

SOUNDINGS

Saint
Christopher's
Episcopal
Church



Autumn 2020

Bird by Bird



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

The author, Anne Lamott, shares this story in her book, *Bird By Bird: Some Instructions On Writing and Life*: “Thirty years ago my older brother, who was ten years old at the time, was trying to get a report on birds written that he’d had three months to write. It was due the next day. We were out at our family cabin in Bolinas, and he was at the kitchen table close to tears, surrounded by

binder paper and pencils and unopened books on birds, immobilized by the hugeness of the task ahead. Then my father sat down beside him, put his arm around my brother’s shoulder, and said, ‘Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird.’”

Like this procrastinating ten-year-old boy, I feel a bit overwhelmed, and at times, “...immobilized by the hugeness of the task ahead.” Specifically, leading a congregation—safely and securely—through multiple crises (i.e. dangerous and unstable events): the COVID-19 crisis, the environmental crisis, the racial crisis, and the crisis of political partisanship and polarization. All of these made worse by “pandemic fatigue.” In and of themselves, each one of these challenges feels overwhelming. Together, they feel downright impossible!

Throughout his ministry, Jesus confronted one crisis after another, among them sickness, suffering, hunger, poverty, selfishness, greed, ignorance, hate, violence, and oppression. With compassion, self-sacrificial love, and the light of hope, he confronted each of these adversities “one bird at a time”—one person at a time, one challenge at a time, one step at a time. Let’s follow Jesus’ path during these challenging and taxing times and confront these



present crises, “one bird at a time,” with one prayer at a time, one recorded or live-streamed service at a time, one Keeping Connected email at a time, one Vestry meeting at a time, one pastoral visit at a time, one Sunday School class at a time, one bereavement group session at a time, one stewardship campaign at a time, one budget at a time, one coffee hour at a time, etc. As our bishop wrote, this is a “journey of stages” that will lead us into the “promised land” of regathering for in-person worship and community life.

We are not alone. As people of hope, we are empowered by God the Holy Spirit (who descended like a bird, a dove, upon Jesus at his baptism). The Holy Spirit will fill our churned-up hearts with compassion, love, courage, grace, peace and blessing. We travel into the unknown, together, and with hope.

Emily Dickenson wrote:

**Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all,**

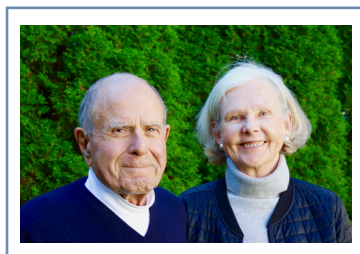
**And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.**

**I’ve heard it in the chillest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.**

This pandemic is “for the birds”!

Blessings,
Brian

Stewardship 2021: Keeping Connected



Joe & Debby Saliba
Chairs,
Stewardship Committee

The 2021 stewardship campaign was launched on September 13 with a mailing to our parish community. The list included parishioners who, in one way or another, have made financial commitments to

our church either as pledgers or one-time donors. The mailing also included those people who have been following us over the internet. It was a broad list and the message stressed the importance of financial commitment to the church.

The Rector's theme this year is "*Keeping Connected: Today and Tomorrow*." It flows from the difficult times in which we live today and how the church has blossomed in spite of our not being able to gather on Sunday mornings. And, perhaps most importantly, how we will regather in the future. We encourage you to read his stewardship message; it is truly compelling and uplifting.

