclude my report with the confident assertion that there is a place for you on the Social Media Communications Team. No social media experience or technical knowledge is required, training and support are provided. All that is needed is an interest in events happening locally and around the world, a willingness to share thoughts and ideas, and a passion for connecting with people beyond the walls of St. Christopher's.

For those who may not wish to write content or appear in reels, there are still valuable ways to contribute. Liking, sharing, commenting on, and saving posts helps increase visibility and ensures that our message reaches more people. Every interaction matters!

Thank you to everyone who has written, planned, filmed, shared, supported and encouraged this ministry throughout 2025. Each contribution helps others gain a sense of the vibrant, thoughtful, and compassionate community that we are at St. Christopher's.

See you online!
Instagram:
[@st.christophers.burlington](https://www.instagram.com/st.christophers.burlington)



Liturgy & Learning



Diane Peters

Altar Guild

by Diane Peters - Altar Guild Chair

The Altar Guild is comprised of dedicated members of the congregation who prepare the Church for all three services on Sundays, Thursday morning and the special services at Easter and Christmas. We take care of all funerals and weddings as well.

There are four teams within the Guild and all of our members work

well together, supporting each other, so that our weekly duties are effectively managed.

Our responsibilities also include the decorating of the Church and Atrium for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. This is a pleasure for us and we are assisted by talented members of the congregation all year.

This ministry is both rewarding

and challenging as we support our clergy each week. It is an honour and a privilege to work with them as they ensure our services are always meaningful.

We would welcome anyone interested in learning more about the Altar Guild ministry.



Rev. Canon Dr. Penny Anderson

Altar Servers

by Penny Anderson

We are grateful for the commitment and the leadership of our altar servers as they have supported our regular 8.00am and 9.30am services through the year, our occasional special services, and our festival celebrations like Easter and Christmas.

We know members of the congregation appreciate the poise and the attention to detail that Carys Ford-Jones, Dylan Ford-Jones, Stephen Gartshore, Ewa Jacobs and Heather Rudge brought to their roles as servers through the year.

Servers get to work closely with the clergy and see all that is happening around the altar, and they provide leadership in liturgical processions. If you think you might like to try out this important ministry, please speak to Canon Penny. All are welcome!



John Reszityk

Encountering the Bible

by John Reszityk

For those looking to grow in their spiritual life, reflecting on the scriptures can be a meaningful and transformative experience. This weekly, Monday evening Zoom meeting provides an opportunity to look at the readings selected for the upcoming Sunday. None of us are clergy or trained in Biblical

scholarship and so we bring our questions and our personal experiences to each discussion where we share our reactions and reflect on the texts. You will be surprised at how often the selected readings bring meaning, insight and clarity to personal, local and world issues while giving opportunity for

participants to grow spiritually. The readings to be discussed are provided to participants in advance of meeting. All parishioners and friends are welcome. For more information contact the church office.



Gloria Campbell

Eucharist Assistants

by Gloria Campbell - Eucharist Assistant Coordinator

By assisting the clergy, Eucharist Assistants enjoy a satisfying and rewarding experience in the celebration of the Eucharist. We are

pleased to welcome to our group Pat Bailey and Cip Bibby.

My sincere thanks to all members. Your commitment and support have

been heart-warming.

If you are interested in sharing in this ministry please contact me or the Rector.



Carol Henley

Memorial Flowers

by Carol Henley - Interim Memorial Flower Administrator

The memorial flowers which adorn either side of our altar on Sunday mornings continue to be a meaningful way to remember those whom we have loved but see no longer. Each week the intercessor reads the names of the loved ones being remembered during the Prayers of the People.

Following the service, the altar guild members, in discussion with our clergy, deliver the flowers to families or individuals to offer support in a difficult situation, to help mark

a celebration, or in recognition of a particular contribution to our parish life.

The cost of having fresh flowers each week is not insignificant, approximately \$650 each month through 2025, and so the donations made by those offering these memorials is very much appreciated. We are grateful for the Chair of our Altar Guild, Diane Peters, and the caring members of the teams who attend to the details of selecting

flowers appropriate to the church calendar, and for lovingly delivering them to parishioners after church each Sunday.

If you would like to schedule a Sunday to remember a loved one, please contact Carol Henley through the church office (905.634.1809 or by email to staff@stcb.ca). We would be pleased to help you select a date and to confirm the wording for your memorial.



Gerry Anthony

Prayers of the People

by Gerry Anthony - Intercessor Coordinator

This past year has seen us continue as usual with our intercessors, delivering prayers in church rather than using the "zoom" platform. Intercessors have taken up the challenge of preparing prayers for delivery at our in-house services. We have a core of intercessors who have been amazingly dedicated to intercessory prayers and have been an integral part of our worship service every Sunday. On behalf of the clergy and

on behalf of you, the congregation, I want to thank them for a job extremely well done.

Each intercessor brings their own particular style to the prayers. It is wonderful how they always reflect the theme of the worship that day. I cannot speak highly enough, or often enough, to thank them for their dedication and faithfulness; they are truly beyond measure.

We are always looking for

intercessors to add to our ministry. This past year we have welcomed Nancy Emerson to our team and entering 2026 we welcome Judi McNairn. If you feel this is a ministry that 'calls' to you, please speak to myself, or to Penny. It would be nice to have a couple of extra folks. Please, do give this request your prayerful consideration.



John Reszitaryk

Readers' Guild

by John Reszitaryk - Reader Coordinator

The scriptures are experienced very differently when proclaimed aloud within the community. The act of reading before a loving community can be transformative for both the reader and listener. And so, proclaiming the Word within our

liturgies remains a key part of our identity as people of faith. We are a group of lay readers and alternates who read a lesson at either the 8.00am or 9.30am services and additional services at Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and other

services. This typically works out to reading once every six weeks or so. We have welcomed a number of new readers and additional readers are always welcome! For more information, contact the church office.



Gill Jones

Thought for the Month

by Gill Jones

Over the past year or so, you may have noticed, either at the beginning or the end of the bulletin, a "Thought for the Month". Our committee selects these reflections each month from a variety of sources: scripture,

biblical scholars, contemplatives, indigenous or secular writers. Our goal is to provide a short quotation which the reader can meditate on, a thought which might inspire, challenge, or comfort.

If you would like to join our group, or if you have any suggestions, please speak to myself, Lee Ford-Jones or Gary Fisher.



Carol Henley

Liturgy Writing Team

by Carol Henley

In 2025 we continued our commitment to learning through our Sunday and seasonal liturgies, parish meetings, and various study series.

We have committed ourselves to learning our history, and to engaging in reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and have done so weekly this year through the writings of John Edmond, an Ottawa lawyer who practiced constitutional and Indigenous law, and who compiled a chronology of the Indian Residential Schools.

In Lent our theme was "Not Your Grandmother's Prayer Meeting" and we explored and practiced various different forms of prayer on Sunday mornings and during weekly study sessions.

On a Sunday morning in May our Climate Justice Committee offered an opportunity to learn about, and calculate, a personal household carbon footprint. Other environmental sustainability resources were also available.

In October our Accessibility

Committee offered a workshop entitled "Holy Distractions! Let's Talk about ADHD" which was an opportunity to learn more about neurodivergence, and ways to be more inclusive and welcoming.

Our Advent theme was "Building Our Village – Conversations about Resilience and Hope" which we explored through our liturgy and homilies on Sundays, and during weekly study sessions.



Music and the Performing Arts



Andy Elmhirst
Director of Music

Music and the Performing Arts

by Andy Elmhirst

The foremost facet of music ministry at St. Christopher's is the Sunday morning service. Here we give musical voice to our joy, thanksgiving, worry and grief with a breadth of genres that is as varied and diverse as one is likely to find in any church.

The first of our three Sunday services begins at 8.00am where the early morning praises are led by cantor Peggy Cardwell and myself. Peggy has been singing at this service for seven years (including the COVID break) and we are grateful for this stability. Her vocal leadership is text-focused and authentically expressive - exactly what church music should be. She inspires us to sing, which is the highest compliment.

