

# SOUNDINGS

Saint  
Christopher's  
Episcopal  
Church



Winter 2019

## Alphabets



The Rev. Brian W.  
McGurk  
Rector

As a child—who was just beginning to learn how to read—I was incapable of understanding and enjoying the newspaper at breakfast, like the adult members of my family. Nevertheless, I did engage in many attempts at reading, all while eating and enjoying my *Wheaties*—“the breakfast of champions.” The cereal box was my periodical. Each morning I

struggled to read and comprehend the back of the box, which featured stories about famous athletes. When I grew tired of this, I flipped it around and studied the glorified images of athletes splashed on the front. By the time the cereal was gone, I got the gist of what was being said.

And then there was *Alpha-Bits*—a sugary cereal formed in the shape of letters. I would literally dump a few milk-soaked letters on the table and try to spell a word before they disintegrated into a milky mush. (After making a mess, I learned to do this before adding milk!)

My stomach and, more importantly, my mind, literally consumed letters, words and ideas!

As 2019 unfolds, there are many letters, words, and ideas floating in my head—among them acronyms of all sorts. Recently, I became a member of **FCEN**. In addition, I joined the **5 Cs** board. And at present, I am working with parishioners here at St. Christopher's to institute **E-HF**. An “alphabet cereal” of sorts!

So....what do all of these acronyms refer to?

**FCEN** stands for the **Faith Communities Environmental Network**. This is a network of Cape Cod communities of faith whose intention is “to reach out to groups representing the full range of spiritual traditions found on the Cape and Islands, giving all of us the opportunity to work together—each of us guided by our respective faith communities—to protect our

Earth home.”

The **5 Cs** is the **Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative**. This is a network of Cape and Islands organizations (representing the Cape's scientific, business, transportation, community planning, education, building and real estate sectors) as well as individuals concerned about the climate crisis. Its mission is to reduce climate change by linking available knowledge, talent and tools of member organizations.

**E-HF** is short for **Earth-Honoring Faith**. This is a new ministry here at St. Christopher's, and one I would like to invite all of you to participate in. Our mission is simple: To become better stewards of our God-given natural world. In the words of the Book of Common Prayer, to become better stewards of “... this fragile earth, our island home.”

On Thursday, February 28, at 3 p.m. we will convene an organizational meeting to initiate this important ministry. Please come and participate in this discussion, and help us chart our course.

Through education, advocacy, and green practices, we can all learn how to live reverently and in relationship with the natural world—the air, water, soil, plants, and animals. These are partners, and they are our equals in the **COMMUNITY OF LIFE**.

How we treat our world is a moral issue that philosophers, scientist and, above all, faith traditions must address. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grimm, coordinators of the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University eloquently state:

“Religions can no longer be dismissed as irrelevant in environmental discussions, nor can they be seen as ineffective. More than 90 percent of the world's people have an affiliation with a religious community, whether nominally or in practice.... Religions are the largest non governmental organizations in the world.... But it is not only for pragmatic or institutional reasons that

*continued on p. 2*

## Alphabets, continued

religions are important players in environmental issues. There is moral force and spiritual energy at the heart of those traditions, which can contribute to long-term solutions to our complex environmental problems.”

To use the words of writer and monk, Thomas Merton, we are all called to be “contemplatives in action.” Meaning: Our faith (our “spiritual energy” and “moral force”) must be expressed in compassionate social action that seeks justice for the sake of the most marginalized, as well as for the sake of God’s good earth.

Faith communities play a central role, and St. Christopher’s will be among them. A review of the world’s religions shows that religious traditions agree, to a greater or lesser extent, on the following points:

- The natural world has value in itself and does not exist solely to serve human needs.
- There is significant continuity of being, between human and non-human living beings, even though humans do have a distinctive role.
- Non-human living beings are morally significant, in the eyes of God and/or in the cosmic order.

- Moral norms such as justice, compassion and reciprocity apply both to human beings and to non-human beings. The well-being of humans and the well-being of non-human beings are inseparably connected.
- There are legitimate and illegitimate uses of nature.
- Greed and destructiveness are condemned. Restraint and protection are commended.
- The dependence of human life on the natural world should be acknowledged in ritual and other expressions of appreciation and gratitude. (Kusumta P. Pedersen, *Environmental Ethics in Interreligious Perspective*)

Most of the words I formed out of my breakfast cereal letters were elementary, but it was the beginning of my search for meaning, understanding, and purpose. Together let’s make some sense out of this environmental “alphabet”—FCEN, the 5 Cs, E-HF—for the life of the world, for the future of our planet, for the legacy we leave our children, and in gratitude for the God who created it. And for us too!