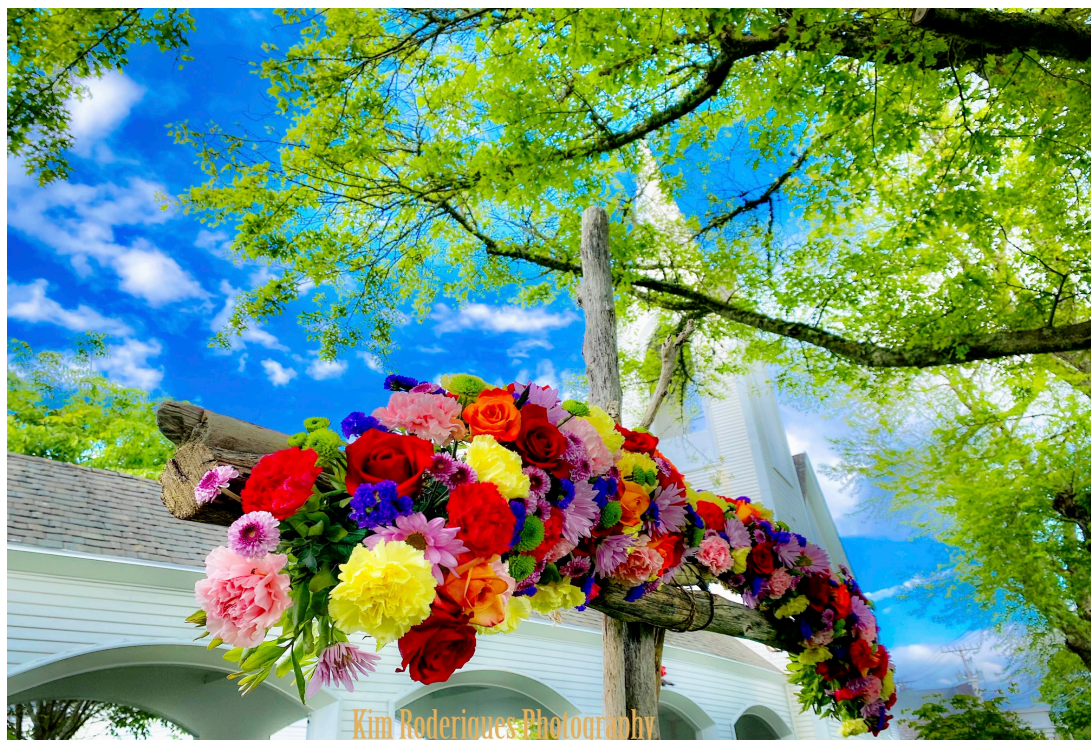
These are difficult times. The virus has upended our normal lives, the presidential election has introduced an element of great uncertainty and anxiety, and to make matters even more stressful, we have not been able to easily gather with our friends to share our thoughts and concerns. We find ourselves searching for those pillars of strength that will hold us upright, balanced, and of sound mind.

Our pillars—our family members, our few chances to gather with friends, and 625 Main Street in Chatham. You know—the building with the driftwood cross in the front yard. These are the pillars from which

we derive our strengths—the things that hold our own family together. And, we suspect your families as well.

It is probably no secret to you that the virus has caused no small amount of stress for our church finances. Because of some superb planning and actions by the people who serve on the various committees, we are in reasonably good shape for 2020. Next year is quite another matter, and we believe that we cannot let down our guard. Per the Rector's theme, we are healthy, thriving, and we intend not to waver.

It is for this reason that in this 2021 stewardship campaign we are asking you to take a very careful look at your financial commitment to the church that we love and make a concerted effort to increase your commitment in this campaign. Already the members of the Vestry, Finance and Stewardship committees have collectively increased their pledges by close



Kim Roderiques Photography

to 10 percent. As of October 27, we have received total pledges of \$421,766 from 117 pledgers, which amounts to 74% of the \$570,000 goal. Please help us maintain and grow that pillar of strength that is so very important in our lives—St. Christopher's. The stewardship committee (Mary Bast, Pam Hufnagel, Joe Meeks, Ginger Plexico, and Debby and Joe Saliba) extends its gratitude for your careful consideration of your 2021 pledge.

Gift & Consignment Shop Remains Open



Louise Montross
Acting Manager,
Gift &
Consignment Shop

The most sustainable shopping option is *not* to buy new, but opt for secondhand whenever possible. Maybe this is why St. Christopher's Gift & Consignment Shop is thriving! As you probably know, the shop announced that it would be closing at the end of July. But as with so much during this pandemic year, things continue to change and evolve. There has been an outpouring of support for the shop in terms of wonderful donations, volunteers both from within and outside the congregation, and shoppers lamenting the closing of the shop. No one could have anticipated how this summer would go at the shop. We've been so fortunate to have the backbone of volunteers enthusiastically support the shop as well as the community in general. Like everyone else, we've also tried out some new ways of doing things, which have been successful, such as selling some items online.

The effects of COVID-19 have resulted in people cleaning out, downsizing and being on the Cape for a longer duration. Upon selling her dad's antique decoy ducks in the shop, Heidi Quill said, "they went from a dusty collection in an old box in the basement to finding new and happy homes. My dad would be so surprised."

