

SOUNDINGS

Saint
Christopher's
Episcopal
Church 
Autumn 2021

A New Mission Statement



The Rev. Brian W. McGurk
Rector

“*To experience the Love of Jesus Christ, and to inspire compassion in our world.*”

This is St. Christopher's brand new mission statement! It was prepared by a task force designated by the Vestry, led by Drew Staniar.

Frederick Buechner writes: “It is not the objective proof of God's existence that we want but the *experience* of God's presence [and love]. That is the miracle we are really after, and that is also, I think, the miracle that we really get.”

To experience the love of God means to encounter the holy, mysterious and living presence of Jesus with our bodies, minds, hearts, spirits, and souls in the here and now of our daily lives. An experience of Christ is a relationship—like falling in love and maintaining that love for decades. As with any mystery, we can't really explain it, or totally understand it, but we can experience love in the deepest depths of our being. In and through the church's worship and prayer, scriptural reflection and silent meditation, communal life and community service, fellowship and friendship, stillness and silence, joy and sorrow, gratitude and humility, faith, hope and love—the Living and Loving Presence of Jesus lives, dwells and has its being in our community and in our souls.

The practices of the Church (when embraced!) connect our inner experiences of Jesus Christ (“spirituality”) with our outer social activities (“compassionate action”).

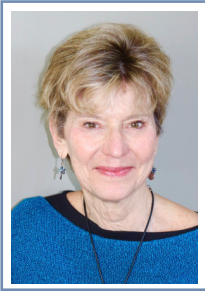
A research project conducted by The Fetzer Institute entitled, “*What Does Spirituality Mean to Us? A Study of Spirituality in the United States*,” concluded: “People who are connected to a higher power [God] or humanity at large are more likely to take community, civic, and political action.” Furthermore, “connected” people contribute more often to the greater good, make a bigger difference in their local community, volunteer and donate more frequently, and speak out on moral and social issues. Connected people dig deep and find love, hope, and courage when the world says otherwise.

In a nutshell: our *experience* of Jesus Christ yoked to *compassionate action* transforms the world's pain and suffering into something much, much better. This is the miracle given to those who open their hearts to the love of Jesus Christ and engage their hands for the sake of the world. Now more than ever, our broken and suffering world cries out for the mission of the Church. Our thanks go to Drew and the Mission Statement Task Force for probing the depths of this mystery.



The vestry sporting their Mission Statement t-shirts!

Faith in the Midst



Judith Felton
Pastoral
Associate

As many of you know, part of what I do for St. Christopher's is provide bereavement support for individuals through pastoral counseling and the facilitation of our weekly Bereavement Support Group. Some I see are new to the journey of grief, some farther along, but all share the realization that the journey never ends.

Instead, the destination becomes malleable as one's sense of self

in the world changes and emerges. When face to face with intense loss, there is also the recognition that what comes next will bear little resemblance to what was, in spite of our efforts to make it so. Loss is transformative and can wreak havoc with the alchemy of our lives.

The losses that we've experienced during and because of the pandemic have threatened the connective tissue that binds us to our truest selves, each other, and sometimes to God. The ubiquitous nature of

the virus has resulted in an awkward dance of approach and withdrawal, doors opening then closed, masks off then on again, dressing up then back to Zoom calls with our pajamas on. The uncertainty of our times can lead to a sense of "soul burnout" as there is much to discern and figure out.

However and perhaps: Faith just might thrive in the midst of loss and uncertainty. Faith in the knowledge that God supports and cradles us unconditionally is the balm that heals the broken connective tissue. Faith in the power of kindness, friendship, community, and our skills of perseverance is the transformative salve; Faith in the knowledge that God loves us and will get us through. "A mighty fortress is our God; a bulwark never failing."

With the pastoral care and compassionate presence we give one another, cradled by God, we will emerge anew and, as Julian of Norwich wrote: "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well."