## Lenten Series with the Rector: The Prison Letters of St. Paul, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

St. Paul wrote four “epistles” or letters from a prison cell in Rome between the years 60–62 CE: *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and *Philemon*. Paul was imprisoned for spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Rome.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was imprisoned by Hitler in Tegel Prison in Germany for resisting the Nazis on the moral conviction of his Lutheran faith. Awaiting his execution, he penned a series of letters that later formed the book, *Letters and Papers From Prison*.

In his prophetic fight against racism in America, armed with the tools of non-violent resistance and the gospel of Jesus Christ, Martin Luther King addressed, from a prison cell, several clergymen who (wrongly) counseled him to slow down his demand for justice. The magisterial *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* was his response.

Through the lives and writings of these three Christian martyrs we will examine the Lenten themes of suffering, mortality, self-sacrificial love, liberation, transformation, and salvation. Classes will be held Thursdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4, and April 11 from 10 to 11:30 am. Please come to one or all!

## Goals for the coming year



**Debra Gebhardt**  
Director,  
Children, Youth,  
& Families

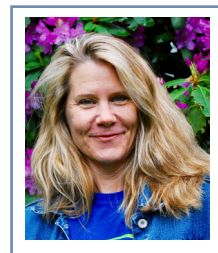
The coming of the new year invites us all to reflect and resolve. My reflections are filled with gratitude; I am blessed to feel so welcomed into the community here at St. Christopher's. These few short months have inspired and invigorated my love of teaching. Nothing is more fulfilling than spending time with children as they explore and understand their own relationship with God.

As I contemplate the new year, two specific goals come to mind. First, I resolve to make Sunday School a meaningful part of our children's lives. The time we spend together is so much fun, but it should also be contemplative and transformative. I hope to teach our children to find peace within themselves, and to then



turn that peace into something productive for their community, which brings me to my next aspiration. My second goal is to get our children out of the classroom and into the community. We live in such a special place, ripe with learning opportunities. I am looking for ways to give our children experiences that teach them love, generosity and kindness. But as they say, it takes a village. I invite you to join us in Sunday School fun, and I invite any ideas you may have to help us reach our goals. Thank you!

## 2018 Facilities Report



**Ali Crockett**  
Facilities Manager

### Jobs Completed in 2018:

- Tile in the hallway on the Parish Hall side.
- Automatic door openers installed at front and rear entrances.
- Trees in the front yard trimmed and maintained.
- Air conditioning for Sibley Chapel and Parish Hall.
- New coil in York heat/AC unit in the attic.
- Automatic starting generator installed.
- Gutter Guard installed outside the Youth Room.
- Gutters on the west side of the building.
- Concrete wall and new stairwell outside youth room door.
- Timbers, loam, and sand added at landing outside Youth Room door.
- Back up sump pump.
- Memorial Garden Celtic Cross completely restored.
- Heat wrap and timer added to pipes in the acolyte room to prevent freezing.
- Memorial Garden fence repaired and trees straightened up from storm damage.
- New plantings by Garden Guild and new urns.
- Garden Guild working hard to keep plants and

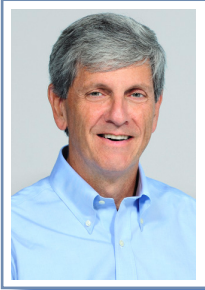
trees healthy and beautiful.

- Tower bell cleaned and stanchion determined to have extreme rust—Our crew replaced the rusted stanchion with wood.
- Replaced all lighting in the sanctuary with LED lighting (95 percent of the church lighting is now LED—some of the lights in office area would need wiring changed in order to fully be LED operational).
- Electric outlets for coffee and tea pots in Parish Hall changed out for safety and ease.
- Benches on Main Street have been secured and are now street level.
- One sanctuary truss was evaluated by Coastal Engineering and our Crew fastened it securely.
- Stairs near sanctuary sanded/stained/repainted.
- Installed LED Emergency lights by our crew.
- Closet installed in Committee Room by our crew.
- Benches cleaned and stained.
- Fire suppression pipes painted.

Many thanks to our Facilities Support Committee led by Rector McGurk, which includes Bob Braman, Vi Fellman, Peter Hughes, Courtney Keenan, Lee Kimball, Dick Kraycir, Laura Rhodes, and David Smith.



## Stewardship Campaign a Success!



**Joe Meeks**  
*Chair, Stewardship  
Committee*

We are happy to report that members of St. Christopher's have made the 2019 campaign a success with pledges thus far totaling \$555,000. Our heartfelt thanks to those who continue to show their support by pledging again this year, and to the many members who increased their pledge. We are encouraged that we received twenty-five

new pledging members at a time when many parishes have a decline in membership. The church is especially grateful for the commitment members have shown to securing our future.

Exceeding this year's goal of \$535,000 puts the church in a strong position. It enables the funding of reserve accounts that build a responsible cushion for unanticipated expenses and one-time expenses that aren't covered by nominal annual increases in the church budget. The importance of building reserves is another reason why we continue to ask those who have not yet pledged to consider doing so.

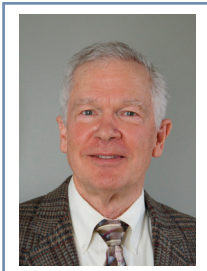
When Brian shared his thoughts on stewardship he highlighted that it is in giving that we receive. While we are thankful for exceeding our goal, we are



*The 2019 stewardship team: Ann Ward, John Sargent, Joe Meeks, Pieter Schiller, Ginger Plexico, and Bob Johnson (not pictured)*

mindful that unlike a PBS fundraising cycle that reverts to regular programming once complete, stewardship at St. Christopher's is a faith response and a faith commitment. Pledging is just one example. Others include participating in St. Christopher's youth and family programs, community programs, fellowship, liturgy and spiritual formation, and pastoral care. Thank you again for your support of St. Christopher's and the Stewardship Committee. With much gratitude: Bob Johnson, Ginger Plexico, John Sargent, Pieter Schiller, Ann Ward and Joe Meeks.

## A Parting Word



**Ted Miller**  
*Senior Warden*

As I prepare to leave my position on the Vestry, I want to take a moment to let you know how much I have enjoyed my time as your Senior Warden. The church is fortunate to have a great team assembled as your Vestry. We were a success in enriching our core strengths of Parish Life and Community Outreach. It was a team effort,

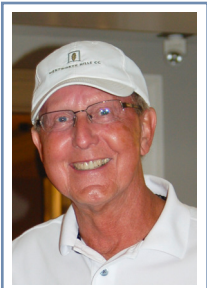
as I certainly could not have done any of this alone. This has been a wonderful group to work with, and my thanks and appreciation goes out to all of you.

All members of St. Christopher's have been

supportive throughout my three years. You have played an important part in my role as Senior Warden. It has been an honor and a pleasure working with so many of you. I will forever be grateful for your trust and support. I especially want to thank Rector McGurk, with whom I have established a wonderful relationship through our open and honest exchanges as we worked together this past year.

I will be working on the transition team with your new Senior Warden, Bob Lynyak, Junior Warden Mary Cavanaugh, and the Rector. With our continuing Vestry members, committees and volunteers, I am confident that 2019 will be another great year for St. Christopher's. Thank you!

# Golf Tournament Report



**Dale Alger**  
Chair, Golf  
Committee

Our eighth and most successful Golf Charity was held at Eastward Ho! this past September. This year's event, featuring a field of 88, attracted golfers from California, Virginia, Alabama, Michigan, Arizona, Tennessee, Texas, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, in addition to off-Cape Massachusetts. Once again beautiful skies and warm

temperatures made this a truly memorable day—thanks again, Rector McGurk, for the great weather!

A special thanks to this year's planning team—Joe Saliba, John Otis, Pat Davin, John Bendas, Ron Barnes, Randy Van Sickle, David Smith, Jim Bast, Pieter Schiller, and Marie Williams, along with all of our volunteers. A special shoutout to Bob Lynyak, (the incoming Senior Warden) the “creator” of this event and a sustaining member every year since its inception.

We had several silent auction items—another first—that were donated from: Fit to A Tee Golf Shop, The Candy Manor, and Nauset Marine. A special thank you to the Rhodes, Hufnagels, and Johnson families for their generous contribution of the Callaway Rogue golf driver.

An anonymous donor also came forth to sponsor a foursome of “first responders.” This foursome was comprised of local police and fire department personnel. We also received a very generous anonymous donation of “five more such foursomes” for the next five golf events.

We were gratified to have 125 tee sign sponsors compared to 88 in 2017, once again raising the bar with record amounts for our Mission and Ministries. We grossed \$44,895, of which three-fourths was donated by non-parishioners. We netted a contribution of \$23,895, which was a huge \$5,475 increase over the previous year.