**Volunteers Nancy Rude,
Cornelia Roche, and
Barbara Cromarty**



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**Volunteers Tara Hagan, David Smith,
and Pam Hufnagel**

The volunteers are onboard, and as long as the volume and quality of donations continue, the shop will stay open Thursday–Friday, 10–5, and Saturday, 10–4. The shop is only accepting donations this year; there are no consignments being taken. Donations in very good condition are accepted Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9–11. For a list of what is accepted or for more information, go to www.stchristopherschatham.org/consignment-shop and check the mid-week email message for particular needs we might have. You may also always check the Consignment Shop Facebook page. And of course—come shop, *tell your friends*,

**Volunteers Karen Riesterer
and Sally Stratman**



**Volunteers Louise
Montross and Ella Leavitt**



Golf Tournament Report



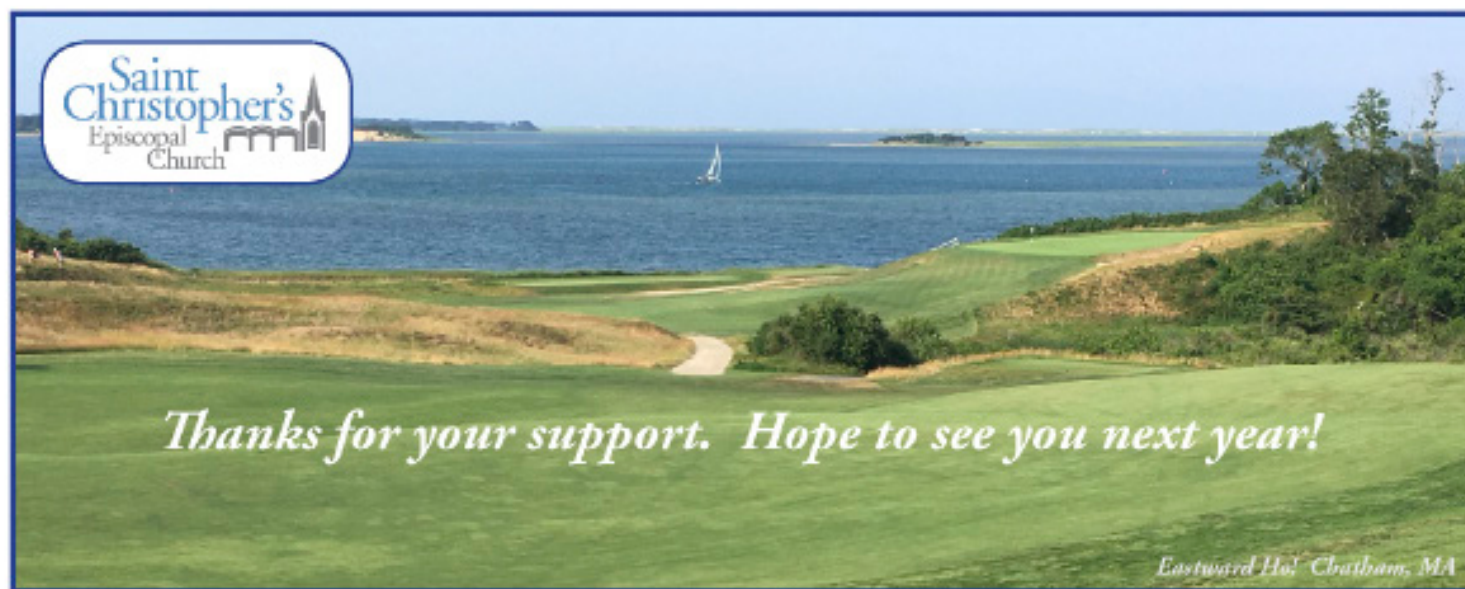
Jim Bast
Member,
Golf Committee

St. Christopher's parishioners can feel very good about the results of the tenth anniversary of our Robert M. Lynyak Charity Golf Event! Even though it had to be cancelled due to commonwealth COVID-19 regulations, we raised over \$22,000, beating the budget, and retained the goodwill of golfers. Our golfers, both parishioners and non-Cape Codders, donated

much of their fees to the church, and our parishioners donated nearly \$3,000 in "virtual" tee signs. We are very grateful to golfers from multiple Massachusetts towns and eight other states who demonstrated amazing generosity. We gratefully acknowledged this by

providing the treasured sleeve of St. C's logo golf balls to all applicants, regardless of whether they donated or not. We enclosed the beautiful "thank you" card shown below, designed by our own Marie Williams, and put everyone on our early alert list for next year. Initial responses suggest a sellout next year in even less than the three weeks this year. We let our first-responder organizations know we had thought of them, and will invite them again.

While we sorely regret the loss of our beloved golf treasurer of all ten years, Pieter Schiller, our enthusiastic Golf Committee co-chairs Joe Saliba and David Smith have agreed to lead our 2021 event. Joe and David welcome those interested in joining this committee, as our work is cut out to provide a high quality event and regain local business support through tee sponsorships.



A Report from the Treasurer



Peter Hughes
Treasurer

This continues to be a financially challenging year due to the many implications of COVID-19. The shop is winding down, and there have been no in-person special events or regular liturgies since early March (except for St. Christopher's-in-the-Field in July). Despite these constraints, I'm pleased to report

that St. Christopher's is financially sound. Many of our members have stepped up to turn what could be

considered lemons into lemonade!

The staff has done an excellent job managing our operating expenses. When we determined that the future of the Gift & Consignment Shop was untenable, Louise Montross and her team worked diligently to attract merchandise and generate sales to salvage what looked like a sizable loss into a win (see p. 3). Despite the fact that the golf tournament was cancelled, the golf committee managed to convert tournament fees into donations and sold many tee signs. As a result, the golf tournament will meet its budgeted contribution to church income (see above).

continued on opposite page

Goll Farm School is Back in Session!



Linda Hughes
Chair,
Together With
Africans

With much enthusiasm and excitement the students of Goll Farm School in Bong County, Liberia have begun a new school year. St. Christopher's Together With Africans (TWA) Committee continues to advocate for educational opportunities for the children of the Goll Farm Community. Through your generous support we have

provided 50 full scholarships for the fall semester.

As you can see in the picture, education in Liberia is not about modern classrooms and equipment. Rather it is about the opportunity that structured learning provides to make a real and significant difference in the

futures of these precious children.

Goll Farm School is an important ministry in the life of Liberian children as well as the spiritual life of the St. Christopher's family. In these challenging times it is easy to turn inward and want to keep everything close to home. However, we choose to go beyond our borders in a cost-effective way to positively influence the lives of students in the Goll Farm Community. It takes \$100 to educate a student for a semester, \$200 for a full year at Goll Farm School. A terrific return on investment!

If you would like to help educate a student in need, please send your contribution to St. Christopher's and identify Goll Farm School on the memo line. If you would like to learn more about Goll Farm School, please contact me at phughes41@comcast.net.



A Report from the Treasurer, cont.

Our recently installed solar system is performing as designed. In July we generated 3.8 MWh and in August 4.2 MWh. Thus far we have reduced our electric bill by \$1,500. We also are certified for the state SMART program which will provide monthly payments to the church for the next ten years.

Pledge payments continue to track well and we thank everyone for their continued support. Pledges account for approximately 75 percent of our income and are extremely important to the financial stability of St. Christopher's.

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan we received in late April has supported cash flow and provided financial relief along the way. Once the PPP forgiveness rules and regulations are finalized by the SBA, we will apply for, and expect to receive, 100 percent loan forgiveness.

In these times when access to the church is limited and staff is working remotely I want to recognize the efforts of Bridgette Renaud in managing the accounts, supporting the annual financial review and maintaining financial order during these uncertain times.

Food Pantry Needed More Than Ever



Martha and Ted Miller
Managers,
Chatham Food Pantry

We are pleased to share that there has been a tremendous outpouring of support from our St. Christopher's community as well as from many generous folks throughout Chatham. We have certainly experienced

a greater increase in the number of clients whom we service. On a weekly basis, we have doubled our volume of food that we distribute. New clients have signed up, as well as others who have returned for additional help once again.

After our initial twelve weeks of drive-through food distribution, we are now back at our spot right in the church. Our clients visit at the door, while volunteers remain inside behind a plexiglass shield. We are all safe, wearing our masks and gloves, while servicing our friends who remain outside, wearing their masks.

We must admit that one positive outcome, during this time of COVID-19, has been the chance to get



Ted and Martha (left) pose in the spring with Jeff and Elise Gorden (right) of Dennis Union Church at the distribution hub.

better acquainted with our clients. We make a special effort to chat and pay close attention to what others are experiencing during these challenging times. What a nice feeling it is to see folks at ease while collecting much-needed food supplies. One lady brought small sanitizer bottles to us, while another shared muffins and cut fruit. We now notice that everyone leaves us with a wave and a nice, loud "Thank You" or perhaps "Gracias." It is our pleasure to serve as Managers of Chatham Food Pantry.

Virtual Sunday School



Debra Gebhardt
Director,
Children, Youth,
& Families

Like many things in this world, Sunday school has gone virtual! Some of us are logging in from the car on the way to hockey practice. Many of us are still in our pajamas. Some of us bring our pets to Sunday School, while others are shooing parents from the room. But I think we're all happy to be together, eating our lollipops, confessing our worries, and saying our prayers.

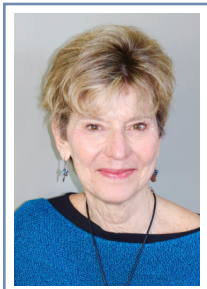
I'm still trying to articulate how our virtual togetherness is different than our physical togetherness. I miss the comfort and happiness of our Sunday School room, but I love seeing the kids snuggling on their couches in their living rooms. I miss telling bible stories with the little wooden Godly play figurines, but I love

finding new ways to bring the teachings of the Bible to virtual life. Like most things nowadays, Sunday School is evolving and adapting, but we're keeping our focus on loving ourselves, loving our neighbors, and loving God.

Sunday School via Zoom



Pastoral Care



Judith Felton
Pastoral
Associate

The last time I submitted news to *Soundings*, I wrote from my lovely office at St. Christopher's during what is now termed affectionately as "pre-Covid time." I love my church office; it's spacious yet warm, it houses my mother's beautifully carved Madonna, my favorite crèche set (which I like to leave up all year), and on the wall are hung some lovely floral paintings done

by Tom Cottrell's aunt. Ali and Bridgette helped me choose the lovely comfy armchairs that now sit idle. It's a lovely room, cozy enough for two and large enough for a dozen. I miss it.

But not at much as I miss the hustle and bustle of our open doors, the opportunities, often serendipitous, of gathering with friends and family in our open hallways, offices, and sanctuary, times during which stories and laughter is shared, solace offered, and hugs provided. We all miss this, old and young alike. Yet I do take great comfort in knowing that we are all still connected, we hold each other in our prayers and heart, we continue to keep the church alive with many opportunities for worship, collective meditation and prayer, Stephen Ministry, pastoral counsel and care, with the help of technology and the telephone. Intimate and grace-filled connection continues to happen because of our deep commitment to one another.

During the time of this Covid crisis, your pastoral concerns team and Stephen Ministry team have been working diligently in assisting me with meeting the pastoral needs of parishioners. I meet with both teams several times a month to discuss pastoral concerns and to offer support to one another. We are challenged by the inability to do home visits, but nevertheless, we are in touch. I'm sincerely grateful for the pastoral care provided by those who are working with me and Brian to uplift parishioners who may be feeling

alone and isolated during these times. Please keep the following Stephen Ministers in your prayers: Sandy Arnold, Martha Crane, Susan Dimm, Anne Flash, Vi Fellman, Ali Crockett, Jo Vachon, Don Chalker, Tom Cottrell, Jim Fulton, and Judy Cornwell. Please keep the following members of the Pastoral Concerns team in your prayers: Mary Bast, Mary Gulrich, Ann Ward, Peggy Davis, Jeff Arnold, Betty Martinier, Sue McFarlane, Joan Bagnell, Tom Cottrell, Carolyn Otis, and Judy Cornwell. These teams are invaluable to the parish and to me.