The Pieter J. Schiller Memorial Pipe Organ Dedication



Maury A. Castro
Organist &
Choirmaster

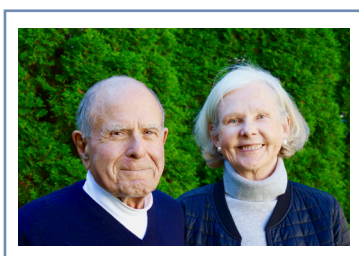
As of the writing of this article, a dedication date has been set for the new pipe organ: Sunday, November 21, 2021. This is *Christ the King Sunday* (the last Sunday of the liturgical year) as well as the Sunday

before Thanksgiving—a perfect day to bless this instrument to the glory of God and the refreshment of the spirit. The dedication will take place as a part of the 10 am Choral Eucharist, and will include the Adult Choir, with myself at the organ.

Since the first day it was used in a liturgy (pictured right), July 25, 2021, the instrument has been a joy and a balm on Sunday mornings, at weddings and memorial liturgies, and at the mini-recital that I gave on August 17. *Soli Deo Gloria.*



Stewardship 2022



Joe & Debby Saliba
Chairs,
Stewardship Committee

The 2022 Stewardship Campaign begins this month with a mailing to our parish community. We hope that you will consider a meaningful gift to keep our wonderful church financially sound. A gift will also

enable us to preserve our outreach programs, several of which are described in our mailing. All in all, we need your help in these troubled times, and we know that we can count on your support.

The Rector's stewardship theme this year is our new mission statement: "To experience the love of Jesus Christ, and to inspire compassion in our world."

To *experience* the love of God means to encounter the living presence of Jesus Christ with our heads and our hearts. In other words, to experience God with our bodies, minds, spirits, and souls—through worship

and prayer. Scriptural reflection and silent meditation, communal life and community service, fellowship and friendship, stillness and silence, joy and sorrow.

Our experience of Jesus Christ empowers *compassionate action* in our world—that transforms the world's pain and suffering into something much better.

It doesn't matter which comes first—an inner experience of God's love in our soul's depths or compassionate action in the world. This is the miracle given to those who open their hearts to the love of Jesus Christ and engage their hands for the sake of the world. Now more than ever, the mission of our church is needed to heal our broken and suffering world. Please support our little "miracle!"

We thank everyone who donated to St. Christopher's in 2021 and we especially thank those of you who will consider an increased gift for the 2022 campaign. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss anything with us: Debby Saliba (debbysaliba@yahoo.com; 617-686-9985); Joe Saliba (jsaliba@aol.com; 617-416-1452).

From the Senior Warden



Win McCausland
Senior Warden

As I write this, we are once again wearing masks to church and limited to 70 people at any service at St. Christopher's. I'm feeling very grateful for all that we have come through over these last 18 months. Autumn is a time for harvest and together—let's harvest the memories of God's goodness to us during this pandemic. For

some strange reason, it's easy to focus on what we have lost in terms of personal contact, in-person worship, group activities, etc. But there are things that have been changed, learned, and will continue because they have been well-received and further the spread of Christ's message of love:

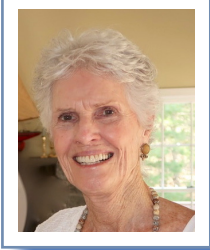
- The church has never closed! It has suspended in-person worship for more than a year, but services continued each week including Sunday School

using Zoom, liturgies using pre-recorded videos and more recently livestream, which has resulted in reaching well beyond our Cape Cod community.

- Pastoral Care has been tested with increased needs, but God has provided the strength, energy, and creativity for this ministry to continue and even add new initiatives that will endure beyond our current limitations, reaching those in need.
- Chatham Food Pantry continues to provide for those who seek its services and has done so without missing a beat, despite limitations on our "in-kind" contributions.

These are just a few of things that are at the top of mind as I write. By now you have learned about the new mission statement. As we think about those things for which we are grateful, let's all work together to think about how to "inspire compassion in the world." Together we can make that mission a reality.

Alec Vaughn: On the Path to Ordained Ministry



Mary Gulrich
Parishioner

The Spring issue of Soundings included an interview of Priest Associate John Martiner, celebrating fifty-five years since his ordination. In this issue, we turn to someone who is just starting that journey. Alec grew up in Chatham and is now a second-year Master of Divinity student at Boston University's School of Theology. Alec is preparing for his ordination at some point after he completes his studies in May of 2023. Let us, as a community, keep him in our hearts and prayers.