We are blessed to be offering our ninth charity event this season on October 7, 2019, once again at Eastward Ho!, a top 65 U.S. private club, by courtesy of a sponsoring member/parishioner.



(Left to right): Chatham PD Officer Mike Murphy, Orleans FD Greg Baker, Orleans FD Aaron Burns, Chatham Deputy Police Mike Anderson



Bob Lynyak (center) and friends



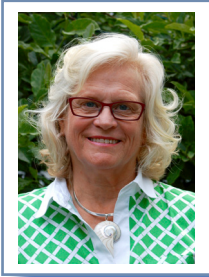
Dale Alger



Tee signs



## The Winter 2019 Exhibition



**Sandra Bowden**  
Curator, The Gallery  
at St. Christopher's

Hopefully, over the last four months the congregation and visitors have enjoyed learning about the story of our English Bible. The second half of this show, *Artists Celebrate the English Bible*, features artists' work in which Biblical text is an integral part of their creations.

Three 21st-century illuminated Bibles are included in this show. Barry Moser from Amherst, Mass., designed and illustrated *The Holy Bible*, the magnum opus of his career. In 2000 Tyndale House published *The New Living Bible*, with 360-word pictures that become a window into the whole Bible. St John's Abbey commissioned the renowned calligrapher, Donald Jackson, to produce a hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible, now known as the *Saint John's Bible*. Completed in 2011, it was the first time since the invention of the printing press that such a project had been attempted.

Probably the most famous artist in the show is William Blake, an English visionary who was deeply influenced by the Gothic and Middle Age. His Vision of Eliphaz from his book on Job unfolds as a commentary by using the margins to provide a visual and textural emphasis. Sins on Earth, by Howard Finster, one of America's most important outsider folk artists of the 20th century, has inscribed his own personal

## Celebrating Our English Bible (Part II)

(Part I appeared in the Autumn issue of Soundings)

paraphrase of the biblical text into his painting as a kind of visual sermon. Sue Coe, an acclaimed English/American artist, juxtaposed the passage from the Beatitudes, blessed be the peacemakers, with the Ten Commandments, challenging us to think through the implications.

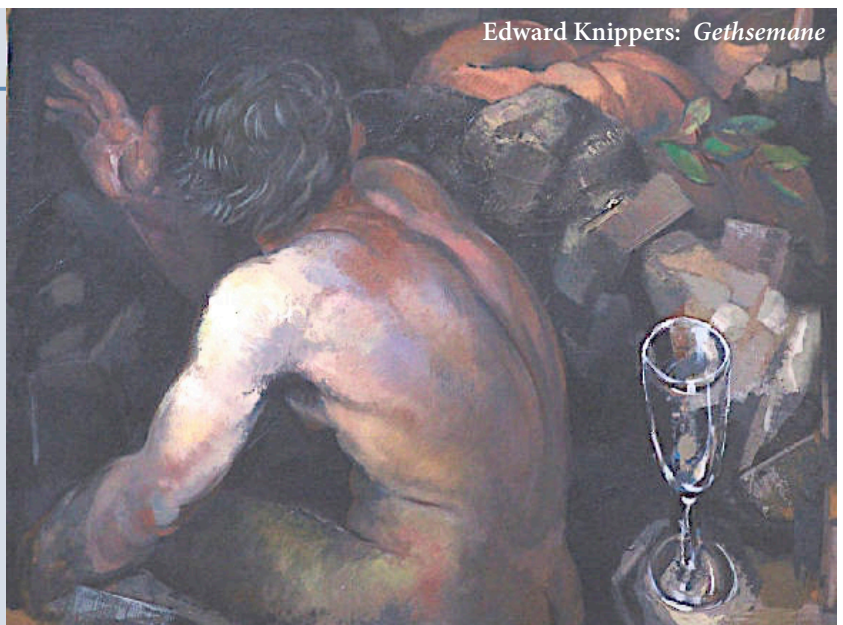
Adam Back's *The Wounded Word* incites many questions. What does this mean? Does it refer to the ever growing attack on Christianity in a secular world? Is it an assault against the Bible itself? Back has literally ripped the Bible in two, exposing various shredded layers, and then attached the two segments to a blood red surface with a fine cord. With intricate detail and mesmerizing patterns, Nancy Snooks, a Catholic sister from Los Angeles has created a contemporary Celtic illumination. At first glance her illumination titled *Look at the Birds*, appears imageless. However, buried in all the swirling detail, bird forms begin to emerge.

Enjoy each of these works of art as a testimony to artists' ability to inspire and illuminate the Bible.

## Summer Exhibition Preview:

### *Violent Grace*

May 10 will be the opening of a powerful new exhibition, *Violent Grace*, with several large paintings by Edward Knippers from Arlington, Va. Knippers says "I grapple with the perennial human questions embedded in the Bible—a strenuous effort never satisfied until it has extracted a blessing. This is the image of violent grace. Drawn into a wrestling match we come away wounded—and blessed—by a passionate, unreasonable, overwhelming beauty.



Edward Knippers: *Gethsemane*



508-945-2832

[stchristopherschatham.org](http://stchristopherschatham.org)

**The Rev. Brian W. McGurk**  
Rector

**The Rev. Dr. John Martin**  
Priest Associate

**Maury A. Castro**  
Organist & Choirmaster;  
Communications Director

**Haskell Thomson**  
Musician-in-Residence

**Debra Gebhardt**  
Director of Children,  
Youth, and Families

**Jamie Chalker**  
Parish Administrator

**Barbara Bush**  
Administrative Assistant

**Ali Crockett**  
Facilities Manager

**Peter Hughes**  
Treasurer

**Bridgette Renaud**  
Assistant Treasurer

**Priscilla Chick, R.N.**  
Parish Nurse

**Eileen Aldrich**  
Manager, Gift Shop

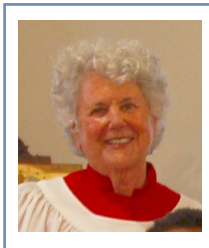
**Sandra Bowden**  
Curator, The Gallery

**Ted and Martha Miller**  
Managers, Food Pantry

**Lou Augustin**  
Sexton

**Lynn Van Dine**  
and **Tim Weller**,  
Soundings copy editors.

## Liturgical Q & A (part I)



**Susan Sargent**  
Chair,  
Altar Guild

**Q:** What are paraments?

**A:** The hangings around the altar, etc.

**Q:** What is a lectionary?

**A:** The lectionary is the book of Bible readings appointed to be read during the church year.

**Q:** Who is the recently-retired baker of the communion bread?

**A:** Pat Cass has been making the communion bread since Rector McGurk came to St. Christopher's with that recipe.

**Q:** What determines the colors we use at the altar?

**A:** The Liturgical Calendar:  
White: Christmas, Easter, marriages, funerals, baptisms, and other feast days.  
Purple or Royal Blue: Advent and Lent  
Red: Holy Week and Day of Pentecost  
Green: Epiphany and Ordinary Time after Pentecost

## Parish Statistics

### Baptisms

Eloise Pinkerton Kelly  
November 4, 2018

Rory James Dill  
November 11, 2018

Emilia Grace Hufnagel  
November 25, 2018

### Marriage

Chelsea Larivee  
& Scott Lueders  
October 12, 2018

**Transfers In**  
Wendy Shepherd  
October 2018

Sarah Murphy  
& James Vlachos  
December 2018

### Deaths

Stuart Bracken  
September 9, 2018

Beverly Watts  
October 21, 2018

Marion Zingg  
November 22, 2018

Josephine Simone  
December 13, 2018

Philip Christophe  
December 21, 2018

**Church e-mail list:** If you are not on the church email list and would like to be, please subscribe yourself at the bottom of the homepage of the church website, [www.stchristopherschatham.org](http://www.stchristopherschatham.org), or email Maury A. Castro at [mcastro@stchristopherschatham.org](mailto:mcastro@stchristopherschatham.org). By adding your address to the list, you will receive the mid-week e-mail and periodic messages from the Rector.

**Digital Soundings:** All who are on the email list receive *Soundings* electronically via the mid-week email, and it is available on the website. If you would like to be taken off the print list, please contact Maury.



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Winter 2019

Non-Profit Organization

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CELEBRATE THE



AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S

Friday February 1	Hyannis Sound Concert	7pm
Sunday February 10	Schubert Concert	3pm
Friday February 22	Movie Night & Dinner	5pm
Monday February 25	Squire Night	6pm
Friday March 22	Movie Night & Dinner	5pm
Friday May 10	Ed Knippers Art Exhibit	4pm
Sunday May 26	Skylark Vocal Ensemble	4pm
Sunday June 30	For the Love of Music	4pm

Go to [stchristopherschatham.org](http://stchristopherschatham.org) for ongoing updates or follow us on