Due to the isolation and loneliness that accompanies this pandemic, many of us are experiencing the complex journey of grief again, or for the first time. The sense of feeling alone is exacerbated by the inability to be visited by friends and family who offer support with hugs and quiet companionship. The sense of loss can be intense. To help mitigate this, I continue to offer a Bereavement Support group every Thursday morning, at 10:30 am, via zoom. I am told by those who attend this group that the support and

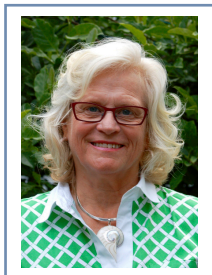


love they receive from one another is invaluable. Every Thursday I am impressed by the courage, genuineness, and integrity of the individuals who participate; working through grief is hard work, but can also result in bursts of joy

and understanding. This group is open to parishioners and the community alike for anyone experiencing a loss. For more information, please contact me.

Looking toward the future, whatever that may look like, I hope to continue to offer pastoral care and counsel in a way that meets the needs of our current times. Please stay attuned to future offerings of support groups, Stephen Ministry training, etc. I am available for individual pastoral care via telephone or Zoom; please don't hesitate to contact me on my cell phone at 860-301-7481, or by email: jfelton@stchristopherschatham.org. I love to hear from people. I am grateful for your support as I keep you in my prayers, always.

Gallery Updates



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

Although the building has been closed for seven months, there have been developments with The Gallery about which I wish to share. First, we're thrilled to report that Nancy Marek Cote, artist of last year's autumn/winter exhibit, *Saints (Canonized and Otherwise)*, generously donated one of her pieces to the permanent collection at St. Christopher's, *St. Francis of Assisi*. Thank you Nancy!



*Sketch and final of
St. Francis of Assisi*



Molas



I also wish to share that the art committee's plan is that once the church building is reopened, we will have an exhibition, *From Eden to Eternity*, on view. It is already hanging and ready for viewing! It is comprised of molas, which are colorfully appliquéd pieces of fabric handcrafted by the Cuna Indian women of the islands in the Gulf of San Blas and used for clothing, decoration, etc. Until you are able to see the exhibit in person, please go to www.stchristopherschatham.org/gallery for a gallery of images from the show as well as a complete explanation.

Finally, as we anticipate the arrival of the new pipe organ in 2021, we look forward to a summer 2021 exhibition celebrating music in art. More on that to come!

Pipe Organ Update

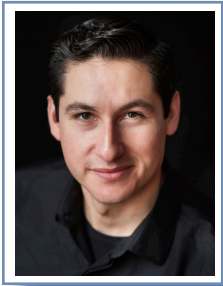


Joe Gagliano
*Chair,
Finance Committee*

Progress continues toward the planned March 2021 installation of the new Dobson pipe organ. Work was completed in the spring of 2020 to create a choir loft, including an accessibility lift. Many thanks to Peter Hughes for executing that phase. Meanwhile, work commenced at the Dobson shop in Lake City, Iowa, on the construction of the organ itself. While the organ is currently scheduled to be installed in March of 2021, this is a process that takes a few months before the organ can actually be used. Finally, up until his very last days, Pieter Schiller was working tirelessly on details related to the project. While we press forward toward the goal, we remember his work with gratitude, knowing that we would not be seeing this project come to fruition without his years of dedicated leadership and sacrifice.



Hymn Contest Winner Announced



Maury A. Castro
Organist &
Choirmaster

In preparation for the dedication of the new pipe organ, a task force was created in 2019 to oversee the dedicatory Choral Evensong, opening reception, dedicatory solo organ recitals, and inaugural collaborative recitals with organ and community musical ensembles. The task force is comprised of Sarah Anderson, Jeff Arnold, Maury A. Castro, Peggy Davis, Jennifer Golini, Lee Tashjian, and Haskell Thomson. In order to commemorate the dedicatory Choral Evensong, the task force initiated a hymn contest for the creation of a new hymn text (the hymn tune will be chosen by St. Christopher's, and will be a tune familiar to the parish). The hymn text was to celebrate, to the Glory of God, the mission and ministry of St. Christopher's Church, in its sea-side context (as opposed to celebrating the new instrument). The contest announcement reached a worldwide audience, and 29 submissions were received by the May 1, 2020 deadline. Lee Tashjian, head of this project, coalesced the submissions, delivered them to the jury (comprised of Maury A. Castro, The Rev. Dr. Carl Daw, Jr., Anne LeClaire, The Rev. Dr. John Martin, The Rev. Brian W. McGurk, and Haskell Thomson). After careful consideration, a winning entry was identified: *Wind, Who Whispered Into Being* by Dr. Lydia Pedersen.

Dr. Pedersen, of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, says of her winning the hymn competition, "I am deeply honoured by this decision, knowing how many excellent hymn writers there are in America and Canada. It is the first time I have won such a competition. What engaged me from the start was a confluence of things I hold dear: Cape Cod, the location of many happy memories; the purpose, inaugurating a new organ; and the stated wish for a text that lifts up music in the context of Pentecost, one of my favourite church festivals. I feel grateful and very privileged to think that my words will help St. Christopher's congregation celebrate this memorable, festive occasion, and I extend my most heartfelt congratulations to you in your rejoicing. May your new instrument bring you many years of delight, comfort, faith, hope and joy through the unique blessings of music."



Hymn writer Lydia Pedersen

Wind, Who Whispered into Being

Wind, who whispered into being
all that is in earth and space,
plants and creatures, stars and microbes,
mountains, seas, the human race:
use us as your co-creators,
sowing beauty, truth, and good,
stewards of the world you gave us,
called to love through servanthood.

Wind, who spoke through your Beloved
words of comfort to the poor,
offered mercy to the sinner,
preached an open heavenly door:
help us live by his example,
speak as echoes of his voice;
that our words, lived out in action,
may make hurting hearts rejoice.

Wind, who with a sacred purpose
fanned the flames of Pentecost,
energizing with your power
all the fearful, lone, and lost:
make of us renewed disciples;
come, inspire us; help us be
open to each other's language,
welcoming diversity.

Wind, once sweeping over chaos,
taming, shaping, ordering;
holy Breath, move here among us
as we worship, as we sing.
Woodwinds, trumpets, organ joining
human voices, glad in praise:
make our lives a mighty chorus
that proclaims your wondrous ways!

©2020 Lydia Pedersen



508-945-2832

stchristopherschatham.org

The Rev. Brian W. McGurk
Rector

The Rev. Dr. John Martin
Priest Associate

Judith Felton
Pastoral Associate

Maury A. Castro
Organist & Choirmaster;
Communications Director

Debra Gebhardt
Director of Children,
Youth, and Families

Bridgette Renaud
Parish Administrator/
Assistant Treasurer

Barbara Bush
Administrative Assistant

Ali Crockett
Facilities Manager

Peter Hughes
Treasurer

Priscilla Chick, R.N.
Parish Nurse

Sandra Bowden
Curator, The Gallery

Ted and Martha Miller
Managers, Food Pantry

Lou Augustin
Sexton

Liturgical Q & A (part VI)



Susan Sargent
Sacristan,
Altar Guild

Q: Where do the torches reside during the week?

A: They reside in the vestibule.

Q: What is a piscina?

A: The piscina is a special sink that empties directly into the ground. Consecrated wine must be discarded only through the piscina. Any leftover bread may not be thrown out, but may be consumed or fed to birds outside.



Parish Statistics

Baptisms

Rory Joseph Wilson
July 5, 2020

James David Higgins
August 9, 2020

Leonard James Oggioni
August 25, 2020

Abigail Fitzpatrick Bierce
September 19, 2020

Wedding

April Mariah Sandefur
& Derek Miles Smith
June 24, 2020

Deaths

Ronald D. Baird
March 11, 2020

Beverly E. Ricci
May 30, 2020

Dicran B. Barian
June 4, 2020

Dennis Dwyer
June 20, 2020

Karl B. Fischer
June 27, 2020

Pieter J. Schiller
September 7, 2020

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, or email Maury A. Castro at mcastro@stchristopherschatham.org. By adding your address to the list, you will receive the midweek e-mail and periodic messages from the Rector.

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



625 Main Street
Chatham, Massachusetts 02633

Autumn 2020

Non-Profit Organization

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A Tribute to Pieter Schiller

At its October meeting, the Vestry voted to name the forthcoming Dobson pipe organ the *Pieter J. Schiller Memorial Pipe Organ*, in memory of the man who headed the organ project for the last few years, and who, by his dedication and skill, made possible its coming into being. Pieter passed away on September 7. He is sorely missed, but the fruits of his labors will bless our parish and our community for generations.

Betty & Pieter Schiller



(L-R) Then Musician-in-Residence Haskell Thomson, Organist & Choirmaster Maury A. Castro, and Pieter Schiller, after examining a Dobson organ in Auburn, Mass., in March of 2015.