Q Will you describe your early life and how it formed you?

I grew up in Chatham with brothers Evan and Patrick as my constant companions, my role models in school and in sports, and in the forming of friendships. We actively engaged in town sports, community events, family outings, and attended St. Christopher's, where my love for liturgy, church music, and Brian's sermons

laid the foundation for who I am today. I became an active member of Faith in Action with Ilene Bendas and Bob Hessler, who taught me faith through service and the art and love of cooking that is now reflected in my ministry.

Alec and his dad, Stewart (also a parishioner) upon Alec's graduation from high school



Q What influence did your attendance at Pope John Paul II High School have on you?

After the death of my mother from cancer when I was 13, I joined my brothers at Pope John Paul II High School. It was a period of great loss and disorientation, but it was there that I began to immerse myself in the study of theology, philosophy and the Bible. During a junior year retreat, my theology teacher asked if I had an interest in joining the priesthood. At the time I did not, but the seed had been planted.

Q What studies did you pursue in college?

I went on to pursue International Relations at Boston University, studied abroad in the London and Athens, and developed a desire for a career in Government Service. An introduction to Marsh Chapel changed all those dreams. That planted seed from high school was now beginning to sprout.

Q What role has Marsh Chapel played in your life?

Marsh Chapel is the inter-denominational worship space at Boston University, housing spiritual life for the entire student population. As a junior, it was where I found my spiritual home. I immersed myself in its daily life of prayer, worship, and service through the food kitchen and outreach programs. Through the inspiration and guidance of the chaplains, especially Dr. Karen Coleman, my spiritual director, and support from fellow classmates, I found my way to the Episcopal Diocese, its Trinity Episcopal Classes, and the beginning of my seminary training.



A very happy college graduate

Q What sustains you on your journey toward priesthood?

I am sustained by my role as an intern at Marsh Chapel and membership in B.U.'s Episcopal Community, led by the Rev. Dr. Elise Feyerherm, who guides me in my prayer life and in the formation of my Episcopal identity.

Prayer and the ongoing support of my family, chapel staff, seminary students, professors, friends, my godmother Ali Crockett, and the love and memory of my mom, a woman of faith and courage, provide me with the strength and passion to continue this blessed journey.

Earth-Honoring Faith Committee Report

In September, world Christian leaders Archbishop Welby, Pope Francis, and Patriarch Bartholomew issued a document entitled *A Joint Message for the Protection of Creation* (visit the Earth-Honoring Faith page on the church website to read the document in its entirety). They emphasize the vital need for cooperation at the present time. To this end, E-HF is planning a meeting for parishioners to read and openly discuss as a community of faith this important document. Details will be available soon.

The Episcopal Church's *Covenant for the Care of God's Creation* was observed September 1–October 4 this year. The covenant asserts a commitment to practice 1) *Loving Formation*—For God's sake, we will grow our love for the earth; 2) *Liberating Advocacy*—For God's sake, we seek the flourishing of all people; and 3) *Life-giving Conservation*—For God's sake, we endeavor to live more humbly and gently on Earth.

Based on these imperatives, E-HF's current initiatives include:

- *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*: Exploring ways we can personally take into account impacts on God's creation. We plan a "show and tell" coffee hour on ways to reduce or recycle plastic packaging.
- *Energy*: Exploring ways to live gently on Earth so that energy resources are equitably available for all in the present, taking into account the needs of future generations. We have designated October as "Energy Audit Month" for parishioners to sign up for this free home service.



A recent Earth-Honoring Faith initiative: the installation of solar panels on the sanctuary, which, when added to the installation in 2020 on the parish hall, make St. Christopher's entirely solar-powered!

- *Food and Faith*: Our newest initiative looks at matters of food justice and choices. We will offer ways to reduce food waste, promote planet-healthy recipes, food shopping advice, cooking tips and more.

