RECTOR’S MESSAGE
The Rev. Sunil Chandy

Home: 1. One’s place of residence, 2. Habitat, 3. place of origin, 4. a social unit formed by a family living together - Webster’s dictionary

I love the concept of home; I think most of us do. Webster’s short and clinical definition of home can be expanded to be a place of security, nurture, comfort, acceptance, and love. If a person has been fortunate enough to experience such a situation, then that person has been truly blessed! Such an experience of “home” can be life-altering and transformative. I know many people hope to create such a place for their own families.

The Bible has many references to home. However, in general, home can be understood as a place where God resides to protect and nurture God’s people. This definition is one that my parents carried
RECTOR'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

with them as they emigrated from Kerala, India over 60 years ago. 
Barely out of their teens, my parents found each other in their mid-twenties and married through a “modern Indian version” of an arranged marriage. Continuing to search for opportunities for their growing family, they emigrated from Bhopal India (where I was born) to Bahrain in the Middle East (where my brother was born) to Tanzania, East Africa (where my sister was born) and finally to the United States (arriving on January 1st 1972 JFK airport in New York City).
Years later in 2013, thanks to a Lilly Foundation Grant, I retraced their journey to the US. This trip was after my father died. In preparation for the trip, I asked my mother many questions about their journey. How did my parents find the courage to move from one unfamiliar place to another? Weren’t they afraid of being alone, being strangers in a land foreign with such a young family? My mother replied that the choice of staying in India was not an option considering the poverty and lack of opportunities for the young, ambitious couple.
Moreover, she said, “We had faith that God would always be with us and provide for us at all times.” I was doubtful at first, but as she recounted the many stories of miracles in the midst of extremely challenging situations, I had to admit I was grateful that God had sustained them. God was, in essence, their “safety net,” their constant companion and friend.
For Christ-followers, faith reminds us that if our home is rooted in God’s presence, then even the most insecure situations can lead us to quiet confidence to overcome challenges.”

"For Christ-followers, faith reminds us that if our home is rooted in God’s presence, then even the most insecure situations can lead us to quiet confidence to overcome challenges."
most insecure situations can lead us to quiet confidence to overcome challenges. Even beyond just surviving, trust in God coupled with thoughtful action can lead us to a thriving and joyful life!

The idea of God being in the midst of our home is not new. In the first century when the Romans destroyed the Great Temple in Jerusalem, the people of God held worship services in homes. Communities of faithful people invariably saw their homes as sacred, holy places. They would even consecrate or bless the home.

At Christ Church, in the season of Epiphany, we will bless homes using a form of this ancient liturgy. If you are interested in having your house, apartment or dwelling place blessed, fill out the simple paperwork in the church office, and someone from our Welcoming Committee will contact you to schedule a time for another priest or me to use this ancient and beautiful liturgy to invoke the presence of God in your home.

Friends, as we stand at the cusp of a New Year, I am sure that many of you wonder about the challenges that this New Year will bring. Will these challenges test our courage, fortitude, and our faith? Will we be able to succeed through these challenges? This New Year may allow our faith in “home,” realized with the presence of God, to see the nurture, security, comfort, love, and acceptance that God offers us in the midst of our challenges.

Sincerely,
The Reverend Sunil Chandy+
Rector
Christ Church Westerly
December was a busy month for the Altar Guild. It is always wonderful for us to gather together and decorate our beautiful church for Christmas and to place the Nativity on the front lawn for all to enjoy. We also are fortunate each year to meet for our annual Christmas Party at Stoneridge hosted by longtime Altar Guild Member, Peggy Greene. **THANK YOU PEGGY!**

The Altar Guild Directresses were honored to light the Advent Candle on the First Sunday of Advent. We also worked with the Pastoral Care Commission and once again directed the delivery of Christmas flowers to our sick and shut-ins. Thanks to Wendy Hyde for her assistance. Those who deliver flowers say that it is a heartwarming experience.

The Altar Guild works closely with the Acolyte Guild. During the Church’s celebration for Everett Perrin and Seth Tulman, the Altar Guild presented Seth, our Honorary Member, with a framed and quilled Episcopal insignia for his many years of dedication to Christ Church and to the Altar Guild. We are happy that

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**Enrolling New Members for 2019!**

**11am service members needed especially!**

Please contact Fr. Sunil, Cheryl Leong or Natalie Pukas if you are interested. Or call the office at (401) 596-0197.
Seth will continue his work with the Altar Guild and has not retired completely.

Cheryl and Natalie held a training meeting with Caswell and the acolytes early in December. It was our pleasure to instruct all of them in our procedures. We will be scheduling more training sessions soon and look forward to working hand in hand with this revitalized Guild.

The color of the hangings will change back to green after the First Sunday after Epiphany. They will remain that color until Lent begins on March 6th.

The Altar Guild plans to hold another rose sale for Mothering Sunday (March 31st) during the month of March. The past two years’ sales have been very successful. More details will be forthcoming in next month’s Cornerstone and in the church bulletin.

We are hoping to increase our membership in this new year. We are especially looking for more help after the 11 AM service. Perhaps you attend that service and will think about joining our group? Please speak to Fr. Sunil, Cheryl Leong or Natalie Pukas if you are interested. You may call the office (596-0197) and your call will be directed to one of us.
Bravo to our Sunday School children who performed in the annual Christmas Pageant. A big thank you to Ms. Allison, Ms. Dana, and Ms. Raven for their leadership!
Dear Friends,

The January blahs are common as the early darkness of mid-winter afternoons takes its toll. Some of us will experience a post-holiday let down. But fear not, the calendar brings good news. January 6 is the celebration of the Magi’s visit to the new born Savior, beginning the season of Epiphany, the season of light! If you look carefully, you will notice that each day, the sunlight lingers a little longer. The light is overcoming the darkness.

An epiphany is a sudden manifestation of the essential nature of something, an intuitive grasp of reality through a simple or striking event, an illuminating discovery, a revelation of truth.

Throughout the season of Epiphany we will hear Gospel stories of Jesus’ baptism, his first miracle at Cana, his calling of the first disciples, and his mountaintop “transfiguration” where the glory of “the word made flesh” is revealed in dazzling light. These chapters tell us much about the divinity of Jesus, and how God works in the world.

God uses moments of illumination to bring people to know and love him, for without God’s intervention none of us would see the truth. St. Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God...”

We don’t find God because of our (continued on next page)
upbringing, our intelligence or education. We find him because he chooses to enlighten us, to reveal himself to us. We have these moments of divine revelation so that we may move beyond knowledge of God, to understanding, in the fullness of his light, through the power of his love.

Faithfully,

Anne

"God uses moments of illumination to bring people to know and love him, for without God’s intervention none of us would see the truth."
CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Our wonderful Acolytes, readers, choir and Clergy all helped to make the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services especially beautiful and special!
A huge THANK YOU to all of our wonderful Christmas Bazaar volunteers especially our AMAZING chairs Wendy Hyde and Lisa Kitchen.

The Bazaar raised over $10,000 for the church!

Attic Treasures - Jane Abrams
Baked Goods - Janet Kitchen
Books - Richard and Dana Semeraro
Children's Room - Emily Knowles
Crafts - Tammi Dunlap
Jewelry - Jeanne Wilks
Knitted & Crocheted - Andrea Scott-Ram

Meatballs - Men's Club
Prepared Foods - Christine Terry
Tag Sale - Susan & Gary Hayes
Luncheon - The Choir
Fair Trade Items - Peace & Justice Committee
Poinsettas - Shirley Andrews
The Men's Club assisted the Christmas Bazaar by making dozens and dozens of delicious meatballs. Mangia!
CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
# JANUARY 2019

For more detail please navigate to: [https://www.christchurchwesterly.org/eventscalendar/](https://www.christchurchwesterly.org/eventscalendar/)

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CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Christmas cheer was delivered to a local nursing home and a few parishioners by some of the Sunday School students, teachers, and clergy. Classics such as Deck the Halls, Frosty the Snowman, and Joy to the World were sung with cheer and joy and put everyone in the Christmas Spirit!
USHERS NEEDED
All you need is the ability to smile and say hello! We need people who would like to serve at the service they regularly attend as well as those who are flexible and can substitute for others. Please contact Jane Pawelkiewicz Home (401)322-7661, Cell (860)933-4406 (text or call!)

HOUSE BLESSINGS
Fr. Sunil will make home visits to bless houses this January. Please fill out a form in the Parish Hall lobby or online: www.christchurchwesterly.org/houseblessing

PRAYER LIST
Please help us keep our prayer list current! Please take a look and send any updates to the secretary.christchurch@verizon.net. Please also contact us if you are ready to be placed on the Thanksgiving List of Healing. Thank you, The Pastoral Care Commission.

PASTORAL CARE REMINDER
We ask if you will kindly remember to call the church office when you or your family member are in the hospital or placed in a nursing home. It allows the clergy and us to visit, bring communion, or send flowers, etc. Due to restrictions of confidentiality, your call is the only way we will know when loved ones - family members and friends are hospitalized or placed in nursing homes.

2nd Annual Reading for MLK DAY
2nd Annual Reading of Dr. King's Letter from Birmingham Jail, Thursday, January 17 at 5:30 pm at the Westerly Library. Hosted by the Westerly Area Peace & Justice Group of Christ Church. If you'd like to read (5-minute portions) or contribute refreshments, please contact Pam McDonald (860)-796-4543

EPIPHANY TRIVIA
Answers on next page
1. A simple one--when do we observe Epiphany?
2. How did it come about?
3. We often see the magi (aka "wise men" or "three kings") as part of Nativity scenes, but when did they really arrive to present their gifts to the Christ child?
Calling All Committee Chairs!

Annual reports for Christ Church committees will be collected in the office by Tuesday, January 7, 2019 to be published in our Annual Report and distributed to the parish by Monday, January 21, 2019. Please provide a proof-read and publish ready digital copy of your report in Times New Roman, 12pt by e-mail to Christ-church@verizon.net.

There is no mandatory structure for annual reports, but if you would like to view suggested guidelines, you will be able to find them on the table in the Parish Hall entry way.

TRIVIA ANSWERS (from previous page)

1. Epiphany is observed on Jan 6, the day after Twelfth Night.

2. There is much written about the origins of holiday traditions, but the simple answer is that since the number 12 was very significant to the faithful (remember there were 12 tribes of Israel, 12 disciples chosen by Jesus), over the course of time, observing 12 days of Christmas, leading up to the celebration of Epiphany came into fashion, and eventually we started having 12th Night (and 3 Kings) celebrations, singing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and so forth....with the theme of Epiphany being the Light of Christ being made manifest in the world, and this would take us up to the next season, Lent.

3. According to the account in Matt chapter 2, after the magi went to Herod, and he told them to report back after they had found the child, he ordered all the children in the land under two years old to be killed, in hopes of getting rid of Jesus, an obvious threat to his power. This meant that Jesus could have been up to age two, and certainly not still a newborn, in a manger in Bethlehem, so the magi arrived much later, as much as two years after the shepherds came to see on the night he was born.
Fall/Winter Services

Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Rite I Holy Eucharist spoken service

Sunday 9:00 a.m.
Rite II Choral Eucharist

Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Contemporary Eucharist with Incense

Wednesday 7:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

Wednesday 10 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

Wednesday 10:45 a.m.
Bible Study

Christ Episcopal Church

CLERGY
The Rev. Sunil Chandy, Christ Church Rector
The Rt. Rev. David Joslin, Rector Emeritus; Bishop in Residence
The Rev. Sandra Haines-Murdocco, Priest Associate
The Rev. Deacon Anne Burke, Deacon

STAFF
Jacquelyn Smith, Interim Parish Administrator; Wedding Coordinator
Barbara Whitford, Financial Administrator
George Kent, Organist & Choirmaster
Kristy Livingston, Director of Christian Formation
Phillip Kurk, Sexton
Sarah Poole, Erin Breslin and Anthony Berling, Childcare Coordinators

VESTRY
Betsey Rice, Senior Warden
Caswell Cooke, Jr., Junior Warden
Robin Millis, Clerk
Stephanie Blanchette, Treasurer

Fred Allardyce
Connie Annand
Deborah Dunham
Mike Evering
Katherine Hoxsie
Lisa Kitchen

Paul Kuhn
Doug Lawrence
Emily Mugge
Walter Pawelkiewicz
Natalie Pukas
Meg Roy

COME JOIN US!

7 Elm Street | Westerly, RI 02891
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christ-church@verizon.net
CALL TO THE 185TH ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

The 185th Annual Meeting of Christ Episcopal Church in Westerly, Rhode Island will be held on Sunday, January 27, 2019 at 10:15 or immediately following the 9am Service. All members of the congregation are invited to attend. A copy of the Annual Report will be sent via email one week in advance. A full hard copy will be available in advance only upon request.

PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO 11 AM SERVICE ON JANUARY 27TH
Be a Christ Church Acolyte!
Join us today – we want YOU!

Be a part of this great Episcopal Church tradition and learn all about why and how we worship.

Open to all ages 8 and up. Being an Acolyte makes worship even more fun and meaningful and gives a sense of pride and accomplishment.

An acolyte can assist in worship by carrying a processional cross, lighting candles, holding the Gospel book, carrying “torches”, assisting a deacon or priest set up and clean up the altar, swinging a censer or thurible or carrying the incense boat, handing the offering plates to ushers, and many other tasks.

Christ Episcopal Church
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ChristChurchWesterly.org

Rector: The Rev. Sunil Chandy
Bishop in Residence: The Rt. Rev. David B. Joslin
Deacon: The Rev. Ann Burke
Clergy Associate: The Rev. Sandra Haines-Murdock

For more information, contact Caswell Cooke at 401-932-3519 or caswellcookejr@gmail.com