Our largest service, by number of musicians, starts at 9.30am and is led by our choir and guitar group. Our all-volunteer, four-part choir is comprised of 23 singers. That number has been steady since the resumption of unrestricted, post-COVID singing. We sing about eight different pieces of music every Sunday and these can come from any genre and any century. Choir is one of the largest volunteer commitments that one can make at St. Christopher's. Whether it's a Sunday morning, an Easter Vigil, a social event or a funeral, the choir's music ministry is at the beating heart of spiritual life at St. Christopher's. Like our other two services, the 9.30am congregation enjoys robust singing and, for a church choir, this is the best evidence of a job well done.

The choir and 9.30am congregation are accompanied by piano, organ and guitar group. The guitar group is under the leadership of John Stephen who acts out of a belief in the power of community music making and out of the knowledge that guitar-driven sacred music is a core part of the St. Christopher's musical identity. In 2025 the guitar group experienced a setback when a couple of long-term

members left the program. It is our hope that, in 2026, more people will avail themselves of the opportunity to gain the musical experience that the guitar group provides.

The music at our third Sunday service is led by the aptly named 11.30 Band. I am grateful for the talent and continued dedication of my bandmates, Raeanne Venne and Jim Wright. We learned many exciting and liturgically unique songs in the past year including Chappell Roan's "Pink Pony Club" for Pride Sunday, the Canadian pop hit "I Got You" by Devon Cole and "God Loves Everyone" by Ron Sexsmith which was introduced to me at Judy Jupp's funeral in July. In 2025 the band collaborated with the choir at the Easter Vigil service and welcomed a number of guest musicians including Audrey Chan, Jim Sandilands, Stephanie Furtado, Clair Macaulay-Newcombe, Wojtek Kuzma, David Montgomery, Stephen Gartshore and John Stephen. Thanks to everyone who helps make music at 11.30am.

Many weeks there is a fourth service on Sundays. St. Christopher's hosts a monthly Jazz Vespers service that brings some of the best jazz musicians in the country to our church. Sunday evenings are also the time when we offer services like All Souls, Blue Christmas or Lessons and Carols. This is in the spirit of Anglican Evensong and, like the traditional service, our Sunday evenings offer some of our best music. It would be nice if, in 2026, we could do a couple more of these. This could be our take on a traditional Evensong and/or an evening service with the 11.30 band.

Our Sunday music is often augmented by guest instrumentalists. Paul Smith, Bev Wilson and Audrey Chan all played numerous times throughout the year. On September 21st we were treated to a performance

by Bells of Praise. The handbell choir from Burlington Baptist Church was a refreshing new sound in our sanctuary. Thank you to those who share my belief in the value of church music and back up this belief with time, talent and treasure.

St. Christopher's has a fourth weekly service on Thursday mornings. It's the perfect waypoint between bible study and lunch. Most churches don't have music at a midweek service but we offer a pairing of familiar Christian songs and solo piano music.

In 2025, members of the choir volunteered to sing at numerous celebrations of life. Their contributions to these major life events cannot be overstated. Some celebrations of life had a particularly high choir turnout. In February, we sang at the celebration of life for Scott Vassel-Pittman, partner of our beloved and long-serving soprano, Joanne. This was a painful and personal one for all of us but one silver lining is that it occasioned the learning of "Three Little Birds" by Bob Marley. In July, we sang goodbye to Judy Jupp in a celebration that filled every seat in the church. In October, we were joined by Hamilton guitarist Joe Alain for the celebration of the life of Justin Landers. Working with Joe was a pleasure and, in 2026, I hope we have the opportunity to collaborate again, hopefully under happier circumstances.

On top of our regularly occurring worship services, evening services, funerals and High Holy Days, St. Christopher's dramatists, dancers, singers, readers and musicians prepare two major services which showcase the performing arts: the Great Vigil of Easter and the Service of Lessons and Carols. One of the highlights of this year's Easter Vigil was the powerful "He Lives in You" from The Lion King which was

sung by the choir, danced by the St. Christopher's Liturgical Dancers and featured Jim Wright on hand drums. A special thank you to Allison Wright and Paula Ramsay who choreographed, taught and rehearsed this piece of music with our young dancers. Liturgical Dance is not only a great learning experience for young people but a beautiful form of prayer that is unique to St. Christopher's.

The Lessons and Carols service this year was a straight up celebration of all things Christmas and featured many familiar carols alongside choral anthems. Members of the choir also sang a Lessons and Carols service this year at the Village of Tansley Woods. Thank you to the choristers who were able to attend this offsite service and to our two altos, Gill Jones and Sandra Rudge, for organizing the whole affair. It is a rewarding ministry for all involved and one that I hope will be repeated in coming years.

In addition to offering our talents in worship, St. Christopher's musicians also perform at parish social functions. Music at the Robbie Burns Night is largely provided by John Stephen who knows a wealth of Scottish folk music and dresses for the occasion. John also coordinates performances by diverse performers from within and without the parish. In March, we welcomed the Dixieland Plus Jazz Band to swing away the

winter blues as part of a belated Mardi Gras celebration. John Stephen was central to this effort as well. The entire choir gets to let their hair down at Music in the Garden which, in 2025, featured a choral medley of ABBA music.

This year's Music in the Garden included a couple of final performances from cherished church members. Pastoral Associate David Montgomery sang us a farewell tune and it was also one of the last times we heard longtime choir and guitar group member Dorothy Warren sing with us. We miss Dorothy's voice and her inexhaustible energy. Dorothy was also the choir librarian, a role that Paula Ramsay has filled. Thank you, Paula.

A major type of extra-liturgical music in 2025 was the solo keyboard concert. In early January, I presented a Christmas organ recital which raised nearly \$1,000 and was attended by many people from outside of the parish. Again in March, I played a solo organ recital which was entitled "Our Hope for Years to Come: Organ music for a troubled time". This concert was done in partnership with the Tuesday night Open Doors dinner, an approach that was repeated in September with my solo piano concert, "A Farewell to Summer". In November, pianist Joy Li and I hosted a piano concert

to raise money for Open Doors. Joy's performance, only three pieces long, was simply some of the best piano playing I've ever heard. Early in 2026 another student of mine, Daniel Lu, played a full length solo piano concert of advanced repertoire which earned him a Licentiate degree from the Royal Conservatory of Music – that's a big deal. Many thanks to everyone who attended and supported, especially Ken Beeby for his work in creating the concert programs and promotional materials. A sincere and deep thanks to the young performers, Joy and Daniel, who donated their time and talents to support our outreach ministries. These four concerts raised over \$3,500 for Open Doors.

This is the same amount that the choir team raised in Coldest Night of the Year. The event didn't lack for music and walkers were treated to performances by the Burlington Teen Tour Band and The Top Hats.

This annual report is lengthy on account of there being so much to share. There's been a lot of Sunday services – morning and evening, funerals, socials, major performances and solo concerts. Each one has its own stories, emotions and memories. Each musical moment, big or small, secular or sacred, has affected someone in some way. Thanks to all who helped make it possible.



Music and the Performing Arts

continued



John Stephen

Guitar Group

by John Stephen

The guitar group is currently comprised of John Stephen and Jim Wright. This group provides instrumental support for the music of the 9.30am worship service from

September through June. The group meets on Thursday evenings at 6.30pm in the Preschool Room. New members are always welcome. A knowledge of basic chords is

recommended. If you have always wanted to play the guitar, this is your chance! Please contact John Stephen or Andy Elmhirst to ask any questions, or just come on a Thursday evening.



Archdeacon
Jim Sandilands

Jazz Vespers

by Jim Sandilands

Jazz Vespers is a great way to introduce friends, acquaintances, and music lovers to St. Christopher's. The freedom and excitement of improvised music offers a great entry into the life of the spirit. The service of Jazz Vespers at St. Christopher's provides a soulful way to encounter God and enter into the evening, in an atmosphere of gentle prayer and great music. To give you a sense of the flavour of vespers, we usually

use this prayer near the beginning of the service:

*Come Holy Spirit be our guest
stay with us for day is ending.
Inspire us with the fire of your
light,
that we may show the light of your
presence
when evening turns to night.*

St. Christopher's was pleased to host nine vespers gatherings in 2025. Musicians included Colleen

Allen, Shannon Butcher, Morgan Childs, Chris Gale, Marie Goudy, Rebecca Hennessy, Elena Kapeleris, Matt Newton, Shawn Nykwist, Jim Sandilands, Tim Shia, Rob Somerville, Jake Wilkinson, and Alison Young, most of whom played at more than one Jazz Vespers.

As always, thank you to Ken Beeby for his generous and expert work on print production, and Brie Langs who runs house sound and the livestream.



Paula Ramsay

Liturgical Dancers

by Allison Wright and Paula Ramsay - Co-Leaders of the Liturgical Dancers of St. Christopher's

The liturgical dance program at St. Christopher's is alive and well! This program provides a meaningful experience for anyone to learn dance movements and steps as they express the word of God. They perform with Andy Elmhirst and the choir, with the band or to the spoken word. The program runs in two sessions, September to December and January to April. Dance experience is not required to participate. Currently the group is made up of youth from the parish and from contacts reaching beyond St. Christopher's.

The liturgical dance group is led by Allison Wright and Paula Ramsay. Debbie McCormack is always in the wings helping with her expertise.

We are a small group that delivers a meaningful message to the services and performances we participate in. At the Easter Vigil we had three very eager young dancers who performed two numbers beautifully. Unfortunately, at Christmas, due to injuries and other commitments there was no dance.

We are anticipating a return of dance in the Easter Vigil this year.

Allison and Paula had the great delight of having an Easter Vigil number "Power of the Cross" which they choreographed, picked up on YouTube by a Presbyterian congregation in Oxfordshire England. It was used in a meaningful service. We are grateful to have the opportunity to run this program for St. Christopher's.

If you would like any information about this programme, please contact Allison or Paula at St. Christopher's at 905-634-1809.



Allison Wright





Children's and Youth Ministry



Carrie Ford-Jones

Children's and Youth Ministry

by Carrie Ford-Jones - Children's & Youth Ministry Coordinator

The Children and Youth Ministry program has continued to thrive at a steady pace through 2025. The familiar programs have remained the same, allowing the children to build routine and consistency and an opportunity to build relationships in the same manner that the adult members of our congregation grow to count on seeing familiar faces and building a network of friends and fellowship. 2025 has also brought in a couple of new programs including Kids Club and Confirmation Classes that have been tremendously successful, and it has been exciting to see this growth in our church community.

GIFT (Growing in Faith Together)

The Sunday morning children's programming during the 9.30am service continues to run three 12-week series through the year, pausing for summer holidays, and one special 4-week Advent program at the end of the year. 'Someone Asked: Who is Jesus?' was the first program of the year, focusing specifically on the life and stories of Jesus through the Gospels. After Easter, the spring program focused on the Parables, allowing the children to become familiar with these stories and to gain a better understanding of how Jesus spoke and taught. Some Godly Play lessons were incorporated into this session, which offered a deeper understanding of the stories and a unique style of learning. The fall program took a pivot back to the Old Testament with 'God's Big Story,' refreshing our memories of some of the classic Bible stories that we, as adults, think about when we remember our own 'Sunday School' days. (Think: Noah's Ark, David and Goliath, Adam and Eve)...for many of the children these stories are familiar—hands shoot up to answer questions and sometimes young ones will even offer to explain the

story to the whole group. But we are always mindful that some children are experiencing God's Story for the first time, so it's nice to bring back these familiar verses to be looked at through fresh eyes. The year ended with 'Advent in Narnia,' a four-week series tying the Christmas story into C.S. Lewis' 'The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe.' Sunday mornings continue to see between 8 and 16 children regularly in attendance most weeks, sometimes welcoming grandchildren from out of town, or friends from neighbourhood and school, which we always encourage and have been delighted to see!

Youth Group and Kids Club

High school youth group continues to meet one Sunday a month for games, movie nights, field trips and reflection. This program often welcomes youth from outside the congregation which is, of course, the goal of the program! Early in the year, the younger members of the congregation were so persistent in their questions of 'When am I old enough to come to youth group?' that we felt it was important to capture that enthusiasm and create a program for them as well. A new monthly Kids Club, for ages 8-11 was introduced in the spring with much success. Opening the children's eyes to the opportunity to attend church in a relaxed atmosphere where they could make noise and run through the halls, gave them a sense of ownership of a space that often feels like it's 'for adults.' Building Kids Club at this stage will contribute towards building the Youth Group of the future, so it's nice to see these friendships flourishing. Each group sees regular attendance of between 5-9 children/youth.

Nursery

Our nursery program, Grannie's Place, was paused for the 2025 year. The space remains welcoming and

available for visiting children ages 0-3, but has not seen any regular attendance as all of our current members have aged out of the program. It is ready to resume at a moment's notice with volunteers happy to jump back in should the need arise!

Fun In The Sun

VBS Summer camp ran another successful full-day program in August with 9 youth leaders and 25 campers. The 'True North' program offered art, science, music, drama, outdoor play and healthy snacks for an energetic group of children. Each year offers the opportunity to recognize the needs of our community and to modify our program to accommodate different learning styles and unique needs of our campers. We are continuing to grow in this area, consulting with leaders from other programs to ensure we are offering the best camp experience possible. The youth leaders work so hard to create a fun and engaging program and they are gaining valuable work and volunteer experience through this program.

Confirmation Classes

Often when a new program is launched, there is a learning curve – What worked? What didn't? What can we try differently next time? What a delightful surprise it was to come out of this program saying 'That was great! Let's do it exactly the same next time!' Of course, the credit for this must be shared. It was Penny's suggestion to collaborate with other churches in our area and to host young people from other congregations. We were also extremely fortunate to have clergy and youth leaders from these parishes to come and take part in leading the sessions. Each one brought their own unique gifts and the result was an engaging program with many new friendships and connections made. We are grateful to the staff at St.

Luke's, St. John's and Grace Church Waterdown for being part of the program's success.

Christmas Pageant

How does one 10-minute performance get its own section in the Annual Report? It is so much more than that! This year's 'The Christmas Story: A Seussical Celebration' was a Grinch-themed narration of the birth of Jesus. The community building that happens around the Christmas Eve Pageant is one of the highlights of the year. Not only recognizing the children who work so hard to rehearse and prepare all through December, and the families that make time during this busy month to show up for these practices, but the day of the performance itself. One of the highlights of this performance is that new visitors are given the

opportunity to dress up and take part in the performance on Christmas Eve, ensuring that everyone feels welcome and that they do not need to be a 'member' to participate. Children visiting family from out of town have grown to count on this performance as part of their Christmas tradition and I can't think of anything better than for one's childhood memories of 'Church' to be such a lively and welcoming experience. I must extend huge gratitude to Jillian Stewart who takes such an active role in making the pageant run smoothly, both through the month of rehearsals, and on Christmas Eve.

Looking Ahead

2026 promises to look a lot like 2025 – a lot of consistency and a little growth! The hope is to continue to offer the familiar programs that

have been working so well, while looking for opportunities to expand where there is interest and need. Our volunteer team has grown by two members in 2025, and we hope to make this happen again in 2026! We will strive to find ways to make our programs accessible and welcoming for youth to be able to invite their friends and the hope is that every child who walks through the doors of St. Christopher's feels that they have found a place that loves and welcomes them for exactly who they are.

I am thankful for the support of the staff, volunteers, parents and caregivers who have made the children's faith formation a priority through this past year, and look forward to continued growth, love and learning for 2026.





Ministry Development & Community Life



Paula Ramsay

Fit for Service at St. Christopher's

by Paula Ramsay - Fit for Service Coordinator

Fit for Service is an exercise program geared to the older population.

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, from 9.30-10.30am, a group of enthusiastic participants come to work out. Melida O'Keefe (Monday and Wednesday) and Florence Czok (Friday) are our able instructors.

Monday and Wednesdays' sessions with Melida O'Keefe begin with cardio exercises transitioning to small balls, weights or bands which foster balance and core development. We then end with a mat stretch. Monday's class is a little less intense than Wednesday's class.

Fridays' sessions are yoga classes. Florence Czok takes us through several yoga positions to develop core strength and balance of mind, body, and spirit.

This varied program provides an

all-round approach to exercise and allows participants to attend sessions geared to their needs. Each person is encouraged to work at his or her own potential and the group varies in age from 40 to seniors with a goal of keeping physically healthy.

The cost of each class is \$4.00 as you come. We have a fee schedule for the month (if you are a regular participant) which is eTransferred directly to the Fit for Service St. Christopher's account or a cheque made out to Fit for Service St. Christopher's. One class per week is \$15.00 a month; two classes per week are \$30.00 a month and three classes per week are \$45.00 a month. Where can you find a better deal than that?