~ Submitted by Chuck Bartlett, Stephanie Bartlett, Cecelia Buckley, Judy Cornwell, Ali Crockett, Peggy Davis, Tessa English, Betsy Evans, Judith Felton, Diane Galazzo, Jane Harris, Nick Harris, Greg Horne, Janis McCausland, Rector McGurk, David Parker, Wendy Reveri, and Bob Summersgill.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Committee Report

Our goal is to reduce, reuse, and recycle items that come into our houses or businesses in order to lower needless landfill waste. Through education and implementing better practices within our church, we are offering our community a call to action. This requires commitment to taking small daily actions and changing policy on what comes into the building, how it is used, and where it goes after use. One example of such change is our recently instituted policy of allowing no plastic water bottles in the building, a step we have taken in support of Chatham's single-use plastic water bottle ban scheduled to go into effect on December 31.

Other steps supporting our call to action can be explored in the following:

- *Recycling*: RecycleSmartMa.org; plasticfilmrecycles.org (detailing how plastic bags and film are sent to Trex to be made into decking);
- *Hazardous Waste Disposal*: capecodextension.org/hazardouswaste/hhw
- *Clean-ups*: Following local news on beach clean-ups scheduled in your town; initiating street clean-ups in your town or adopting your own stretch of street for clean up

As a community of faith, we can work together to make changes in our environment by reducing, reusing, and recycling. Submitted by Stephanie Bartlett, Ali Crockett, Betsy Evans, and David Parker.

Together with Africans



Linda Hughes
*Chair,
Together With
Africans*

In 2014 I had the privilege of journeying to Goll Farm School in Bong County, Liberia, which is about 80 miles outside of the capitol city of Monrovia. My travel companions included David Smith, Barbara Gibson, Steve & Jackie Keenan, and my husband Peter. The first thing you notice is that everyone speaks English and then the traffic congestion catches

of supporters. Without your support, many of our students would be working to support their families instead of preparing for a better life through education.

The three-days-per-week feeding program, sponsored by the Radners, provides a vital source of nutrition that is often lacking in their normal diet. Healthy, well-fed students learn better!

The Together with Africans Committee (TWA) appreciates and thanks those who so generously sponsor students. This school year we are providing scholarships to 50 of the nearly 250 students at Goll

Farm School. This outreach effort is important, cost-effective, and rewarding. It costs \$200 per year to educate a student. You are making a difference. We recently learned that one of our original students has returned to Goll Farm School as a teacher, giving back to the community that gave him an opportunity.

If you are searching for a worthy cause and want to participate, please contact me at phughes41@comcast.net.

your attention.

After a day or two in Monrovia we headed to the school in two vehicles on very poor roads. Early on one vehicle died, which left all of us squeezing into a single vehicle on the hot dusty road to the school. After about 8 hours we arrived to a large gathering of students and staff who were excited to see their soon-to-be friends from St. Christopher's.

I have such fond memories of our visit to Goll

Farm School. Relhetta & Prince Whreh are deeply committed to educating Liberian children and have made it their life's mission. We visited the homes of many of the students and were overwhelmed by how grateful and proud the parents were that their child had the opportunity to be educated. I distinctly remember an older boy who lived with his father in a small shed almost 8 miles from the school. He walked to and from school every day and always arrived on time. This is a prime example of a student who benefits from the scholarships provided by the St. Christopher's family



Fill the Earth with Music



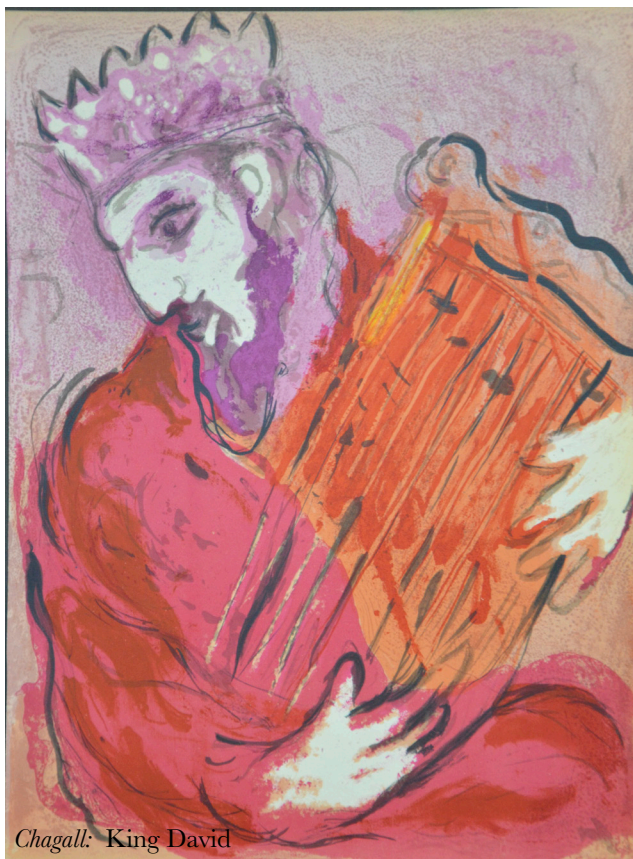
Sandra Bowden
Curator, The Gallery
at St. Christopher's

