

**ST. CHRISTOPHER BY THE SEA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING AND VOTE - MARCH 22, 2026, AT 11:00 AM**

Dear St. Christopher By the Sea Parishioners,

I am sending this letter on behalf of the St. Christopher By the Sea Board of Trustees (BOT). As you all know, St. Christopher has been an integral part of the Gibson Island community for over a century. It is a place where people gather each week to learn and pray; where generations of families have celebrated baptisms, weddings, and lives well lived; and where many of those we have loved are laid to rest in the Memorial Garden. It is also a place for cherished traditions, from Ladies Teas to Holiday Hayrides and Caroling, Ice Cream Socials, and Maundy Thursday dinners, where all are welcome. Through its Outreach Program, St. Christopher has served many people in the surrounding area, supporting both individuals and families in times of need. In short, St. Christopher's front doors are open to all as a place of worship, love, and support.

As stewards of our beloved church, the BOT takes its responsibility seriously to ensure that St. Christopher continues to serve the Gibson Island community and surrounding communities for the next century. In 2019, the church launched a capital campaign to raise money for the Memorial and Endowment Fund (fund). The purpose of that campaign was to ensure the church would have enough money for anticipated, long-needed, expensive repairs to the church and the parish hall. The goal of the 2019 campaign was to raise \$350,000, to reach a targeted goal of \$1,000,000 in the fund. The campaign was a success. As a result of your contributions and market returns, the fund currently has a balance of \$1,977,597, as of February 23, 2026.

Endowment Protocol allows the BOT to use 5% of the value of the funds in any given year for anything that the Board deems important. In recent years, the BOT has not used available funds, instead choosing to keep the money invested. Should the BOT find it necessary to utilize more than 5% of the funds in any given year, then Operational Protocol requires the BOT to serve notice of a meeting of the congregation at which a vote will be taken. **Accordingly, this letter serves as such notice for a special meeting and vote to be held on March 22, 2026, at 11:00 am, immediately following Sunday's church service. It is our intent to have professionals available at the meeting to answer any questions you may have.**

The Board seeks your vote to utilize more than 5% of the funds to complete the necessary work on both buildings, as summarized below. To assist with collecting votes, we have engaged a proxy firm, SimplyVoting, to gather parishioner votes. You will receive an email very shortly from SimplyVoting with voting instructions. You may cast your ballot as soon as you receive the email. ONLINE voting opens with this notice and will close on March 21, 2026 at 12:00 pm. You may also vote in person at the meeting on March 22.

Summary of Exterior Work

Both the parish hall and church are in dire need of repairs. The roof and siding on both buildings are at the end of their useful life and need to be replaced. The windows on the church and the front doors on the parish hall and the church are rotting and in need of replacement.

Summary of Interior Work

The current electric needs to be upgraded from the original 150-amp service to a 300-amp service to meet current needs. The worn-out steel pipes need to be completely replaced with copper piping. The sacristy has no insulation and inadequate heat and air conditioning, so HVAC work is necessary to bring it to acceptable standards. This includes the removal of an oil tank and chimney. In 2017, the church raised \$196,000 to complete an interior renovation of the parish hall, so no further work is necessary at this time. The sacristy itself is very old and is also in need of a renovation, i.e., flooring to be refinished, cabinets replaced, the bathroom updated and expanded, increased file storage, etc. To complete the plumbing and HVAC work noted above, we must remove everything, including the floors, so now is the time to make the necessary modifications. It will save the church thousands of dollars in the long run by fully renovating the sacristy now, while it is torn apart.

Architects for this project were engaged in 2025 and oversaw the bidding (multiple bids were received). The BOT recently approved the recommendations presented by the architects in our January Board meeting. The project's cost is estimated at \$1,000,000. This figure includes a generous contingency fee to cover the cost of any unforeseen issues, such as potential rot beneath the siding.

The contractors are available to begin work this summer (2026). It will be a phased project, with the parish hall exterior work being completed first. Once that work is finished, work will begin on the exterior of the church, as well as the interior (if the permit for the interior is acquired in time). Our weekly Sunday services will likely need to be held outside or in the parish hall for a short period.

Again, the current balance in the fund is \$1,977,597. The BOT is requesting the use of the \$1,000,000 needed to fund this project, which will draw the fund below the \$1,000,000 minimum balance we are aspiring to maintain. The intent is to draw on the funds on an as-needed basis, so the money continues to accrue interest. Over the course of 2026, we are hoping to receive donations that will allow us to replenish some of the money being withdrawn from the fund. Having a healthy balance in the fund will ensure that St. Christopher's future needs are protected, as we ask for your support to complete these necessary repairs.

It is our hope that you all understand the importance and sense of urgency in completing the necessary work on these cherished buildings and vote in favor of the

BOT request. There is no need to wait to vote; you may vote as soon as you receive an email ballot from SimplyVoting, or you may cast your vote at the meeting on March 22.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I can be reached at 443.255.8535.

With gratitude,

Christine W. Cross, *President*
St. Christopher by the Sea
Board of Trustees

Carolyn Boehning, *Vice President*
Murray Leigh, *Treasurer*
Opie Owen, *Secretary*
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