In addition to paying our instructors, we have made significant contributions to St. Christopher's and

to various outreach programs within the community, as we are able.

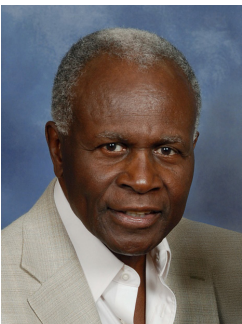
Our group was in third place for total money raised in Burlington in the Coldest Night of the Year campaign in February.

Following a full body workout, anyone is free to join us after the exercise program for coffee/tea and social time.

Most days we have 15 to 30 participants (male and female) – many of whom are from outside the St. Christopher's community, and we are delighted.

We enjoyed a luncheon in June this year and had a wonderful time getting to know fellow participants.

For questions regarding the program, please feel free to contact Paula Ramsay through St. Christopher's at 905.634.1809.



Winston Campbell

The Ginger Group (aka Retirees Fellowship Group)

by Winston Campbell and John Reszityk - Retirees Fellowship Group Co-coordinators

Who doesn't enjoy lunch with friends and learning about interesting topics while chatting over a special beverage? If you do, then you may enjoy joining us every six weeks or so on Mondays from 11.30am - 1.30pm in the Great Hall. We are a group of 60 or so men and women from both St. Christopher's and beyond

our doors. We have speakers on topics ranging from Senior's health concerns, popular science topics, ecology, the local environment and history to topics in modern Christianity such as relationships with our Indigenous peoples and local Migrant Workers. While we do look to recover our costs with a

small charge for those who can pay, no one is turned away. Meanwhile, any excess funds are redirected to needs within Open Doors and the church. For more information contact Winston Campbell through the church office.



John Reszityk



Cherly Miles Goldring

Watercolour Wednesdays with Cheryl

by Cherly Miles Goldring

It started with an idea - introduce people to the magic of watercolour while completing a painting in just one afternoon. No experience required, simply a willingness to be a part of a new adventure. One person attended my inaugural class in 2023 and he left with his first work of art, tucked under his arm, surprised and pleased with the results.

Two and a half years later on January 7, 2026, 10 people filled the Great Hall, eager to release their creativity on a sheet of watercolour paper. Some new faces joined the regular attendees and, after receiving a few simple painting principles and techniques, the group embraced the task at hand.

Less than 4 hours later, cell phones

were pulled from pockets and purses, the artists had their photos taken, while proudly holding their paintings. New friendships had started, and, in almost every class, new ones are made. It is a safe place to express yourself and discover skills you never thought you had.

I have been painting for more than twenty years, have been selected for many juried shows, and my paintings hang in private homes, businesses and public spaces across Canada and abroad. I work in oil, acrylic and watercolour, and have travelled across the country, to hone my skills. I have distilled some important lessons from my experiences and happily share them with my students. My mantra says it all.

“Be bold, follow your instincts and remember: you have the unique ability to see the world through your own eyes and bring that vision to life.”

Why not join me for an afternoon escape, an opportunity to meet like-minded people, make a new friend and leave with a frameworthy masterpiece of your making.

Classes are offered on the first Wednesday of every month, 12 noon – 4.00pm.

All supplies are included in the \$35.00 price per person.

Please reserve your space with the church office at 905.634.1809.

A warm beverage and freshly baked scones are included in this afternoon adventure.



Gail Grant

MAP - Reshaping Parish Culture

by Gail Grant - MAP Chair

Committee members - Gerry and Dot Anthony, Winston Campbell, Tom Nicol, Carol Henley, Shannon Mac, Ewa Jacobs , Cip Bibby, Joanne Vassell-Pittman

Our first task of the year was to review and revise the goals of our committee to better reflect the current needs of our church community. It is these goals that we reflect upon as we explore each event or task that we undertake:

- 1 Hold events to nurture our feeling of community and build a sense of belonging for all
- 2 Explore ways to diversify our events and reach out to demographics we may be missing
- 3 Support the leaders of the hospitality, greeters and parish council in ways to connect with newcomers, visitors etc.
- 4 Make best use of online tools to connect - Boost social media presence
- 5 Be present where God is at work in the community but also be present where the unchurched find meaning

For the 2025 Calendar Year we

planned, organized, facilitated and enjoyed with our community; Name Tag Sunday, Robbie Burns Potluck and Coffee House, Dixieland Potluck... music and dance, Music in the Garden, Old Fashion Church Picnic and Strawberry Social, Halton Pride Festival, Orange T-Shirt Sunday, Truth and Reconciliation Ceremony and Walk, Greeters and Hospitality Wine and Cheese... renewing and reviewing our hospitality goals, Christmas Market Bistro.

We appreciated all members of our community inviting their friends, family and neighbours to come out and experience St. Christopher’s warm hospitality at each of our events.

Under the direction of Shannon Mac, we continue to increase our media presence on social media through Facebook and Instagram. Shannon has facilitated writing workshops to create scripts for our

social media posts and is our creative videographer bringing them to life for our audiences. We greatly appreciate the support of our congregation and their families in liking, sharing and following our posts.

We have struggled with the loss of one our most vibrant MAP committee members. Judy always brought laughter, reflective questioning, direction, perspective and leadership to everything we did. She was the energizer bunny. ❤️ We have missed her terribly.

We are so happy to welcome two new members to our Committee, Cip Bibby and Joanne Vassell-Pittman. They have both brought fresh and thoughtful ideas to our planning and have jumped into the work without skipping a beat.

If you think you might be interested in the work your MAP committee engages in, please contact Gail Grant at staff@stcb.ca.



Carol Henley

Welcome & Hospitality

by Carol Henley

I can still remember my first visit to St. Christopher's and, in particular, the welcome that I received from two people. Those interactions made me think that I had found my church people, and that I should return the following week. That was over thirty years ago. My experience is not unusual among those who have come to call St. Christopher's home, and is a good reminder that the welcome that we offer each time we open our doors can have a profound impact on people.

The two formal ways that we offer hospitality and welcome on Sunday mornings are through our Greeter and Hospitality teams.

For many, many years this ministry has been offered under the incomparable leadership of Judy Jupp. Judy's influence extended far beyond her formal roles over the years. She embodied the welcome and acceptance that we are called to as faithful people. Judy reminded us often of the importance of this ministry, that we should always be looking at how we could improve our practice, and that it is the work of every parishioner. Since her unexpected death in June of last year, we have taken opportunities to honour her gifts, and to reflect on the lessons and legacy that she left. Formally, the Mission Action Plan (MAP) - Reshaping Parish Culture

team held a welcoming gathering for members of both the Greeter and Hospitality teams which was well attended and received. We spent some time reflecting on our best practices and looking forward to how best to maintain and enhance our ministry. We will be well served to continue this tradition!

At any service on any Sunday morning, you will be met by a member of a greeter team. They will wish you welcome and do their best to ensure that you have everything you might need to participate fully and comfortably, be it a service booklet, a great seat, a connection to people or information, or just a warm greeting. They also help us to partake in communion in a relaxed and orderly way. We are well served by six teams at the 8.00am service and six teams at the 9.30am service, each one headed by a team captain. Ken Beeby takes the lead at the 11.30am service each week and delegates to other willing and able parishioners as needed. Thank you to each and every one of you!

Following Sunday services we are served warm and cold beverages and baked goods (sometimes homemade!). This hospitality is offered by four teams at 8.00am and six teams at 9.30am, both under the capable guidance of Ellenor Winslow and Cip Bibby, who ensure that

supplies are topped up and ready to go. The 11.30am hospitality is set up by the preceding teams and tidied up by willing parishioners following the service. Several long-serving team members have stepped back from their roles this year and we offer heartfelt thanks for many years of service to Lynda Eden, Pam Nicol, and Tom Nicol!

For many years Judy Jupp drew up the schedules for both Greeter and Hospitality teams which were then distributed through the office. Joy Thomson has continued this task, assisted by office volunteers. Probably more importantly, Judy kept a close eye on Sunday morning, noticing who was new and perhaps looking for a way to connect, or familiar folks who might be looking for a new way to engage. These teams are a great way to meet new people and undertake ministry that is very much needed and appreciated. This is work that we can all undertake. If you feel called to this ministry, please let the office or one of the clergy know. We would be happy to find a spot for you. In addition, notice and talk to others about whether they might be interested and willing to participate. This is foundational ministry and there is room for all of us to offer a welcome.



Tricia Clarke

Seniors' Social Group

by Tricia Clarke

The Seniors' Social Group meets every Tuesday in the Family Room from 2.00-4.00pm. The first hour is spent catching up, sharing jokes and stories and enjoying light refreshments. The second hour is

reserved for non-competitive games of euchre, scrabble and other board/card games.

The last Tuesday of the month we go off-site and meet for lunch at 1.00pm at a local restaurant. We

arrange car pools for those unable to drive.

Come... join us, meet new friends, build new relationships, enjoys lots of laughter and great camaraderie. All are welcome.



Elizabeth Baldwin

Bridge Group

by Elizabeth Baldwin - Bridge Group Coordinator

Our bridge group meets every other week from September through June. We gather in the Preschool Room on Mondays at 2pm. Please see the actual dates of each meeting in our Eblast and Messenger.

We currently have 16 registered in our group. We fluctuate between

two and four tables, dependant upon vacation times. A small fee is requested at each meeting with the net proceeds being donated to the church in the spring. Light refreshments are enjoyed during the games. All are welcome but previous knowledge of the game is

appreciated. Come - challenge your brain, meet new friends, enjoy time spent with others, keep the game of bridge going, trigger your memory! Please connect with Elizabeth Baldwin through the church office at 905.634.1809 or at staff@stcb.ca. We look forward to seeing you!



Carole Caron

Burlington Mindfulness

by Carole Caron

In 2025 we were offered an opportunity to provide a Mindfulness program at the church. Everyone is welcome to attend at no cost other than voluntary donations. We began our sessions in January 2025 and met twice a month to talk about and practice mindfulness and meditation.

Mindfulness practice is an effective way of coping with stress, anxiety

disorders, depression, grief, pain, and helps to cultivate more calm and inner peace.

Attendance at the meetings has varied throughout the year. We currently have 8-10 consistent participants who have shared the benefits of the sessions in how it has helped them to ground themselves and to find inner peace.

Our meetings are held every second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 7.00 - 8.30pm, in the Family Room.

Everyone is welcome. You don't have to have experience with mindfulness or meditation to participate.



Bob Goodwin

Men's Cooking Group

by Bob Goodwin - Men's Cooking Group Coordinator

For the 2025/2026 year, it was decided to combine the previous two groups into one Men's Cooking Group. This allowed us the opportunity to develop more recipes and more friendships moving forward. The

group now consists of 16 gentlemen meeting monthly to enjoy good food and fellowship. Although preparing and eating the meal is the reason we get together, the fun and fellowship is what really makes the men's cooking

group so special. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Gerry or Bob through the Church office.



John Reszityk

Wednesday Breakfast Group

by John Reszityk

For the early risers within our community and a group of friends, we have been continuing with the 7.30am Wednesday morning breakfast at Cora's. We are a group

of men who get together weekly for breakfast, coffee, and conversation. No topic is off limits as we share stories and reflect on the events of the day: world, national, and local

events or what's happening within our church, our communities, or our families! For more information contact Winston Campbell.



Outreach/Social Justice



Shannon Shuell

Open Doors

by Shannon Shuell - Director of Outreach Ministries

The 2025 year marked a period of reflection, growth, and significant impact for Open Doors. From 2024 to 2025, Open Doors experienced remarkable expansion in service delivery, most notably within our meal programs, which grew by 47%. This increase reflects both rising community need and the effectiveness of our programming.

What makes this growth especially notable is that it occurred without a proportional increase in our volunteer base. With relatively stable staffing and volunteer numbers, our team rose to an extraordinary challenge. Staff and volunteers collectively delivered significantly more meals, supported more individuals and families, and maintained consistent quality across all services. This level of impact speaks to the operational efficiency, resilience, and deep compassion of our team, who ensured that care, dignity, and excellence remained at the core of everything we do.

In 2025, Open Doors received \$12,000 in grant support from Burlington Helping Burlington (BHB), designated to strengthen our programming and to be applied across initiatives, as needed.

In addition, we pursued several new funding opportunities and were successful in securing two awards for the 2026 season. The Burlington Community Fund (BCF) awarded \$10,000 to support seasonal staffing needs for our seasonal programming. We were also selected as a recipient of Rotary's Lakeside À

La Carte initiative, through which Open Doors will receive 25% of the proceeds from Rotary's major annual fundraising event.

While these grants provide meaningful support, Open Doors continues to actively seek additional funding to further strengthen capacity – particularly to expand part-time staffing support in response to increasing demand.

Throughout 2025, Open Doors hosted a range of events that offered valuable insights into both program sustainability and community impact. While initiatives such as Open Doors, Open Kitchen, What's for Dinner, an environmental event and participation in the Lion's Farmers Market aligned with our mission and supported outreach goals, attendance levels, fundraising outcomes, and operational demands indicated a need for re-evaluation of format, timing, and resource allocation to ensure long-term effectiveness. In contrast, several events demonstrated continued success and strong growth potential, including Harvest Fest, Family Fun Day and catering services. These programs achieved high community engagement, positive feedback, strengthened partnerships, and, in many cases, were effective fundraisers, reinforcing their value as sustainable, mission-driven offerings moving forward.

The 2025 Coldest Night of the Year campaign was a remarkable success and a powerful demonstration of community commitment. Through

the collective efforts of participants, volunteers, and donors, the event raised an impressive \$64,000 in support of Open Doors' programs and services.

This achievement was made possible by the generosity of 695 donors, reflecting broad community support for our mission. On event day, 127 walkers across 22 teams braved the cold to raise awareness and funds. Their efforts were supported by 69 dedicated volunteers, who ensured the event ran smoothly. Together, these combined efforts resulted in an extraordinary outcome with a lasting impact on the individuals and families we serve. CNOY continues to be our signature fundraising event and we are hoping that 2026 will be another banner event to celebrate.

After careful consideration, Open Doors made the decision not to renew Yellow Robot's contract for a second year in order to take time to re-evaluate our core mission and operational needs. The partnership concluded on good terms, and we look forward to exploring potential opportunities to work together again in the future.

In alignment with this transition, I was delighted and honoured to accept the appointment as Director of Outreach Ministries. My focus is on providing leadership, continuity, and a clear point of accountability as we enter this next phase of continued growth as Open Doors responds to the evolving needs of our community.



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2025



Serving the *community*

For nearly two decades...

Open Doors has offered volunteer-based outreach programs that address emerging **community** needs. Our services support individuals and families while fostering an inclusive, resilient community.



9,213 hot meals served



Over **7,000** lbs. of food given out monthly



65-75 community visits weekly



Over **4,000** lbs. food waste diverted to compost and green programs



420 backpacks and supplies handed out



235 families helped with Pj's, hygiene kits and gift cards



None of these impact numbers would be possible without our incredible **volunteers**, who generously gave **8,500 hours** of hard work to make it all happen.

*From the 2025
Hunger report*

Hunger touches every region of Ontario - and behind every statistic is someone making impossible choices: parents skipping meals, seniors choosing between food and medication, workers still falling short. Different stories, same outcome: hunger strips health, dignity, and stability from families and communities.



Outreach/Social Justice

continued



Lee Ford-Jones



Mary Loree

Climate Justice

by Carol Henley

The work of the Climate Justice Committee continues to be inspired by the words in our logo: Pray, Learn, Act, Advocate.

Once again, the committee has been ably led by co-facilitators Mary Loree and Lee Ford-Jones. We have continued to educate ourselves on environmental issues, always with an eye towards how we can improve our own practices, and share our learning with the congregation and broader community. Messenger articles have covered a variety of topics and we've also appreciated regular eco-tips in parish weekly communications (bulletin announcements and email blast).

Committee members participated in both the spring and fall parish outdoor clean-up mornings as well as an eco-event in March, presented by Sheridan College students and in co-operation with Open Doors.

In April several committee members attended a Diocesan sponsored Earth Day webinar which offered tools for action and advocacy. On Sunday, May 4th, committee members were available in the Atrium between services to assist anyone who wanted to calculate their household carbon footprint.

Prior to the Ontario Provincial election, we reported on the positions of the various candidates with respect

to climate issues.

In September, Lee and Carol attended the Diocesan Facilitators Workshop held at St. James, Dundas. It was a terrific opportunity to hear about what other parishes are undertaking, as well as to get an overview of an updated Parish Accreditation Plan. The day has helped to shape the work that we will undertake in 2026!

You are always welcome to join our meetings which are generally held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm in the Family Room. Tentative 2026 plans include a pollinator event in the spring, as well as a book club style series of conversations.



Proposed Membership of Parish Council for 2026

Membership Category **Who** **Serves through**

Members as defined by Canon

Rector	Penny Anderson.....	term
Rector’s Warden (appointed by Rector).....	Shannon Mac.....	2027
People’s Warden (elected by ACM).....	Mike Ravenscroft.....	2028
Deputy Rector’s Warden (appointed by Rector).....	Lisa Roussac-Kruitwagen	2029
Deputy People’s Warden (elected by ACM).....	Bill Hewlett.....	2030
Lay Representative to Synod (elected by ACM).....	Giova Gallagher.....	2027
Lay Representative to Synod (elected by ACM).....	Shannon Mac.....	2028
Alternate Lay Representative Synod (elected).....	Jillian Stewart.....	2027
Alternate Lay Representative Synod		
Youth Representative to Synod	Carys Ford-Jones.....	2028
Alternate Youth Representative to Synod		

Members (to be appointed by the Rector)

Parish Council Chair.....	Shannon Mac.....	2026
Liturgy & Learning.....	Penny Anderson.....	term
Compassion & Care.....	Penny Anderson.....	term
Children, Youth & Family Ministry.....	Carrie Ford-Jones.....	term
Open Doors.....	Shannon Shuell.....	term
Music and the Performing Arts.....	Andy Elmhirst.....	term
Parish Mission Action Plan Animator.....	Christyn Perkons.....	term
Chair of Stewardship Committee.....	Bob Taylor.....	term
Climate Justice Facilitator.....		term
Parish Treasurer.....	Jasmin Dorsett.....	term

Members-at-Large (to be elected by members at the Annual Congregational Meeting)

to ensure balance in age and gender, the inclusion of newcomers, & skills required to maintain an overview and lead

1 Robin Ehlert.....	2027
2 Stephen Gartshore.....	2027
3 Fred Grigsby.....	2028
4 Ewa Jacobs.....	2028
5 Rodney Lott.....	2028
6 Clair Macauley-Newcombe.....	2027
7 Wendy McCowan.....	2028
8 Judi McNairn.....	2027
9 Al Nicolls.....	2028
10 Emmy Carlos Rayman.....	2027
11 VJ Sahi.....	2028
12 Winston Tinglin.....	2027
13 Marva Worrell.....	2028



Minutes of the 73rd Annual Congregational Meeting February 23rd, 2025

Getting Started

Call to Order

Canon Penny called the 73rd Annual Congregation Meeting of St Christopher's Church to order at 11.36am.

Opening Prayer

Canon Penny offered the opening prayer.

Appointment of Vestry Clerk

Canon Penny appointed Clair Macauley-Newcombe to serve as Vestry Clerk and to record the minutes of the proceedings.

Approve minutes of the February 25, 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting

Moved by Mike Ravenscroft, seconded by Stephen Gartshore, *THAT the minutes of the 72nd Annual Congregational Meeting held February 25, 2024 be approved as circulated.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Canon Penny explained the next motion

- we are not voting to *approve* the reports
- we're simply saying we agree that these are the documents we'll use when we make decisions for our congregation through the rest of this meeting.
- Motions that follow will ask you to approve particular parts of the reports you hold in your hands.

Receive all reports

Moved by Carolyn Henderson, seconded by Amy Collard, *THAT the reports and financial statements printed and distributed be received.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Expressions of Gratitude

- Canon Penny thanked everyone whose ministry is reflected in the reports received by the ACM for their heart, their faithfulness, and their love for St. Christopher's.
- She thanked Carol Henley, Ken Beeby, and Joy Thomson for their work in publishing and distributing the reports.
- She thanked the finance team — Amy Collard, Debra Bishop-Peroune, Laurie Boyes, Deidre Conway, Tom Nichol, and Joy Thomson.

- She thanked the hospitality team, and the many people who made sandwiches and other delightful nourishment to sustain members during the meeting.

Finances

- Canon Penny presented the financial reports:
- She expressed gratitude to the 20-or-so people who attended the finance preview over Zoom on the afternoon of February 16, and to Debra, Amy and Joy, who spent a lot of time working directly with the team from Glenn, Graydon Wright, who produced our audit.

Auditor's Report

- Canon Penny noted a correction in the Auditor's report:
- Referring to the page numbers at the bottom of each page of your report, we're looking at Page 11, item v, that describes our new Mission and Maintenance investment fund. Most of you will see a hand-written correction in your copy so the sentence reads, "at the discretion of the Corporation, income from the fund may be used for operating expenses." That's it. Otherwise, the auditor's report shows that the financial side of our operation complies with generally accepted standards.

2024 Actuals

Overview

- Before turning to the details of St. Christopher's financial performance in 2024, Canon Penny took a small step back and considered the big picture.
- There are a lot of generous people at St. Christopher's. There are a lot of people who prioritize giving to their church because they value the ways we care for our members, they value the programs and services we offer, and they want us to connect ever more deeply with God's work in the world. Your gifts show you are committed to our mission. Thank you.
- Now to the details: We finished 2024 with a higher than expected operating deficit.
- You can see on page 17 that, this time last year, we had planned a balanced budget, but that we finished with a deficit of -\$81,491.
- There are two main reasons we fell short of our plan:
 - some of the revenue we expected to receive in 2024 from the 2023 stewardship campaign did not come in, and,
 - the effects of inflation we all saw in our household bills for goods and services raised the cost for things the church needed more than we could have anticipated.
 - As examples, the amount we paid for coffee, office supplies, and hydro were over budget because of inflation.
- You heard in my charge that a group of generous donors got together to pay down last year's operating deficit. In my charge I thanked this group of donors for the generous way they expressed their love for God, and for St. Christopher's.
- Because of their generosity, we are not beginning 2025 way behind the start line.

Income

- Let's look at the details for last year's income. Regular donations matched the plan approved at last year's Annual Meeting; as I said, we did not receive some of the donations to the 2023 stewardship campaign we had hoped to receive in 2024.
- Income from outside users was higher last year than we planned — I'll say more about this when I present the 2025 proposed budget.
- All the special events we run through the year represent a great deal of energy and commitment from a large number of volunteers. I want to say thank you to everyone who worked on events like the Christmas Market, the Mothers' Day Tea, Rummage Sales, and Fun in the Sun. Thank you because you are a critical part of the public face of our congregation.
- At the bottom of page 16 you can see a summary of income and expenses for all special events in 2024.
- There's one line to note in this series — St. Christopher's applied for and received 2 grants totalling \$19,400 to upgrade the security of our building. We used this grant money to add a building-wide security system in

our hallways and on our outside entrances, and to add closed-circuit video monitoring. Thank you to Joy Thomson for successfully applying for those grants!

- You can see on the bottom line a total income of \$796,488 in 2024.

Expenses

- On the expense side, looking near the top of p 17, middle column, there were a couple of places where actual expenses for worship/program exceeded our plan. Inflation played a role in the cost of flowers and sanctuary supplies. I'm happy to say our Sunday and Thursday attendance increased last year, which also partially accounts for the increased cost of bread and wine.
- The numbers reported on the income side for special events were all gross amounts. In the next section of our spread sheet you see the expenses related to each of these special events. You have to spend money to make money.
- About the diocesan assessment: The number is more than we had planned in 2024 — we had to finalize our proposed budget before we received the bill for our assessment.
- The number is higher than 2023, because of the success of our stewardship campaign. When our income increases, our diocesan assessment increases.
- In my overview of our financial performance, I identified a few numbers in the administration and maintenance expense section that were affected by inflation.
- I think you can see, generally, that we did a careful job of controlling expenses in this area.
- We have already looked at the bottom line of income versus expense, where we see an operating deficit of - \$81,491.

2024 Capital Expenditures

- Page 20 shows details of the plan approved at last year's Annual Congregational Meeting and how the Corporation actually spent money from the capital fund.
- The story of our plan versus the capital repairs and upgrades we actually performed is typical: We carried out a couple of the projects we expected to complete — e.g. replacing carpets in the office, and replacing a furnace.
- But we also needed to perform repairs we couldn't have planned for, like a lightning strike. The wardens assured me that this was not because of my preaching!
- On page 20 we also show capital work carried out through 2 grants we received in 2024.

2024 Investment Activity

- I think the report on page 22 is self-explanatory. I mainly want to note that, in response to a request at last year's Annual Meeting, we are publishing a statement of activity in our investment accounts in 2024.
- You can see balances for each account on January 1 and on December 31, and a statement of deposits made by the Corporation and withdrawals authorized by members at last year's Annual Meeting.
- 2024 was generally a good year on the markets — at the bottom of page 22 you'll see that our account recorded a rolling average increase for the year of 15.673%.
- This is the right moment for a small excursus about the new investment opened by the Corporation late last year. Contributions to the new Mission and Maintenance Fund will be protected, and income may be used by the Corporation for operating expenses.
- I think it's fitting that the first gift to the Mission and Maintenance Fund was made by Betty Coombs in memory of the Rev. Stephen Coombs.
- It will take some time for the fund to grow. The Corporation will look for opportunities to invest special gifts and bequests in this fund. In time, I think there's a lot of potential for the Mission and Maintenance Fund to help us pay for life-giving ministry at St. Christopher's.

Open Doors 2024 Actuals

- You heard in my charge that, with careful oversight from the Open Doors Executive committee, Open Doors made a big move to financial stability in 2024.
- This move is thanks to hard work from Debra Bishop-Peroune, Fred Grigsby, Tom Nicol and Christyn Perkons, and thanks to the dedication of our Open Doors staff, Gloria Campbell, Jasmin Elliott, and Shannon Shuell, who work with an impressive team of volunteers.

- The Executive Committee's next goal is to move Open Doors into a position of financial sustainability. I will say more about this move to sustainability when I talk about the proposed 2025 Open Doors budget in just a few minutes.

Actuals

- For now, I want to look with you at the middle column on the bottom of page 19.
- You'll see that Open Doors finished the year with a small surplus. Of course, it's good news to finish in the black. But also, it's required for all of the grants we apply for.
- Note this reported surplus does not include \$113,000 in deferred revenue that Open Doors has in the bank, and will be able to use in 2025. Income from CNoY 2024 is included in this deferred revenue figure.
- How did we get to this positive position? Look over at the middle column on page 18.
- You'll see income from a series of fundraisers and special events totalling just over \$41,000.
- This represents a lot of hard work from many people, and a result that was \$11,000 more in income from fundraising and special events than budgeted.
- The next section of income numbers record donations to Open Doors. I am moved by the generosity of our community. It's a sign that the work we are doing through our outreach ministries is resonating both in our congregation, and beyond.
- The bottom line shows that our outreach ministries finished the year with \$16,500 more income than we had planned.

Expenses

- On the expense side (now we're back on page 19, middle column) I think you can see that expenses were well controlled.
- A couple things to note — Open Doors paid for a gardener (line 6215) in 2024, and Open Doors began paying for the consultant (line 6218) who is assisting with our goal of moving Open Doors to financial sustainability.
- You can see that both of these opportunities came up after the budget was finalized at last year's Annual Meeting and, together, they account for why our expenses for the year exceeded our plan.
- As I noted, we ended the year in a balanced position.

Approve 2024 financial statements

Moved by Amy Collard, seconded by Jim Wright, *THAT the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2024 be approved.*

The motion was

CARRIED

St. Christopher's 2025 Proposed Operating Budget

Income

- Page 16, left-most column of numbers...
- We have taken a conservative approach on the income side. The stewardship committee has a plan to communicate with the congregation periodically through 2025, and the Corporation is reasonably confident the congregation will respond in the ways we have anticipated through envelopes and one-time donations.
- You'll see we spent all the income we received through the 2023 stewardship campaign. That was our plan. But it means we are heading into 2025 without the support of that income.
- We are looking to things like space usage and our investment funds for extra income in 2025, compared to 2024, to help.
- In my charge I noted one big difference this year compared to last year when it comes to space use — Open Doors finances have returned to a place of stability, so transfers from Open Doors to the church for overhead costs, like space use and our audit, will resume this year.
- Joy's hard work building relationships with **outside users** is paying off. You'll see that income from external groups in 2024 exceeded our plan by nearly \$10,000, and exceeded 2023 actuals by \$17,000. This is a strong foundation for our plan in 2025 to increase income from outside groups. Hats off to Joy Thomson.

- As for income from **investments**, we are increasing our draw from the Foundation for innovative ministry this year by \$10,000 because we see that more of my time and more of David's time will be spent working on planning and community organizing around liveable income. (Facing Economic Disparity)
- And we plan to draw as much as the markets allow from the Rectory Fund to help pay for housing allowances for the same two clerics.
- Overall, the Corporation expects income to be flat in 2025 compared to 2024 actuals. Our budget is based on a projection of \$795,200 in income in 2025.
- You can show your support for our shared mission right now. On the back of your agenda you'll find a PAG (Pre-Authorized Giving) form. This form will allow you to begin supporting your church through safe and convenient electronic transfers. If it has been awhile since you updated the amount you give to St. Christopher's through your PAG, and you are able to do so, you can make a change today.
- As I said in my charge, we are at an inflection point in the life of our congregation. It's our shared ministry, and it's our responsibility, together, to respond to God's call and to join God's work in the world.

Expenses

- Staff salaries and benefits are our largest single expense each year. The increase for salaries in 2025 compared to 2024 comes from the recommended 4.3% increase approved by Synod Council for 2025.
- If you'll permit me one more excursus, you may find this comparison helpful:
- I looked back in our files and found that, in 2010, the budget for salaries was \$415,397. Not that different from our budget for salaries in 2025 — \$432,700.
- Granted, staffing levels now are slightly lower compared to what they were in 2010, but still comparable. Here are those numbers one more time: 2010 — \$415,000; 2025 \$432,000.
- Why Penny? Why this walk down memory lane?
- Because it's totally natural to scan down a column of numbers, stop at the biggest one, and see a problem.
- I think this comparison with St. Christopher's in 2010 shows that, when it comes to staff salaries and benefits, present day St. Christopher's is doing more with less.
- Just because I can, let me give you one more number.
- When you factor in inflation, in today's dollars, that 2010 salary cost would be \$569,889.
- This is a budget that, on every line, is planning to do more with less.
- In the lines just below personnel expense, you'll note we are not transferring funds from the Foundation to Open Doors this year. At the risk of repeating things you heard in my charge, thanks to the work of the Open Doors Executive committee, the Open Doors operation has returned to stability. We are now working on our goal of long-term sustainability for Open Doors.
- Expenses for worship and programs are generally in line with our actual 2024 expenses.
- The second largest single expense is our diocesan assessment. You'll see the assessment increased in 2025 by \$18,000. Again, this increase is because of our success. Our income increased because of our 2023 stewardship campaign, and our assessment increases accordingly.
- Our plan lowers the cost of administration and maintenance by about \$8,500 compared to last year's actuals. We do this by:
 - sending mail to people who can't attend church every two weeks instead of every week.
 - ending our Bell contracts and changing over to a voip phone system
 - printing 75% fewer colour copies, and,
- I think the Wardens and Treasurer will confirm this — we can't cut any more from our expenses and still maintain the level of programs and services you expect from your church.
- This is a 'do more with less' budget.

Open Doors Proposed 2025 Budget

- Let's look at the proposed 2025 budget for Open Doors — the left-most column of numbers on page 18.

Income

- You'll see a big jump in our projected income in the first two sections of our budget. Together our plan for income from fundraising and special events in 2025 will exceed last year's actuals by about \$100,000. Here's where the leadership of our consultant, Kimberly Calderbank, comes in. As she plans and runs events, Kimberly is coaching our staff to build their leadership skills, while expanding our network of volunteers, partners and donors.

- Here's one example of a new program that will help move our outreach ministries from financial stability to financial sustainability:
- Through Open Doors Open Kitchen, we are bringing in teams from local businesses that are looking for team building and difference-making experiences for their employee teams.
- Businesses are paying for the opportunity to have their people prepare and serve meals on Tuesday evenings.
- Our lead volunteers support the groups through their time with us on a Tuesday.
- We are also using the Open Kitchen sessions to invite the teams to become Open Doors supporters going forward — telling the Open Doors story in the community and hopefully returning for special events through the year.
- Increased income through fundraisers and special events accounts for the projected increase in 2025 income compared to 2024 actuals you see at the bottom of page 18.

Expenses

- In terms of expenses, on page 19, you'll see that expenses are higher in a couple of areas.
- Open Doors will pay \$15,000 to St. Christopher's for overhead costs in 2025, an expense our outreach ministries could not pay last year — it is a sign of financial health.
- Also, note that Open Doors paid \$1,200 to St. Christopher's to offset the cost of coffee/tea/sugar at community meals in 2024, and will continue to pay this going forward.
- And Open Doors paid \$1,000 towards our audit in 2024, and will pay \$1,500 towards the audit this year and going forward.
- Also, we are paying for a full year of our consultant's time, which is new this year compared to last year.
- The leadership team will monitor the Open Doors operation closely to ensure expenses remain in line with income.
- And you can see that we are projecting a surplus of \$348 for 2025.

Approve 2025 Operating Budgets

Moved by Amy Collard, seconded by Rodney Lott, *THAT the 2025 Operating Budgets be approved as presented.*

The motion was

CARRIED

I spoke in my charge about our thinking around the setting of the Foundation draw at \$30,000 this year:

Authorize Withdrawal from Foundation Funds for Ministry Expenditures

Moved by Paul Shelton, seconded by Debra Bishop-Peroune, *THAT the Corporation is authorized to spend up to a total of \$30,000.00 in income and principal from the St. Christopher's Foundation to support St. Christopher's operations for the current year and through 21 February 2026.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Authorize Withdrawal from Rectory Fund

Moved by Shannon Mac, seconded by Gill Jones, *THAT the Corporation is authorized to spend up to a total of \$50,000.00 in income, if funds are available, from St. Christopher's Rectory Fund for the current year and through 21 February 2026 to partially offset housing allowances paid to ordained clergy.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Authorize Withdrawal from Capital Fund

Moved by Mike Ravenscroft, seconded by Joanne Vassell-Pittman, *THAT the Corporation is authorized to spend up to a total of \$45,000.00 in income and principal for capital expenditures for the current year*

and through 21 February 2026, as outlined in the Proposed Capital Expenditures table on page 21 of the Finance Report.

The motion was

CARRIED

Appointment of Auditor

Moved by Paul Shelton, seconded by Amy Collard, *THAT Henderson Roller Partnership be appointed auditor for 2025.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Organization

Ratify actions of Corporation in 2024

Moved by Carolyn Henderson, seconded by Erick Nettel, *THAT those joint and several acts carried out in the name of and on behalf of St. Christopher's Anglican Church, Burlington, by its Wardens and Rector during the year 2024, are hereby confirmed and ratified.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Authorize Site Use Agreements

Moved by Shannon MacKenzie, seconded by Mike Ravenscroft, *THAT the Incumbent and Churchwardens be authorized to consider and, if they deem it advisable, to approve leases, licenses, or space agreements of less than three years inclusive of all renewals*

AND THAT this authorization shall extend only to agreements that include the following provisions:

- *The agreement may be terminated by St. Christopher's Church upon sixty days' notice*
- *The lessee or licensee shall provide proof of liability insurance*
- *The lessee or licensee agrees to hold harmless St. Christopher's Church, the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, the Bishop or Niagara, and the Anglican Church of Canada*
- *The lessee or licensee agrees to abide by the Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment policy of the Diocese of Niagara*
- *The lessee or licensee agrees to sign an affirmation that acknowledges the right of people to be free from discrimination on the grounds articulated in the Ontario Human Rights Code and agrees that its activities will uphold the dignity of every human being.*
- *The lessee or licensee agrees to sign a statement that they will not provide or sell single-use plastic bottled beverages at any events hosted at St. Christopher's Anglican Church*

AND THAT if there is any conflict between this resolution and any authorization or approval resulting from it, and the Canons of the Diocese of Niagara, it is understood that the Canons shall prevail.

The motion was

CARRIED

Elections

On page 35 you can see our proposed list of parish officers for 2025. The terms of some of these officers continue through until the next Annual Meeting. Some of these officers are appointed by me, so we are going to look at the screen to see only the people who have been nominated for election at today's meeting.

Election of Parish Officers

Moved by Carolyn Henderson, seconded by John Reszityk, *THAT the following people be elected to the positions indicated:*

<i>People's Warden</i>	<i>Shannon MacKenzie</i>
<i>Deputy People's Warden</i>	<i>Lisa Roussac-Kruitwagen</i>
<i>Lay Representative to Synod</i>	<i>Giova Gallagher</i>

<i>Alternate Lay Representative to Synod</i>	<i>Jillian Stewart</i>
<i>Youth Representative to Synod</i>	
<i>Alternate Youth Representative to Synod</i>	
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Robin Elhert</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Clair Macauley-Newcombe</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Judi McNairn</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Emmy Carlos Rayman</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Winston Tinglin</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	<i>Stephen Gartshore</i>
<i>Parish Council Member</i>	

The motion was

CARRIED

- Congratulations to our newly elected officers.
- Canon Penny noted that, as a result of this election Shannon MacKenzie replaces Paul Shelton as People's Warden. And Lisa Roussac-Kruitwagen replaces Mike Ravenscroft as Deputy People's Warden. Congratulations Lisa and Shannon!
- Canon Penny expressed her personal gratitude to Carolyn Henderson for her leadership and her dedication as a Warden over the previous 4 years.
- There are two other handovers that require words from Canon Penny:
- Now, exercising my authority as your Rector, I appoint Paul Shelton to be Rector's Warden.
- Welcome, Paul, to your role as Senior Warden!
- Now, exercising my authority as your Rector, I appoint Mike Ravenscroft to be Deputy Rector's Warden.
- Welcome Mike!

Other Business

Canon Penny received no notices of motion prior to the advertised deadline.

Expressions of Gratitude, Part 2

- Canon Penny thanked Shannon Mac and members of the content team for the work they are doing on our social media accounts.
- She thanked members of the Altar Guild, and Diane Peters for her leadership, in a behind the scenes ministry that makes a big impact in our worship.
- She thanked Pastoral Care volunteers — visitors, people who lead worship in retirement homes and long-term care facilities, and people who visit over the telephone — whose ministry is vital, and so important for people in hospital, and people who for all kinds of reasons find it hard to get to church.
- She thanked musicians, and people who move to music, and dramatists.
- She thanked office volunteers.
- She thanked all the people who help offer programs and events for the youngest members of our congregation. GIFT and youth group volunteers get to have a lot of fun while they help to create an atmosphere of safety and wonder for children and youth.

- She thanked Mike Peroune and Chris Jones who have kept a close eye on our property — inside and out — through the year. They were joined by Stan Pearce and a number of helpers for outdoor projects. Thank you! I hope you all noticed that our gardens looked really good last summer! Thank you to the St. Christopher's gardeners — Sandi Smith, Lynda Clark, Karen Joyce, Dave Little, Ewa Jacobs, Bill Brown, and David Evans!
- Your Wardens are impressive people. Canon Penny singled out Carolyn earlier. But she is truly grateful to Paul, Shannon and Mike for their generosity with their time, their humour, and their commitment to St. Christopher's.
- You know that St. Christopher's staff are there to support the work of shining volunteers in so many aspects of our shared ministry. Canon Penny is proud of the generous way members of the St. Christopher's and Open Doors staff team express their commitment to St. Christopher's people and to our shared mission. Thank you.

Adjournment

Moved by Lisa Roussac-Kruitwagen, seconded by Laurie Boyes, *THAT this meeting be adjourned.*

The motion was

CARRIED

Blessing — Rev. David Montgomery declared a blessing.

Dismissal — Canon Penny dismissed the congregation.

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We are a dynamic, inclusive, diverse community
rooted in the life-giving, life-affirming, life-changing love of God
reaching beyond ourselves
caring for creation
making a difference with others.

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