Fill the Earth with Music celebrates the installation of the church's new Dobson pipe organ. Singing and musical instruments have been vital components in the life of the believing community as far back in the Bible as Jubal who played the *kinnor* or harp. King David wrote many psalms, one of which is Psalm 150, which charges us to praise the Lord with the trumpet, cymbals, stringed

instruments, and organs. An engraving in this show has drawings of many biblical instruments.

Artists from the earliest times have portrayed musicians and used music as a focus of their work: from the 15th century illuminated *French Book of Hours* with David's Psalm 51, to the plaster cast of Donatello's *St. Cecilia*, and Barbara Zuber's joyful depiction of African Americans' animated singing and dancing. There is no end to the list of artists who have offered us remarkable art celebrating the joy of music.

It is impossible to imagine the church without music. The monastic tradition used Gregorian chant



Chagall: King David



Douglas R. Giebel: String Quartet

and choral singing to enhance worship as seen in the elaborate Bifolium Antiphonal Leaves that a choir used in the 16th and 17th centuries. De Hooghe's 18th-century engraving of the title page to the book of Psalms shows how the Dutch viewed music. Not only the church, but also the Jewish community celebrates music's significance as seen in Rosenstein's serigraph, *Sing to the Lord a New Song* and Marc Chagall's two lithographs.

Artists from the 21st century continue to be inspired by the depth and joy of music. Marianne Lettiori, Doug Giebel, Ed Knippers, and Melissa Valliere are examples of this rich tradition.

It is the hope of The Gallery at St. Christopher's that the art in this exhibition will help us appreciate how artists find inspiration in music, and that each viewer will be further inspired to celebrate and Fill the Earth with Music.



Zuber: Tent Meeting



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

Ali Crockett
Facilities Manager

Peter Hughes
Treasurer

Sandra Bowden
Curator, The Gallery

Ted and Martha Miller
Managers, Food Pantry

Lou Augustin
Sexton

Parish Statistics

Births

Mackenzie Elyse Watson
May 14, 2021

Blake Stone Smith
June 27, 2021

Claire Elizabeth Herndon
July 11, 2021

Henry Frank Herndon
July 11, 2021

Olivia Ruth Wilsterman
October 2, 2021

Weddings

Micayla Stoner
& William Cissel
June 5, 2021

Juliana Potter &
David Gottesmann
June 10, 2021

Carolyn Payne &
Richard Robinson
June 12, 2021

Rahma Karam &
Alexander McKnight Paulson
July 13, 2021

Mary Stewart Wachter
& Henry Crosby
July 17, 2021

Elise Tropin & Nicholas Tropin
August 7, 2021

Madyson Famiglietti
& Andrew Barton
August 8, 2021

Nicole D'Andrea
& Zachary Scanlon
August 27, 2021

Suzanne Nimocks
& Andrew Varney
September 5, 2021

Kimberly Lofgren
& Kurt DeVyllder
September 11, 2021

Charlotte Doyle &
Graham Healy-Day
September 25, 2021

Madison Hughan
& Harrison Everts
October 2, 2021

Deaths

Donald "Dee" Rowe
January 10, 2021

David Dewey
February 4, 2021

Alexander D. Shaw, III
May 2, 2021

Winifred Portenoy
May 17, 2021

Adrienne Lidbeck
June 14, 2021

Graham Ross
June 29, 2021

Jane Meincke
July 16, 2021

David Van Sickle
September 2, 2021

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, 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.



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Autumn 2021

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Blessing of the Animals

October 3, 2021:

