

# Christ Episcopal Church

Woodbury, New Jersey  
1857 - 2007

Joan A. Mitchell



# **CHRIST CHURCH**

**Woodbury, New Jersey**

**1857 – 2007**

**“THE VERY GEM OF THE DIOCESE”**

***The Facets of the Gem***

**The First One Hundred and Fifty Years  
Of  
Christ Church’s Parishioners, Its History,  
and Its Treasures**

**By Joan A. Mitchell**

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This book is dedicated to my husband,  
George T. Mitchell, Jr.  
A former Warden, Vestryman, and Faithful Parishioner of Christ Church, Woodbury for  
more than 40 years,  
Who stood beside me throughout the creation of each page.



**When you come into this church  
Remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is here;  
He is present and to be adored  
Under the form of his blessed Sacrament reserved for Holy  
Communion.  
Kneel down and worship him.  
Give thanks for your blessings.  
Bring to him your needs –  
Remember all in distress, sorrow, and pain.  
Pray that the dead may rest in peace  
And do not forget those who minister and worship here.**

**Placard posted on the front door of  
Immanuel Episcopal Church On The Green,  
New Castle, Delaware**

**Author Unknown**

**Christ Church, Woodbury**  
**“The Very Gem of the Diocese”**  
**The Facets of the Gem**

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Dear Beloved of Christ:

Our Biblical tradition captures many opportunities that were embraced by the faithful as moments of thanksgiving for who we were in the past, and more important, who we are becoming under the guidance of a merciful God. Each story and each recorded event was seen as a moment that was sanctified or set apart for God's particular use. As people prayed, dreamed, feared, celebrated, departed, and returned, God was with them in His ultimate wisdom to redeem each moment and move them closer to redemption.

It has long been recognized by the faithful that the hand of God does indeed enter human history, and that the presence of God breaks forth in time and space to effect His plan of salvation. Our particular history is celebrated, not only because of our ability to remain steadfast in our faith, but because Christ is with His Church. We recognize moments of triumph and moments of great challenge, and shudder whenever we peer into those recorded moments in which our fallen human nature seems to ascend far above our call to be a people of forgiveness and reconciliation. But at no time are we without the redeeming power of God, making all things new and inviting us to share in his eternal victory now. We are a community of faith that takes seriously the call to live together in the power and love of God precisely because we are first and foremost a Eucharistic community, one that continually reaches for holiness as God, through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit nourishes us and guides us into all truth.

The real strength of Christ Church lies in the desire of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to guide our lives. We see this desire being manifested in those souls past and present who define the history of the church we love and worship in 150 years after its consecration by the Right Reverend George Washington Doane, New Jersey's second Bishop. The act of faith that we celebrate is the vision of a Bishop to plant a church where one had previously not existed. We also celebrate the act of faithfulness by all those who carried that vision to this present day, and those who will bear it into the future.

Thank you to Joan A. Mitchell and all who assisted her in compiling this history of Christ Church, Woodbury. This offering completes an undertaking that can only be approached within the attitudes of reverence and thanksgiving.

Christ Church continues to thrive and grow despite the tumult in today's world because our past is so much a part of our present, and linked so closely to our future. To those who have gone before us, we extend our gratitude. To those who will come after us we offer our prayers, and hope that our own efforts may serve as an inspiration and a foundation on which their future will be secured.

In the peace of God, which passeth all understanding;

The Very Reverend Brian K. Burgess, SSC, Rector

## Introduction

At the 1858 Diocesan Convention, Bishop George Washington Doane spoke the following words, quoted in part from his address:

“On Thursday, 17 September 1857, I consecrated Christ Church, Woodbury. ....  
And Christ Church, Woodbury, solid in stone, and ‘beautiful, exceedingly,’ and fitted for all sacred uses, stands, in the eye of God, the very gem of the Diocese.”

And now it's 2007 – 150 years after Christ Church was consecrated, and its history is still a work in progress.

Chronological histories of Christ Church have been written many times before, and historical records are readily available for perusal by all those who are interested. In January 1971, a booklet entitled *Highlights In the History of Christ Church* was printed. The Rev. Ludwig I. Weinrich, the 4th Curate at Christ Church who served from May 1967 through March 1969, began the original research and first draft of this history.

Rewriting, revising, and expanding this work was initiated by The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird, Jr., who also served as Curate of Christ Church from 1969 through 1975. The end result of Fr. Weinrich and Fr. Bird's efforts was a booklet of the most complete history of Christ Church compiled at that time. Because of the bright red color of the booklet's cover, it was renamed “The Red Book” by its readers, a title by which it continues to be identified today.

In 2007 the world has become accustomed to computers, with instant access to data via the Internet, Bloggers, the YouTube, and Ipods. Research that used to take painstaking hours, trips to the nearest library or historical societies, and most of all a great deal of patient effort and hard work can now be accomplished with a few keystrokes. Historical facts that formerly required lengthy hours of research are now minutes away from our fingertips. “The Red Book” was a painstaking effort at a time long before today's



computers, word processing software, and the resultant ease of document creation. The final product was first written in longhand, then typed on a manual typewriter, then proofread, and then retyped by volunteer members of Christ Church who spent many hours researching, writing, rewriting, typing, proofreading, and retyping to produce the historical data, researched and drawn from handwritten records dating back to 1854.

As Father Bird so eloquently stated on the first page of “The Red Book,” a history is always more than mere facts and figures, names and dates, or places and things. A history is the story of people, those who worshipped at Christ Church’s altar many years before the year 2007, and whose faithfulness and dedication helped formulate the church as it stands today. And from the earliest stages of this latest effort to document the history of Christ Church, I found myself agreeing with Fr. Bird.

At the Diocesan convention in 1858 when Bishop Doane announced the beginning of Christ Church with his oft-quoted words repeated earlier in this Introduction, I believe he was referring to the *church building* – the *structure*. The Bishop was well acquainted with John Notman, the architect who designed the church, and from the beginning the Bishop felt a strong sense of identity with the project. In fact, in 1858 the families who comprised the congregation were few in number, but they were loyal to the church, and to Fr. Norris, Christ Church’s Missionary and first rector, and finally they had a consecrated place of worship in which to gather. Therefore, this latest effort I have undertaken is focused more on the *people* involved in Christ Church’s history, and how their devotion helped lay the foundation for the church as we know it today.

Over the past months I have had the opportunity to read the Minutes of Christ Church’s earliest Vestry Meetings, as well as the Minutes of the early days of the Christ Church Guild, the St. Agnes Guild, and the eventual Altar Guild. These minutes are fascinating, and afford a glimpse into an earlier time of the church’s history – a time filled with politeness, graciousness, and dignity. Certainly there were problems then, too – financial as well as personal – no different from the problems we face today. But the love and care these men and women felt for Christ Church is so apparent, demonstrated by the acts of

these early members through their writing. Beautifully scripted penmanship, detailed descriptions of their joys, accomplishments, disappointments, and sorrows of that time, the heartfelt and moving memorials written when several of these early members died, clearly indicate the enormity of their task, and the devotion with which they meticulously and lovingly handled each detail. Their words were written over 100 years ago by individuals who live on in Christ Church today through memorials given by their families, in a church founded on respect and built with love.

In the pages that follow, I hope to introduce to my readers some of the earliest worshipers of Christ Church, Woodbury – those who struggled and suffered and rejoiced – and to offer some additional and/or heretofore unknown history on the memorials dedicated in remembrance of their loved ones.

Most important, this book is a tribute to those who survived during the 150 years in which their church remained a focal point of their lives, as well as to those who worship within its sacred walls today. These people, indeed, are “the facets” of the gem of the Diocese.

In 1964, Sande Allen, who was then a parishioner, compiled an earlier chronology of Christ Church. She ended her writing as follows:

“The heritage we one day shall leave will be the history of now. We pray that man may say of us who toil in this generation: ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servants’.”

Through the pages of this book I hope in some small way to personalize these “good and faithful servants” – the “Facets of the Gem of the Diocese” – whose devotion and efforts in the past afford us the church in which we worship today.

J.A.M.  
December, 2007

# **Section I**

## **In The Beginning ...**



**Lord Christ, when you came among us, you proclaimed the kingdom of God in villages, towns, and lonely places: Grant that your presence and power may be known throughout this land. Have mercy upon all of us who live and work in rural areas, and grant that all the people of our nation may give things to you for food and drink and all other bodily necessities of life, respect those who labor to produce them, and honor the land and the water from which these good things come. All this we ask in your holy Name. Amen.**

**The Book of Common Prayer**

*According to the Use of*

**The Episcopal Church**

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Town of Woodbury, New Jersey**

A history of Christ Episcopal Church must of necessity begin with a brief history of Woodbury, the city in which the church is located.

The town of Woodbury, New Jersey was founded by Henry Wood in 1682. Wood was a Quaker from the northwest of England who fought with Cromwell against King Charles I, and was persecuted for his religious beliefs when Charles II took the Crown. Finally released from prison in Lancaster where he had been incarcerated for practicing his Quaker beliefs, he settled in the village of Tottington, near Bury, Lancaster. At the age of 80 he emigrated with his family to the United States on the ship “Lyon” to escape further religious persecution, and to settle in a country where they could practice the religion of their choice. His surname (Wood) and his hometown (Bury) comprise the name of Woodbury, now the seat of Gloucester County, New Jersey.

After crossing the Atlantic Ocean, history records the ship carrying the Wood family traveled up the Delaware River and ventured into the Pesczackasing Creek, now known as Woodbury Creek. It is believed the family settled near the mouth of the creek; however, as of this writing nothing remains of Henry Wood’s original settlement in what is now Woodbury.

Henry Wood’s original birthplace – Brookhouse Farm in Tottington – still stands. In the year 2000, a Millennium Plaque was installed on the farmhouse wall commemorating the Wood family’s emigration to the United States. There is also a stained glass window in St. Anne’s Church, Tottington, celebrating Wood’s life.

From the time of Wood’s arrival until the early 1800’s Woodbury was primarily a Quaker town, and those few faithful souls who worshipped in the Anglican faith gathered

wherever they could to worship as they chose. In fact, New Jersey didn't have an Episcopal Bishop until the election and consecration of The Rt. Rev. John Croes in 1815.

By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Woodbury had grown considerably, and was incorporated as a city in 1854. During those early years the town boasted a population of 2,298, and three hotels had been constructed – Newton's at Broad and Delaware Streets; Paul's, on North Broad Street south of Woodbury Creek; and the Columbia Hotel, which later was the foundation of Underwood Hospital. At that time Broad Street was a wide, unpaved thoroughfare, shaded by many trees and bordered on both sides by fine homes and shops offering a variety of services, including flour, feed and provisions, tinsmithing, a cigar factory, and a blacksmith shop. The Town Hall stood at the corner of Broad and German Streets (now Barber Avenue). In it was a public library and a civic hall.

Sounds idyllic – perhaps a wonderful place to live and worship and raise children 150 years ago? There was just one problem .....

Between 1861 and 1865, New Jersey was a state divided by the Civil War. Economically, New Jersey was tied to markets in the south; it was also the last northern state to abolish slavery. And because of the Civil War, and the geographical location of Woodbury, emotions over the North and the South lay very close to the surface in the town. This was one of the most violent periods in the country's history, and residents of Woodbury were often caught in the middle. Family loyalties to relatives who supported both the North and the South impacted many of the citizens, often causing rifts (and sometimes violence) among family members and neighbors.

But Woodbury survived. Gradually resentments and long-time feuds diminished, and life for the early citizens returned once again to normal existence. Woodbury High School was established in 1899, and in 1903 the first class, consisting of four members, was graduated. By the turn of the century, Woodbury's population had swelled to 4,087.

\*\* \*\*



Now back to Christ Church and its beginnings, which occurred in the midst of civic turmoil. In every history of Christ Church, Bishop Croes' name appears in the first paragraph. So who was he, and why was he important to Christ Church?

**Chapter 2**  
**The Rt. Rev. John Croes**  
**and**  
**The Rt. Rev. George Washington Doane**  
**The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bishops of New Jersey**

**John Croes** was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1762. During the Revolutionary War he served as a sergeant and quartermaster in the Continental Army. After studying for the ministry in the Episcopal Church, he was ordained a deacon by Bishop William White in Philadelphia on February 28, 1790, and a priest in March, 1792. He served as rector of Trinity Church, Swedesboro, and later rector of Christ Church in New Brunswick. He was also the principal of Rutgers Preparatory School. In November 1815 he was consecrated Bishop of New Jersey in Philadelphia, and began serving a diocese with 9 priests who struggled to serve 27 congregations.

Bishop Croes helped found the General Theological Seminary, the General Missionary Society, and the Episcopal Sunday School Union. He was considered by his clergy to be solid, reliable, and conscientious.

During Bishop Croes' episcopate, services were held occasionally in the town of Woodbury, conducted either by the Bishop himself or by the priests in charge of the parishes at Clarksboro and Chew's Landing (Fr. Richard Hall and Fr. J. Glancey Jones).

Bishop Croes died in New Brunswick, New Jersey on July 26, 1832 and is buried beneath the chancel of Christ Church, New Brunswick. That same year he was succeeded by The Rev. George Washington Doane, another name familiar to those who have studied the history of Christ Church, Woodbury.

**George Washington Doane** was born in Trenton, New Jersey on March 27, 1799. After graduation from Union College in New York in 1818, George considered a career in law, but after 6 months of study, he changed course and entered the ministry, studying

theology in the General Theological Seminary when, as he was known to say, “the whole Seminary was accommodated in a second story room over a saddler’s shop down town.”

In 1821 he was ordained a deacon and in 1823 ordained a priest by Bishop Hobart. He first served in New York City, where he helped found St. Luke’s Church. Between 1828 and 1832 he served in Boston at Christ Church, first as assistant and then as rector. While living in Boston, in 1829 Fr. Doane married Eliza Green (Callahan) Perkins, the widow of James Perkins of Boston, and eventually the Doanes’ became the parents of two sons, William Crosswell Doane and George Hobart Doane.

In 1832, when he was thirty-three years old, he was offered the position of Bishop of New Jersey.

From the time of his acceptance, Bishop Doane’s life was largely associated with this diocese, which, during his episcopate comprised the entire state. Although the diocese of New Jersey held little promise, Bishop Doane faced the challenge with his characteristic enthusiasm. There was no parish in it with which the Bishop was not familiar, and hardly a parishioner he did not know. He was prominent in everything that concerned the general interest of the institutions of the Church, and particularly those connected with its growth.

When he assumed the Office of Bishop, he also became rector of St. Mary’s, Burlington, and continued in both roles until his death. In 1837 he founded St. Mary’s Hall-Doane Academy (a girls’ school), and in 1846 Burlington College (for boys) opened its doors, demonstrating the bishop’s belief that education could be successfully accomplished under church control. However, the establishment of these schools brought him into serious financial embarrassments, which later became the nominal ground not only for criticism, but also for serious accusations, and led to his presentment and trial – the result of which was the unanimous dismissal of the presentment.

Bishop Doane was an outstanding orator, a prolific writer, and the author of numerous poems compiled by his son William Croswell Doane in a book entitled *The Life and Writings of George Washington Doane*. The Bishop was also the author of a number of hymns, including “Softly Now the Light of Day,” “Thou Art the Way,” and “Fling Out the Banner” – all of which were well known and loved.

Like his father, William (Bishop Doane’s first-born son) also became an Episcopal priest. He assumed the role of rector of St. Mary’s, Burlington upon his father’s death in 1859, and later in 1869 became the first bishop of Albany.

The younger son, George Hobart Doane, had been greatly influenced by the Oxford Movement embraced by his father. After graduation from the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1850, young George Hobart found medicine unsatisfying and soon thereafter became an Episcopal deacon at Grace Church, Newark. Still dissatisfied, and deeply affected by his father’s trials under the direction of “evangelical” Episcopalians, George Hobart Doane converted to Catholicism, much to his father’s displeasure. The conversion of the son of an Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey caused a national stir, but Bishop Doane’s son had set his course, and in 1857 was ordained a Catholic priest in Newark, New Jersey. In 1890, His Holiness Leo XIII named him prothonotary apostolic “which not only gave him the right to wear purple, but with the consent of the bishop of the diocese the pectoral cross and mitre.”

After his conversion, George Hobart Doane was officially deposed from the ministry of the Episcopal Church by his own father, and for years there was no contact between the father and his son. Some years later, Father George Hobart Doane was invited to preach in the Catholic church of Burlington, his hometown, and the Episcopal see of his father. When he learned of his son’s impending visit, Bishop Doane remarked, “Well, I see the prodigal is coming home. Then we must kill the fatted calf.” The Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey sent ornaments from his home and flowers from his garden for the adornment of the altar in the local Catholic church. That evening over a family dinner father and son were reconciled.

Bishop Doane's appointment over the Diocese of New Jersey placed Woodbury on his annual schedule for visitation, and while there he held services in the Old Court House attended by a growing number of followers, as well as by visiting congregations and their clergy. The Bishop soon recognized the growing number of worshipers in Woodbury, as well as the need for a more organized and regular place of worship. On May 15, 1854 Bishop Doane appointed The Reverend William Herbert Norris as a Missionary to Woodbury, and wrote the well known letter of introduction to Benjamin F. Carter, who would become a life-long-time, devoted communicant of Christ Church:

Riverside, 15 May, 1854

My dear Mr. Carter:

This will introduce to you The Rev. Mr. Norris. He is instructed to remove to Woodbury and undertake the establishment of a church there. I commend him to your kindness. You will show him the cure and aid him in its accomplishment.

Your faithful friend,  
/s/ G. W. Doane

Fourteen months later, on July 26, 1855 Bishop Doane wrote another oft-quoted notation in his diary:

On Thursday, 26, I laid the corner-stone of Christ Church, Woodbury; and made the address. The Rev. Messrs. Norris, the Missionary, Bartlett and Graham (of the Diocese of South Carolina) were present. I found the roots of the church already well set, in a soil where some have thought it never could secure a lodgment. But, "all men have not faith."

Finally, it was Bishop Doane who spoke the following words to the Diocesan Convention in 1858:

On Thursday, 17 September, I consecrated Christ Church, Woodbury. The request to consecrate was read by the Missionary, the Rev. William Herbert Norris, and the Sentence of Consecration by the Rev. Elvin Keyser Smith. Morning Prayer was read by the Rev. Messrs. Garrison and Weld, the Rev. Dr. Odenheimer (of the Diocese of Pennsylvania), and the Rev. Mr. Mitcheson, reading the Lessons. I preached, and administered the Holy Communion; the Rev. Dr. Coleman (of the Diocese of

Pennsylvania) reading the Epistle, and the Rev. Messrs. Graham and Durborow, of the same Diocese, assisting in the distribution. This was a day of gladness, and of gratitude, to many hearts, besides my own. Year after year, for many years, I have preached to large congregations, in the Court House; never to more than two or three families, that professed and called themselves Churchmen; and it has passed into a proverb, of the vicinage, that the Church could never be planted in Woodbury. Nor could it, in the ordinary way. But the Missionary and his admirable wife gave themselves to the work. They had counted the cost; and they incurred it. Personal and domestic privations, they esteemed as nothing. Their vocation was to build a Church, which should be paid for; and to educate their children. God has blessed them, in the one. He will not fail them, in the other. From that upper room, up the steepest of all stairs, their worship was transferred to the holy and beautiful House, which has been the object of so much exertion, and so many prayers. And Christ Church, Woodbury, solid in stone, and “beautiful, exceedingly” and fitted for all sacred uses, stands, in the eye of God, the very gem of the Diocese.

Under Bishop Doane’s direction the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New Jersey grew steadily stronger, and at the end of his 27 years as Bishop the Diocese was served by 99 clergymen.

In 1859 the Bishop became ill with a fever, believed to be typhoid, from which he recovered, but which left him weak and longing for rest. One of the last things he said was, “I die in the Faith of the Son of God, and in the confidence of his one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I have no merits – no man has – but my trust is in the Mercy of Jesus.”

Bishop Doane died on April 27, 1859, and is interred in the burial grounds that surround St. Mary’s Episcopal Church on Broad Street in Burlington, New Jersey.

The Rt. Rev. George W. Doane was succeeded by William H. Odenheimer as Bishop on October 31, 1859. In 1874, New Jersey divided into two dioceses and the Diocese of Northern New Jersey (later the Diocese of Newark) became a separate entity from the southern portion of the state, which retained the title of The Diocese of New Jersey. On February 2, 1875, The Rt. Rev. John Scarborough assumed the role of Bishop of this remaining portion of the diocese.

**A Prayer During the Erection of a Church**

**Written by The Rt. Rev. George Washington Doane**

**Riverside, July 4, 1863**

**O, Almighty God, who has given unto us, Thy servants, grace, to erect an house, for the honour of Thy name, and for the comfort and salvation of the souls, for which, Thy only Son did shed His precious blood, accept the offering, which, in all humility, we bring to Thee, of that, which is Thine own; and bless Thy servants, and their service.**

**“Prosper, Thou the work of our hands upon us,” O God; “O, prosper Thou our handy-work.”**

**Direct their counsels, to whom the work is specially entrusted, that it may be ordered, to Thy greatest glory, and to the greatest good of Thy believing people. Have, in Thy Holy keeping, the building, and whatsoever appertains to it: that our sacred purpose may be brought, the soonest, to the best result.**

**Direct and bless the skill and industry of the Architect, the master-builders, and the workmen. May they be safe from every accident, and secure from every danger.**

**And may all, who are, in any way connected with this temple, made with hands, be built up, through the operation of Thy Holy Spirit, as living stones, acceptable to Thee, through Him, who is the tried and precious corner stone, Thy Son, our only Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## **Section II**

### **The Formative Years**

#### **The Early Days of Christ Church**



**Almighty God, we thank you for making us in your image, to share in the ordering of your world. Receive the work of our hands in this place, now to be set apart for your worship, the building up of the living, and the remembrance of the dead, to the praise and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**We give you thanks, O God, for the gifts of your people, and for the work of many hands, which have beautified this place and furnished it for the celebration of your holy mysteries. Accept and bless all we have done, and grant that in these earthly things we may behold the order and beauty of things heavenly; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Prayers during The Dedication and Consecration of a Church  
From The Book of Common Prayer  
According to the Use of The Episcopal Church**

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Benjamin F. Carter, Esq.**

As quoted in the previous chapter, Bishop Doane's letter introducing Fr. Norris to his potential congregation in Woodbury was addressed to Benjamin F. Carter. So who was Benjamin Carter, and why did Bishop Doane choose him as the person to receive Fr. Norris at the beginning of Christ Church's history?

Benjamin F. Carter was born on November 2, 1823 in Philadelphia, the son of Joseph Carter, a native of Gloucester County. Benjamin studied in schools in Philadelphia until he was eleven years old, after which he attended private schools in Woodbury. He was Woodbury's postmaster during the terms of Presidents Pierce and Buchanan, and held this position for one year under President Lincoln. He was one of Woodbury's first mayors. His career as a judge began when he was appointed in 1858, and he served as a distinguished presiding judge of Common Pleas Courts in Gloucester County for 20 years.

In 1854 Judge Carter married Elizabeth M. Reeves. On December 15, 1855 their first child, Agnes Reeves Carter, was baptized in Christ Church, later confirmed there (January 5, 1868) and then married there (February 9, 1881).

Like his older sister, Samuel Reeves Carter, the Carters' second child, was baptized in Christ Church on November 26, 1863. Their third child, another son named Benjamin Frank Carter, was also baptized in the Church. Sadly, this little boy died when he was 6 years old. His burial service was held in the Church, after which he was interred in the Christ Churchyard.

Benjamin Carter was a leading citizen, and one of Gloucester County's most respected residents. He and his family lived at 57 Euclid Street in Woodbury – their house still stands in that same location today, but is now the Congress Office Building.

Throughout his lifetime of dedicated civic responsibilities, Judge Carter continued to be an active Episcopalian, and was one of the original trustees of Christ Church. He served as Superintendent of the Church's Sunday School for 33 years, and was a longtime member of the vestry, serving as Senior Warden and treasurer; he was a frequent representative of the Church at diocesan conventions. His wife, Elizabeth, also a devout and faithful member of Christ Church, was elected treasurer of The Christ Church Guild when it was first organized.

Benjamin Carter was a frequent contributor of verse to *The Constitution*, a local Woodbury newspaper. Below is one of his contributions written when he was 59 years old that appeared in the December 13, 1882 issue of the paper commemorating All Saints' Day:

Catholicity

"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints."

Oft is celebrated the "Holy Communion,"  
Freely should be the "Table" spread,  
All in Christ will have union,  
For is He not their common "head"?

What if on slight points we vary,  
Shall it part us, in that wise?  
Sings the lark like the canary,  
Yet their notes will harmonize.

What if not alike in thinking  
If we bear the Christian name  
Though from different cups we're drinking,  
Still the fountain is the same.

'Tis not greatest matter, surely,  
With which people we take part,  
But to love the master purely,  
Serve him with a faithful heart.

Each that shall confess the Saviour,  
He will at his father's throne,  
(If consistent his behaviour)  
As His loved disciple own.

‘Tis God’s promise, He that made it,  
Power possess to fulfill.  
He that made the soul can save it,  
Let Him save it as he will.

Apparently Benjamin Carter and Bishop Doane enjoyed a long-lasting and genuine friendship, strengthened by their interest in and commitment to the beginning of Christ Church. In a letter written to Mary Louisa Whittall, a devoted parishioner of Christ Church, Samuel Carter remembers the following anecdote about his father:

“My father always favored Bishop Doane. Before the Episcopal Church was built in Woodbury, the Bishop visited them yearly, and he and neighboring clergymen would put on their robes at my father’s house and march to the Court House for the service. In 1861, two years after Bishop Doane’s death, my father and two other men were driving to another town on Sunday to attend church, and the question arose as to where Bishop Doane was. One of the men replied that he didn’t know where the Bishop was, but wherever Bishop Doane was now was where he would like to be someday, too.”

After Bishop Doane’s death and the split of the New Jersey diocese, Judge Carter also maintained a close relationship with Bishop Scarborough, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bishop of the Diocese. In an undated letter written by Carter’s son, Samuel Carter remembers:

“I recall that Bishop Scarborough usually spent Saturday nights (on his annual visitations) at our home; and when prayers were repeated by the family before breakfast on Sunday The Bishop would say, “You read the prayers, Mr. Carter.”

Elizabeth M. Carter predeceased her husband on August 20, 1886, when she was 60 years old. The year after his wife’s death Benjamin Carter resigned as Christ Church’s Superintendent of Sunday School under The Rev. Howard E. Thompson’s rectorate, and wrote the following letter to announce his resignation:

To My Teachers and Scholars of Christ Church’s Sunday School:

My Dear Friends –

Soon after the close of our School last July, by force of circumstances I was led to resign the position of Superintendent of the School to which I

had been appointed about 33 years ago by the then Rector, the Rev. William Herbert Norris, and had continued in it to that time.

Thirty three years is nearly an average life time. During this time our Church vine was planted here, the Parish was organized, and our beautiful church built, which is very dear to me. Two of the Bishops of the Diocese have died. Four ministers have come to the Parish – two have gone, one died, and one remains.

Teachers and scholars and officers have changed again and again and again till none of the original are left save Mr. H. Kerby, then a scholar, and myself. That much good has been accomplished in the School during these years by faithful and successful teaching, none can doubt. A large number have gone from the School to the Font to be made members of the body of Christ – from the Font to the Bishop to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and ratify baptismal vows in the rite of Confirmation.

Very many have gone from the influence here out into the world to make their mark, as we may hope, for good, and many others are resting in the “silent land,” waiting for the great day of our Lord.

I am thankful that it has been my privilege during all these years to take a part in this grand Sunday School work, and now as I withdraw from it here you must not think it is from want of interest or because I have become wearyed (sic.) by the way. Prompted by feelings of kindness, regard, and much respect for you I send these parting words.

And now, as we have so often prayed together – “May the Lord bless you and keep you in his work, and make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, and give you peace.”

Truly and affectionately,  
Your friend,  
/s/ Benjamin F. Carter

Benjamin F. Carter, Esq. died on November 7, 1894 at his home on Euclid Street.

Eleven days after Judge Carter’s death, The Vestry of Christ Church assembled in a special meeting on November 18, 1894 to adopt the following memorial:

#### In Memoriam

Benjamin F. Carter, Senior Warden of Christ Church, Woodbury, New Jersey, entered into rest November 7, 1894 in the 72<sup>nd</sup> year of his age.

The Vestry of Christ Church assembled in special meeting on this 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity, November 18, 1894, unanimously adopt the following memorial, directing that it be recorded in the Minutes, published in the local papers, and copied for transmission to the family of the deceased.

The departure of this our brother closes the earthly part of a life recognized by all as honorable and upright in the Church and in the Community. Prior to the last several years of failing health and powers, are recalled many years of steadfast religious habit; unswerving loyalty to the Church; more than ordinary adherence to right principle; and active interest and service for the Spiritual and temporal affairs of his own parish.

It is gratefully remembered that our brother was a prominent factor in the life of this parish from its beginning and all through its day of small things. Occupying from the first organization the position of Senior Warden, he was also for many years Treasurer, Superintendent of the Sunday School, and uninterruptedly until his death a delegate to the Convention of the Diocese. But for his own refusal of the honor on account of his failing health, he would have also been in recent years elected by the Diocese a delegate to the General convention of the American Church.

He has been the intimate and valued friend of three successive Bishops of the Diocese, and thus familiar with the larger life of the Church through the changes of many years.

It is the grateful, albeit regretful privilege of this Vestry to record the character and service of our brother through these earlier years and to esteem as the merciful ordinary of God the shortening of the time after such notable powers had failed.

In faith and submission we ask for him peace and progress in Paradise; and for ourselves more humble, holy and obedient walking before God.

/s/ Howard E. Thompson, Rector  
William Milligan, Secretary

The graves of Benjamin Carter, his wife Elizabeth, and their young son Benjamin Frank Carter (who was first interred in Christ Churchyard) are now together in the Reeves Family Cemetery, a small private cemetery at the edge of Greenfields in West Deptford Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey.

In 1905 the Resurrection Window in the church located next to the door leading to the Sacristy was given by the Carters' son and daughter in memory of their parents – a lasting memorial to two of the earliest and most dedicated parishioners of Christ Church who worshiped at the altar so many years ago.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Construction of Christ Church, Woodbury**

When Fr. Norris arrived in Woodbury there were only a handful of worshipers in the area. On April 10, 1854, a month before his official arrival, Fr. Norris wrote, "In the evening in the Court House at Woodbury, the Rev. Mr. Smith read prayers and I preached. The Rev. Mr. Stratton was present."

On June 4, 1854, a month after his official introduction by Bishop George Washington Doane, Fr. Norris began holding services in the Temperance Hall, a building erected in 1848 by the Samaritan Lodge, Division #47 of the Sons of Temperance. This was a three-story building, with a two-story dwelling on either side of a central hall. The third floor was one large room used for lodge meetings during the week, and for Episcopal worship services on Sunday mornings. This room became known as the "Upper Room," and it was here that Fr. Norris conducted services that were "humble, yet dignified" for a congregation who had waited and prayed so long for a church of their own.

On August 2, 1854 Fr. Norris conducted the first Baptism for his new flock, and recorded the service in his Parish Register. The baby was Cora Ladd, infant daughter of Samuel H. and Sarah Ladd. Sadly, Cora Ladd is also the first recorded Burial in the Register, dying the same year she was born.

The first step toward a formal church was taken when Fr. Norris appointed a committee consisting of himself, John K. Wright, George Manley, John Downing, and Benjamin F. Carter (who was named Treasurer of the Fund). It was at this meeting that the name "Christ Church" was decided upon once the "organization" was complete. The next step: Fr. Norris, George Manley, and Benjamin Carter were appointed a committee whose purpose was to secure a suitable lot on which to build a proper church.

On March 24, 1855 Fr. Norris purchased from Benjamin Lord and his wife Hannah the lot on which Christ Church now stands, together with the house on the corner of Delaware and Wood Streets, for a total cost of \$3,250. Two days later, in consideration



of \$500, Fr. Norris deeded the lot (exclusive of the house) to William Herbert Norris, John K. Wright, George Manley, Edward Pierson, and Benjamin Carter, in trust for church purposes. The house was apparently not part of this package of land on which Christ Church was built.

In May 1855 Fr. Norris wrote in his journal:

“The Mission at Woodbury, was begun on the Feast of Pentecost, in 1854. The service was celebrated in the upper room, which is still used for that purpose. The number of communicants found to be in and around the borough was 10. Since added 21; removed 3; died 1; present number 27. Baptisms 7 (infants 2, adults 5). Confirmed (on two occasions) 17; Burials 3.

A plan for a low priced and plain but appropriate stone Church has been procured from Mr. Notman, and an effort will be made to erect it this summer. It will be done, if we can obtain that help from the fellow members of the body, which we may reasonably count upon. We have already secured about one-third the estimated cost, but not enough to justify us in beginning to build. Our fund, however, is steadily increasing by small gifts. Our purpose is to pay as we go, to run no hazards, to incur no debt outside of the congregation, and beyond our control.”

In the above entry, Fr. Norris refers to “Mr. Notman.” The selection of this architect was not by accident; once again Bishop Doane was most likely instrumental in the choice. John Notman, a well-known American architect, was born in Scotland and educated at the Royal Scottish Academy. In 1831 he emigrated to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. Notman’s reputation spread quickly, and he was soon considered one of the country’s most innovative architects in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Notman introduced the Italianate villa to the United States at Burlington, New Jersey, and was recognized as one of the country’s most skillful practitioners in that vein. Coincidentally, in addition to his religious conviction and dedication, one of Bishop Doane’s most significant contributions was to American architecture. Notman’s work came to the Bishop Doane’s attention, and with his support Notman’s reputation grew even more rapidly.

An example of Notman's early Gothic villa design was "Riverside," designed by him as a home for Bishop Doane in Burlington, New Jersey. (Design and construction dates of this home vary between 1837 and 1846). The Bishop's home had significant exterior features of the Italian style, in addition to its Gothic interior. Sadly Riverside was demolished in 1961. Another example of the combined efforts of these men was the earliest English Gothic Revival structure in North America (New St. Mary's, 1847-1854) in Burlington, New Jersey.

Notman's strength lay in his ability to import sophisticated design ideas from Britain and translate them skillfully for his American clientele. Some of his more famous local designs include St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia; St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Philadelphia; The Protestant Episcopal Cathedral of St. John in Wilmington; St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Philadelphia; The Athenaeum of Philadelphia; the College of New Jersey Chapel in Princeton; the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia; Holy Trinity Episcopal Church on Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia – and Christ Episcopal Church, Woodbury.

In July 1855, Christ Church's cornerstone was laid. In May 1856 Fr. Norris again wrote:

"The Church building, which was begun about eleven months ago, is nearly finished. It is a substantial and handsome edifice, and will furnish accommodations for three hundred worshippers. It is earnestly hoped that it may be consecrated this summer. We have good reason to believe that our congregation will rapidly increase after we begin to worship in the church."

On September 17, 1857 Bishop Doane consecrated the new church.

By May 1858 the parish had grown, and once again according to Fr. Norris, Missionary:

"Number of families, 16; number of individuals, 68; baptisms 10 (adults 5, infants 5); confirmed, 10; marriages, 2; burials, 1; Communicants (added 4; removed into the parish, 1); present number, 33.

The Holy Communion is celebrated at every Sunday morning Service, and on Christmas and Ascension Day. Catechists and Sunday School Teachers (1 male, 4 females) 5; number of children taught the Catechism openly in the Church, 15; Sunday Scholars (not included in the foregoing) 15; total number of young persons instructions, 30.

Divine Service is celebrated once every Sunday, and on Christmas and Ascension Day and every other day except Monday, subject to occasional interruptions.”

**No man entering a house ignores  
Him who dwells there.  
This is the house of God.  
And he is here.  
Pray then to him who loves you,  
And bids you welcome.  
Give thanks for those who in years past,  
Built this place to his glory.**

**Written by The Reverend Kenneth Newton  
Early Rector of St. Peter's Church  
St. George's Parish, Bermuda**

## **Section III**

### **Inside Christ Church**

**We love the place, O God,  
Wherein thine honor dwells;  
The joy of thine abode  
All other joy excels.**

**We love the house of prayer,  
Wherein thy servants meet;  
For thou, O Lord, art there  
Thy chosen ones to greet.**

**We love the sacred font,  
Wherein the holy Dove  
Bestows, as ever wont,  
His blessing from above.**

**We love thy altar, Lord,  
Its mysteries revere;  
For there, in faith adored,  
We find thy presence near.**

**We love thy holy word,  
The lamp thou gav'st to guide  
All wand'ers home, O Lord,  
Home to their Father's side.**

**Then let us sing the love  
To us so freely giv'n,  
Until we sing above  
The triumph song of heav'n.  
Amen.**

**William Bullock, 1854  
Hymn 398, The 1940 Hymnal of the Protestant  
Episcopal Church**

## Chapter 5

### The Altar and Reredos in Christ Church

Christ Church's first altar was a plain wooden table in the Upper Room of Temperance Hall, on which Fr. Norris' small pocket communion set was laid.

When the new church was built in 1856, the altar remained a wooden table covered entirely by hangings. At first only green and white hangings were available; the other colors came at a later date. In 1890 the altar at which we worship today was installed and consecrated, given by Mrs. John S. Twells in memory of her husband, John Stokes Twells. At the base of the altar on the right side is a small plaque commemorating this memorial, worded simply:

*To the Glory of God and in Memory of John S. Twells  
At Rest  
March 13, 1890*

In 1890 the altar's rich dark wood was enhanced by a drape (called a dossal), hung from a brass rod behind and above the central place of worship in Christ Church. This dossal covered the lower portion of one of three vertical windows that were at that time above the altar. A cross, two small brass vases (kept on the altar whether or not they held flowers), and a Missal stand – these items were all that stood on the altar in the early years.

To further enhance the focal point of our worship, in 1921 the Reredos and Panel behind the altar were given by Bertha R. Twells in memory of her mother and father. An inscription carved on the base of the Reredos resting directly above the altar reads:

*To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Samuel G. and Celeste Rodney Twells.*

The Altar and Reredos in Christ Church are truly magnificent works of artistic beauty, meant to stimulate the worshipers' spirit and give rise to an atmosphere of reverence and adoration. Executed in oak, one of the hardest woods known to man, the altar has stood

in its present location for 117 years. Most often dressed with hangings, the outward beauty of the church's altar is not often seen to those who worship before it.

On either side of the base on the front of the altar are three Corinthian columns, intricately carved into the wood. Next to the columns on the left side is another carving of perfectly created sheaves of wheat, signifying bread; next to the columns on the right side is another carving of grapes, signifying wine. In the center front of the altar is a metal oval insert, engraved with a lamb. All of these carvings are symbolic of the Holy Eucharist.

Embedded on top of the altar is a stone measuring 18" x 18". On this stone, of unknown origin or composition, but well worn and scratched in testimony to long years of age and use, five crosses are engraved – one at each corner and one in the center, signifying the five wounds Christ suffered in His hands, feet, and side during His crucifixion. This stone is reminiscent of the stone altars of the early days of the church; today, in some churches during the consecration of the altar these five scars are filled with oil and/or incense and ignited by the bishop during the ceremony.

Behind and above the back of the altar is a raised shelf called the Retable. Upon it stands the altar cross with the candles to the right and left; during the Eucharist two additional candles are placed on the altar itself. The memorial flowers are displayed on two stands on either side of the altar.

The words *Holy Holy Holy* are carved into the wood on the front of the Retable immediately above the altar, signifying the Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity. Below, on the left side of the Retable is a carved sheaf of wheat, while the right side is enhanced with carved grapes.

The Memorial Reredos that surrounds the Altar is an intricately carved screen meant to dignify and enhance the Altar. Embedded in the Reredos is a hand-carved panel portraying a sculptured reproduction of DaVinci's immortal *The Last Supper*, originally



painted on the wall of the Church of Santa Maria della Grazia in Milan, Italy. This hand carved work shows our Lord and the twelve disciples in the upper room at the occasion of the Last Supper. The spontaneous action of the twelve is prompted by the drama of the moment when Jesus has just predicted that one of them would betray him, and the disciples' faces mirror their reaction to these words.

The first character seated at the table, from left to right, is Bartholomew, also known as Nathaniel. He is on his feet, gripping the table, unwilling to accept the accusation. Next is James (the Lesser), so called because of his short stature. The third figure is Andrew, the fisherman, and then Judas, whose grasping nature is reflected in both his face and his hands. His elbow rests on the table; his right hand clutches the telltale moneybag. Behind Judas stands Simon Peter, the great rock of the early Church. In his right hand he holds a knife, perhaps because he was about to prepare the fish for the meal. He points to Jesus, and whispers to John, the beloved disciple, who was a young man at the time. Seated at the "head" of the table is the central, majestic figure of Jesus, whose face appears almost expressionless, but in his representation the artist has captured the divinity of Jesus' character, hallowed by the sublime power of His majesty. To His right stands Thomas, the doubter; James (the Greater); then Philip, a young man older than John, mild-mannered and demure. Next is Matthew, the "accuser," who points a finger at Judas as if he already knows he will betray Jesus. To his right is Thaddeus, or Jude, and at the end of the table is Simon, the oldest man present.

For many years the panel in Christ Church's Reredos was thought to have been carved by Anton Lang, who portrayed Jesus in the 1900, 1910 and 1922 presentations of the Passion Play at Oberammergau. This assumption grew from the initials "A.L." carved at the bottom right hand side of this panel. More recent research during the preparation of this latest history of Christ Church has discovered the Christ Church's Reredos and panel were in fact carved by Alois Lang, a cousin of Anton Lang.

Alois Lang was a Bavarian craftsman who was born in Oberammergau in 1872. In this village, known throughout the world for its woodcarvings and for the Passion Play

performed once every ten years, Alois studied under Ludwig Lang, an acknowledged master in the art of carving. Work of this kind was Alois' only study and occupation. When the Reredos at Christ Church was created, Mr. Lang was employed by The American Seating Company, whose Ecclesiastical shops were located in Grand Rapids, Michigan (the same company who later designed Christ Church's front doors). He was a communicant at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Springfield, Illinois, and designed the Reredos there, which is more elaborate but quite similar to the one in Christ Church. Among his other creations is a Reredos that enhances the altar in The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Great Falls, Montana. He died in the spring of 1954 at Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Facing the altar, to the left is the Ambry, identifiable by its solid brass door, and dedicated in 1961 by Mr. Joseph Foster in memory of his wife, Sarah Foster. Inside the Ambry the Sacrament is kept reserved and ready for the sick, and for the devotion of the faithful. The Altar Guild members' sole responsibility is to place in and remove the key from the Ambry door. A Priest of the church is the only individual who opens this door.

Facing the altar, to the right on the wall is a shelf called a Credence Shelf or Table, on which the bread and wine rest before consecration. This Shelf, given as a memorial by Mrs. H. F. Eigenbrodt, was dedicated on September 13, 1959 in memory of her husband, Henry F. Eigenbrodt. Mr. Eigenbrodt was a long-time and respected parishioner of Christ Church, and for many years served as a vestryman and warden. A brass plaque on the front of the Shelf reads: "To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Henry F. Eigenbrodt – 1884-1956. Given by Mrs. H. F. Eigenbrodt."

So now we have the Altar and the Reredos – two of the most holy and visible memorials in Christ Church, both in memory of family members named Twells. An introduction to this family and the significance of their contributions to the history of Christ Church is described in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 6**

### **The Twells Family of Woodbury, New Jersey**

John Stokes Twells, in whose memory Christ Church's altar was given, was born on July 25, 1818. On September 7, 1841 he married Fanny Grant at a 9 a.m. service performed by the Rev. Channing Moore at 44 Pine Street in Philadelphia. That same month John and Fanny left Philadelphia and moved to Peru, Indiana, where they lived until August 1844. It was in Indiana their first son, Samuel Grant Twells, was born on September 25, 1842.

In November 1844 the family moved to Philadelphia, Pa, where their daughter, Josephine de la Cuesta Twells, was born on August 14, 1845. In 1848 the family relocated to Germantown, Pa., where Josephine, at the age of four years, died on June 15, 1849. Their third child, John Standley Twells, was born in Germantown, Pa. on December 24, 1851.

In 1852 the entire Twells family (mother, father and two remaining children) all contracted Typhoid fever, and miraculously all survived. In 1856, when son John Standley Twells was five years old, he was infected with Scarlet Fever and was not expected to recover. Slowly he regained his strength, but his illness left him with the loss of his speech. A family record describes John Standley as "practically recovered, but much shattered."

In February 1858 the Twells family returned to Philadelphia, where they remained until May 1861, when they moved to their new homestead in Woodbury, called "Briar Hill Farm," which included a farm and boatyard that stretched from Delaware Street to the then navigable Woodbury Creek.

It is the line descended from the Twells' first son, Samuel Grant Twells, that is of most interest and directly connected to Woodbury and Christ Church.

Samuel Grant Twells married Celeste O. Rodney on October 11, 1874, and subsequently 6 children were born to the couple:

- Bertha Rodney Twells – born 8/9/1875
- Herbert Norris Twells – born Jan. 6, 1877 (obviously named after the first rector of Christ Church)
- John Stokes Twells – born 8/23/1879 (more about him below)
- Caesar Rodney Twells – born 8/7/1883
- Fanny Grant Twells – born June 27, 1887 (named in honor of her paternal grandmother)
- Alfred Lee Twells – born July 12, 1889

From the time of the family's earliest worship in Christ Church, the Twells family gave generously to the church, and will long be remembered for the many memorials donated by them. A partial list of these memorials includes:

- October, 1886 –Prior to her husband's death, Mrs. John S. (Fanny) Twells offered Christ Church \$5,000, thereby liquidating the debt upon the Rectory and Temperance Hall properties, and canceling the mortgage. At the time, Fr. Thompson (the 4<sup>th</sup> Rector) noted Mrs. Twells' gift in his journal, followed by his exclamation: "Laus Deo."
- 1887 – Mrs. John S. Twells provided Christ Church with the Ewer and Fittings for the Baptismal Font. (This is the only mention of the present Baptismal Font at the time of this writing.)
- 1888 – A Clergy Sedilia was given by Mrs. John S. Twells.
- September 7, 1890 – Mrs. John S. Twells offered Christ Church the new altar in memory of her late husband who died in March of that year.
- At the same time, the brass Sanctuary Gates that we see open and close each Sunday while kneeling at the altar are another of Mrs. Twells' gifts in memory of Mrs. Sarah D. Ladd. This memorial was a tribute to a parishioner who was also an early member of the parish, who died when she was 60 years old. Mrs. Ladd was the first organist at Christ Church, and along with the Misses Glover was the first to serve on the Altar Guild. A brass plaque on both gates is inscribed as follows: *Open to me the Gates of Righteousness That I may go into them And Give thanks unto the Lord. To the Glory of God and in Memory of Sarah D. Ladd. Faithful at the Altar. Entered into Rest April 30, 1889.*

- 1892 – A Litany Desk in memory of Frank Leslie was a gift of Mrs. John S. Twells, the Saint Agnes Guild, and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew.
- In 1897 –A new pipe organ was given to Christ Church in memory of Fanny Twells (Mrs. John Stokes Twells) by the Vestry, the Christ Church Guild and the St. Agnes Guild.
- In 1905 – The **Alpha & Omega** stained glass window in the vestibule of the church was a gift of J. Standley Twells (the third child born to John Stokes Twells and Fanny Grant Twells) in memory of Mary P. Locke, a nine-year old child who died of Scarlet Fever on February 17, 1884.

*An interesting fact:* On the opposite side of the vestibule is the **Chi Rho** window (the first two Greek letters of the word “Christ”) in memory of Gladys V. Dobbs, the eleven-year-old daughter of Edward H. and Elizabeth B. Dobbs who died on January 28, 1905. It is important to note that the first two windows seen by every one who enters Christ Church are memorials to two children who live on so many years later through the thoughtfulness of those who loved them, and loved the church in which they worshiped.

- In 1905 – The large solid brass Latin style cross, which until 1999 stood on Christ Church’s altar for 94 years, was given by Mrs. John Stokes Twells in memory of the Church’s first Rector, The Rev. William Herbert Norris. This magnificent ecclesiastical piece measures 39” high by 20-1/2” wide. The letters **IHS** (the first two and last letters of the Greek name for Jesus) are inscribed in the center. This monogram is also thought to be the initial letters of **J**esus **H**ominum **S**alvator, a Latin phrase meaning “Jesus, Savior of Human Beings.”
- In 1912 – Tiling in various parts of the church floor and vestibule was given by Miss Bertha Twells.
- In 1915 – A silver Chalice was another of Miss Bertha Twells’ gifts.

John Stokes Twells, son of Samuel Grant Twells and Celeste Rodney Twells and named after his grandfather, is another interesting member of the Twells family. John Stokes was confirmed in Christ Church on June 14, 1897. In the early 1900’s he served as one of the town’s first Councilmen, then Council President, and finally Mayor of Woodbury for two terms (1935 to 1938). Like his father Samuel, he operated the Twells’ Farm on Briar Hill Lane, and the Twells’ boat yard. Through his mother’s heritage, the second John Stokes Twells was a direct descendant of Caesar Rodney, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Revolutionary Brigadier General, and former President of Delaware (an office designated by the Delaware Constitution of 1776 that provided for

the first executives of the independent State of Delaware, and forerunner of the elected office of Governor). Another interesting fact: in connection with the recent 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Diana, Princess of Wales' untimely death, genealogical research during the writing of this history of Christ Church indicates a distant relationship between Princess Diana and Caesar Rodney, thereby linking the Princess with the Twells family bloodlines.

Miss Bertha R. Twells (John Stokes Twells' sister) was active in Christ Church until she died on November 4, 1954 in Underwood Hospital at the age of 79 years. Over the years Miss Twells headed many of the organizations of the Church, and served as president of the Altar Guild for more than 30 years. A plaque in the hallway of the Ullrich Education Wing labeled "Past Benefactors of the Education Wing" commemorates Miss Twells' devotion to children and to Christ Church, and reads as follows: "In honor of Bertha Rodney Twells – for many years a faithful teacher in this Sunday School. This room furnished by Christ Church Guild in 1951."

Miss Twells was buried from Christ Church by Canon Robert G. Williams (the 10<sup>th</sup> Rector), who said of Miss Twells at the funeral:

"Now she has gone to her Eternal Rest. Many places will be made poorer and emptier by her absence – this town will, so will Christ Church, and so will many homes and many hearts. She will abide with us in a spiritual presence, and the inspiration of her noble spirit will be greater and not less."

John Stokes Twells died on February 9, 1970, and after burial services at Christ Church conducted by The Reverend Canon William V. Rauscher (the 11<sup>th</sup> Rector), he was buried in Eglington Cemetery, Clarksboro, N.J. A true public servant, he lived his life in the highest tradition of his predecessors.

In 1963, those who remained of the Twells family celebrated 100 years of family residence in Woodbury. In 1978 the window called the *Arts & Sciences* window on the back wall of the Gospel side of Christ Church was given To the Glory of God and In

Loving Memory of The Twells Family. The window is inscribed: "Presented to Christ Church By Those Who Love Them. Merciful Lord, we Beseech Thee to Cast They Bright Beams of Light Upon Thy Church."

Today in 2007 no descendants of the Twells family worship at Christ Church; however, the legacy handed down to all of us from these early devoted and generous members will live on for untold future generations. In further recognition of the family's service to the community, Twells Avenue in Woodbury, N.J. serves as a continuing reminder.

Surely the words spoken by Canon Williams during his eulogy at Miss Bertha Twells' burial service are a tribute to the entire Twells family.

*O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered; accept our prayers on behalf of thy servant(s) departed, and grant them an entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of thy saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

The Book of Common Prayer  
1928

## **Chapter 7**

### **The Rectory of Christ Church**

On March 24, 1855 Fr. Norris purchased the lot on which Christ Church now stands, along with the house on the corner of Delaware and Woods Streets. Two days later when he deeded the ground to the Vestry of Christ Church he excluded the house from the transaction. The house, which became home to Fr. Norris and his family, was called “The Norris House.”

When Fr. Norris died in 1880 the house was inherited by his widow Juliet Rawle Norris, who continued to live there. When she died in 1883 the house was inherited by her son Dr. Herbert Norris. On December 21, 1885 Dr. Norris deeded the house to the Vestry for the magnificent sum of \$4,300! And so in 1885 The Norris House became officially “The Rectory.”

The Rectory is a three-story Victorian style house, which over the years has been renovated and remodeled several times. A picture dated 1896 shows the house with a large front and side porch. On the first floor is a large living room with a gas fireplace, a spacious dining room, kitchen and powder room. Adjacent to but apart from the family’s living area is the Rector’s office, as well as the Parish Secretary’s office. On the second floor are four bedrooms and 2 baths. There is hardwood flooring throughout the house. On the third floor are several more bedrooms that have not been used for many years.

Since 1885 the Rectory has been home to 12 of the 13 Rectors and their families: The Rev. William H. Norris (while the Rectory was still “The Norris House”); The Rev. Wm. H. Lewis, The Rev. George M. Bond, The Rev. Abram L. Urban; The Rev. Malcolm Taylor; The Rev. James O. McIlhenny; The Rev. Edgar Campbell; The Rev. Howard M. Stuckert; The Rev. Canon G. W. Williams; The Rev. Canon William V. Rauscher, Jr.; The Rev. Douglas E. Anderson; and The Rev. Brian K. Burgess. During the rectorate of Fr. Abram L. Urban (1896 – 1902), the Rectory was completely remodeled and veneered



with stone. (Incidentally, Fr. Urban's son Ralph Ernest Urban, who had lived in the Rectory with his parents, followed in his father's footsteps and became an Episcopal Priest. On November 11, 1932 Fr. Urban's son was consecrated as Suffragan Bishop of New Jersey.)

When Canon Rauscher became the 11<sup>th</sup> Rector in 1960, there was neither a secretary nor an office. As Christ Church grew, Verna Schmidt was hired as the first Parish Secretary – her “office” was located in the foyer of the Rectory beneath the stairwell. Several years later the side porch of the Rectory was eliminated, and the present office structure was built in a location convenient to the Rector's office, but apart from the family's living area.

Over the years the Rectory has been visited by many prominent individuals. A partial list of overnight visitors includes: Astronaut Edgar Mitchell, the sixth man to walk on the moon; Hugh Lynn Cayce (son of the famous Edgar Cayce); Harold E. Hughes (then Governor of Iowa); Arthur Ford, (the controversial famous psychic); Canon John Pearce-Higgins, Vice Provost of Southwark Cathedral, London, England; Walter B. Gibson, prolific author and creator of Lamont Cranston and “The Shadow” series; Brother Mandus from England; Father Whitall of Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, New York; Fr. Cyprian Murray of the Franciscan Order; Anthony Brooke, the first white Rajah of Sarawak in Northern Borneo; and Allen Spraggett, Religion Editor of the *Toronto Star*. Other visitors to the Rectory and Christ Church include Virgil Fox, the famous organist; healers Olga and Ambrose Worrall; Yogi Amrit Desai; author Dr. Marcus Bach; master magician Milbourne Christopher; John Calvert, who toured the world with his illusion show and also played “The Falcon” in early Hollywood films; Dr. Carroll Nash; psychiatrist Robert Laidlaw; columnist Ruth Montgomery, who wrote the story of Jeane Dixon; Dr. Walter Huston Clark; Dr. Gardner Murphy; Dr. Stanley Krippner; and numerous clergy and bishops, including all the Bishops of New Jersey, beginning with The Rt. Rev. George Washington Doane, who consecrated Christ Church on September 17, 1857. All of these visitors shared information and knowledge within the Rectory's walls.

On January 20, 2005 Fr. Brian K. Burgess, his wife Denise, their son Robert and daughter Catherine became the most recent residents in this fine old house. Before they arrived the Rectory was repainted, the bathrooms were renovated, a new heating system and central air conditioning was installed in the Spring of 2005, and renovations to the unused third floor of the Rectory were approved, which Fr. Burgess felt would be ideal quarters for visiting clergy and out-of-town visitors. As of this writing renovations to the entire third floor are underway, scheduled for completion before the end of 2007.

Just stones, bricks, wood, and mortar? I think not. I truly believe old homes like the Rectory have lives of their own, and take on characteristics of each of its residents. Apparently Fr. Burgess' son and daughter sensed this presence when they moved in, and at the time the Rector told me, "My children both walk a little more quietly in their new home, listening for voices from the past and anxious to become a part of its history."

This stately Victorian house is a living testament to those families from the past who have lived there. It provides a haven of peace and love for the present Rector and his family, and stands as a symbol of hope for all future Rectors of Christ Church, Woodbury.

## **Chapter 8**

### **The Churchyard at Christ Church**

In 1869, before the construction of the Parish House, Christ Church, Woodbury, had its own churchyard. At the time there was nothing on the east side of the Church but empty space. Twelve burial lots were laid out in a straight line, running from the iron fence at the front of the church to the northerly end of the property, with a footpath alongside the graves where for 40 years various members of Christ Church families buried their dead. As in the English churchyards, Christ Church's parishioners of that time were reminded of their mortality as they walked past these graves and entered the church to worship.

On March 6, 1869 The Rev. William Herbert Norris described the churchyard "Rules and Regulations" as follows:

First. The Trustees reserve for themselves and their future associates and successors in the legal ownership of the Church and yard exclusive control over the said yard, excepting the use hereby granted of their portion herein described: they also reserve the right to make such regulations concerning burials as shall seem to them needful and proper: and the right to charge for every breaking of the ground for a burial, or a disinterment, or for the erection of a stone or monument, a sum not exceeding two dollars.

Second. No service, ceremony or address shall take place at any burial except under the authority and sanction of the clergyman in charge of the Church. And in case of a vacancy in the charge or absence of the minister, then with the sanction of those holding the legal title of the Church property.

Third. In order that there may be no structure in the yard unsuitable to the place, no tombstone or monument may be erected which shall be disapproved by the legal owners of the Church property.

Fourth. No transfer of the rights and uses herein granted shall be valid until approved upon a written certificate by the legal owners of the Church property.

/s/ William Herbert Norris  
President of the Board of Trustees  
Dated March 6, 1869  
Woodbury, N.J.

The following early member families of Christ Church purchased these 12 lots, and some of their names are familiar today by looking at the Church's stained glass windows:

Lot 1: Benjamin F. Carter, Senior Warden

Lot 2: Chalkey Glover (Originally purchased in 1860 by J. Wright, the first parishioner to buy a plot.)

Lot 3: No certificate was issued for this lot. For a time it was occupied by family members of The Rev. W. H. Norris until he moved those bodies to the churchyard of St. James the Less in Philadelphia (which is also Fr. Norris' final resting place).

Lot 4: L. N. Ladd

Lot 5: Thomas Nash

Lot 6: David Cooper

Lot 7: Dr. C. F. Clark (originally purchased 2 lots, but later sold Lot 6 to David Cooper)

Lot 8: Charles Hopkins

Lot 9: Clement Whitall

Lot 10: James N. Pierson

Lot 11: Henry Campbell (originally purchased by John Shivers)

Lot 12: James B. Caldwell

In a parish history written by Mary Louise Whitall, a longtime faithful parishioner of the past, she recalls moving with her family into a house opposite the church during The Rev. William H. Lewis' rectorship (from 1873 to 1878). "Mr." Lewis (as Ms. Whitall refers to him) had 3 sons, and she remembers playing among the tombstones in the Christ Churchyard with these boys.

Individual and detailed deeds for each of these lots were issued to the original 12 owners, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of Gloucester County. At the time of issue, the original twelve owners agreed to transfer their deed to a new owner through Christ Church and the Court if the original owner changed his/her mind and wanted to be buried elsewhere.

By 1883 Fr. Norris had died, “Mr.” Lewis had come and gone, and Fr. George Bond was then rector. During those years Christ Church had become more organized and detail-oriented, and evidently some of the parishioners had grown a bit testy over the size of their individual burial plots. Also, the price had gone up on these lots. To further complicate matters, the Carter’s six-year-old son Benjamin Frank had died in 1872 and tragically had been buried in the wrong spot in the Churchyard – actually he was laid to rest in the Glover’s plot! So it appears it was left to Senior Warden Benjamin F. Carter to clarify a few details regarding the churchyard and the plots therein.

On November 8, 1883 Mr. Carter wrote the following detailed description of the burial lots for inclusion in the Vestry minutes:

A description of the burial lots in the yard and on the easterly side, and line of Christ Church building, Woodbury, New Jersey, commencing at the southerly side of the lot near to the iron fence, ten feet from the southerly corner of the first buttress, and running northerly to the fence on the northerly side of the Church lot. The lots were intended to be all of the same size, except the Caldwell lot which is not so long as the others. For it was paid twenty dollars (\$20). All the others were thirty dollars each. By mistake in certificate, the Carter lot was made to be only 10 by 10 feet, while the Glover lot was made to be 12 by 12 feet – when they should have been 10 by 12 feet.

By December 1906 the decision had been made to build a new Parish House. In preparation for this building the burial lots had to go, and this decision is so stated in the Vestry minutes that month. Also by then a number of the original deed holders had changed their mind and transferred their deeds to other parishioners. (An interesting aside – at that same meeting the Vestry also decided the choir should be vested for the first time. They also fired the organist at that meeting.)

A year later, on December 2, 1907 the Vestry approved the purchase of several large plots in Section C (the original and oldest section) in what is now known as Eglington Cemetery, Clarksboro for a cost of \$300. Next they assigned the job of overseeing the

disinterment and reinterment of all bodies in Christ Churchyard to the Property Committee!

Thus began the removal of many of original members of Christ Church to their various final resting places (again!). By the end of December 1907, most of the families buried in Christ Churchyard were reinterred in the newly purchased Christ Church area in Eglington (or in previously existing family plots there) – with one notable exception. Benjamin F. Carter's wife Elizabeth had died on August 20, 1886, and at the time she was interred in Christ Churchyard close by her six-year-old son Benjamin Frank Carter (who had been mistakenly buried in the Glover plot next to the Carter's). When Mr. Carter died on November 17, 1894 he was buried in his wife's family cemetery, known as Reeves Cemetery (which today can be found in the middle of Greenfields). At that time Mr. Carter's wife and son were disinterred from the Churchyard and also moved to Reeves Cemetery.

The last family to be removed from the Churchyard was that of Chalkley Glover, whose members were reinterred on April 28, 1909 in Colestown Cemetery, located in what is today Cherry Hill. A letter in the archives dated March 8, 1909, written to Mr. John Twells, Secretary of the Vestry, and signed by Theodora Glover and Sisters, indicates the removal of the Glover family was not accomplished without some dissention. The letter reads:

Mr. John Twells

Dear Sir:

We have just received your letter about moving our dead from Woodbury Church yard. Now we wrote to Mr. McIlhenny (*the Rector of Christ Church at that time*) giving him a statement of the cost which we will now tell you.

Mr. Davis charges thirty two dollars and fifty cents. Mr. Purly charges seventy five dollars for moving and fitting the stones.

The ground at Colestown is sixty dollars.

Our lot in Woodbury Churchyard will be fifty dollars, making altogether two hundred and seventeen dollars, and fifty cents.

Now when that amount of money is payed (sic.) to us we will remove our dead as soon as Mr. Purly and Mr. Davis can do the work, and then we will give you the deed of our Woodbury lot, but until we receive the two hundred and seventeen dollars and fifty cents our dead must remain where they are. The money must be paid to us and we will have the work done and settle our own bills.

Very respectfully yours,  
Theodora Glover and sisters  
Ellen Grey Glover  
Sallie B. Glover

It should be noted that Fr. McIlhenny (who had resigned as rector in October 1908) had previously responded to the letter referred to by the Misses Glover in the above correspondence, in which he pointed out that the amount of \$217.50 was more than twice the amount given to others to remove their dead. But the Glover family refused to budge – not a penny more, and not a penny less – and so the vestry finally approved the requested \$217.50, and the Glovers' loved ones were finally moved to their final resting place.

Besides the deceased Glover family members, parishioners reinterred from Christ Churchyard include: Charles and Lucy Hopkins; Eliza Hugg; Thos. M. Clark; the infant child of Samuel G. Twells; Edward, Bertha, Sarah and Clara Pierson; David, Elizabeth and Robert Cooper; Charles and Anna Whitall; James Caldwell and his wife Ascha; and Susan Galbraith.

In old Section C in Eglington Cemetery (near the flagpole) are the gravestones that mark several of these faithful parishioners. In September 2005 one of these stones – a cracked and sunken flat marble slab (or tablet, which is the correct name for this monument) that marks the grave of James B. Caldwell (1828-1880) and his wife Ascha (1824-1870) – was in sad disrepair. The tablet is inscribed with both of their names, and an inscription that reads: “Removed from Christ P.*(Protestant)* E.*(Episcopal)* Church Grounds, Woodbury, New Jersey, December 13, 1907.” A recent visit to the office in Eglington resulted in the cemetery recognizing the historic value of this grave, and as a courtesy to

Christ Church *at no expense* the cemetery repaired the Caldwell's final resting place. This old sunken plot has now been filled in, a concrete foundation has been laid beneath the tablet for support, the crack in the tablet has been repaired, and it now rests in its original level position on top of the grave. It is gratifying to know that through the interest and kindness of personnel at the Eglington cemetery, a husband and wife who faithfully served Christ Church many years ago have once again been afforded the respect to which they are entitled.



**Chapter 9**  
**The Pulpit and The Lectern**  
**(Capt. Charles Kerlin and Mrs. & Mrs. W. S. Connor)**

On July 2, 1887 the Brass Eagle Lectern that stands in the front of Christ Church from which the Lessons are read at each service was given to the church by Mrs. And Mrs. W. S. Conner in memory of their son, W. Haskell Conner.

The following inscription appears on the base of the Lectern:

**“To the glory of God and in memoriam – W. Haskell Conner entered  
into rest December 19, 1884. Son of W. S. and Mary A. Conner.”**

According to a newspaper clipping, Mary A. Conner was buried from the home of her husband, William, 164 S. Broad Street, Woodbury, New Jersey, on August 12, 1916.

An obituary printed at the time of William S. Conner’s death (obviously after his wife had died) states:

“At the age of 16, William S. Conner worked as a clerk in Philadelphia in a dry goods store. Later he became a wholesale dry goods owner. He became President of the Delaware River R.R. Mr. Conner was President of the Farmers & Mechanics Bank in Woodbury, and was one of the organizers of the Woodbury Trust Company, and The First National Bank of Westville. Eventually he became President of both banks. The accumulation of money was his chief interest. He was not interested in politics or public affairs. He had been in failing health for a long time. He is survived by one son and several nieces and nephews.”

Three years later, during 1890 the Pulpit in Christ Church was installed as another memorial. At that time the organ was already situated on the Gospel side of the church, and the door opening from the Nave into the Sacristy had not yet been constructed; so the Pulpit was placed on the Epistle side, where it remained for the next 61 years. In 1951 at Canon Robert G. W. Williams’ request and direction, and under the supervision of Mr.

Ralph Kurtz (Parish Musician Richard Kurtz's father), the church properties were expanded and the Pulpit was moved to its present location.

The word "Pulpit" is derived from a Latin word *pulpitum*, meaning platform or stage. The Pulpit is a unique item in church furniture and architecture, and the right to stand in it must be earned by ordination. In churches the pulpit is elevated so as to draw the attention of the listeners to the speaker. For many years, in cathedrals as well as in small or large churches, it was from the Pulpit that the Gospel was read.

On the base of the Pulpit is inscribed:

**"To the Glory of God and In Loving Memory of Susan F. Kerlin, wife of Charles W. Kerlin. Entered Into Life November 13, 1889. Lord All Pitying, Jesus Blest, Grant Her Thine Eternal Rest."**

The brass lamp that hangs above the pulpit was installed at the same time. The lamp is inscribed as follows:

**"To the Glory of God and In Loving Memory of A. Louise Kerlin, wife of John Kerlin. Entered into rest on Easter morning 1886. Aged 83 years. 'At evening time it shall be light.' "**

Both of these memorials were given by Charles Kerlin – the pulpit in memory of his wife, and the lamp above the pulpit in memory of his mother. An interesting aside: the cost of the pulpit was \$500; the lamp cost \$30. – quite a sum at that time. The Kerlin family is listed in Christ Church's first Register among the earliest parishioners.

A search of the census records in The Gloucester County Historical Society revealed that in 1860 Charles Kerlin lived in Chester where he worked as a "waterman." According to Webster's Dictionary, a waterman is a man who makes his living from the water, as by fishing, or a boatman who plies for hire, usually on inland waters or harbors. Since Mr. Kerlin lived in Chester, it would appear the second part of this definition more appropriately describes his work.

In 1870 Charles Kerlin is listed as living in Camden, and is described as "Sea Captain." In 1880 he and his wife Susan appear in Woodbury records as residents. Unfortunately in

Christ Church's early records there is no mention of Mr. Kerlin or his wife ever serving in any "official" capacity in the church.

Susan Kerlin's death notice appeared in the November 14, 1889 issue of *The Gloucester County Democrat* as follows:

Kerlin – In Woodbury on November 13, 1889, Susan F., wife of Capt. C. W. Kerlin. Services in Christ Church, Woodbury, on Saturday morning. Interment private at Rural Cemetery, Chester, Pa.

The head of Christ, sculptured in brass, is in the center front of Christ Church's Pulpit. Radiating from Christ's head is a series of rays, symbolic of the light coming from the life of our Lord. This is different from an aura or the glow seen in some of the windows in the church around the heads of the Saints, and is more reminiscent of the rays of the sun, symbolizing the Son of God and his life-giving energies.

An interesting aside – in 1890 when the Pulpit was installed The Reverend Howard E. Thompson was rector of Christ Church. And was everyone pleased at this beautiful adornment? NO! Many of the members felt Fr. Thompson was "too high" – some accused him of having a "brass phobia." Despite the criticism emanating from a number of parishioners, Fr. Thompson continued with his installations. In addition to the Pulpit, the lamp above it, and the brass lectern with the eagle atop it, a brass processional cross was also received while he was rector.

Today in 2007 the current rector ascends the stairs of Christ Church's beautiful brass Pulpit, just as did nine of the twelve rectors before him. So when you look at the Pulpit, the lamp above it, and the lectern, think of Charles W. and Susan F. Kerlin, of John and A. Louis Kerlin, of W. Haskell Conner and his parents W. S. and Mary A. Conner, of Father Thompson, and of all the former rectors of Christ Church whose hands have held onto the Pulpit railing as they climbed its stairs to preach the Word of God.

**Chapter 10**  
**The Sanctuary Lamp in Christ Church**  
**(Mr. William Milligan**  
**and**  
**Mrs. Helen E. W. Rutherford)**

Christ Church was first lighted by electricity in November 1907. Before then the only illumination in the church came from gas jets, introduced in 1888. Prior to that time, candles and lamps were the only option.

The Sanctuary Lamp in Christ Church was donated and installed in 1923. In addition to the beauty of its design, the lamp was selected because it was electrically lit – it had not been converted from gas to electricity. It is a unique design, not easily obtainable today and is, in fact, perhaps one of a kind.

“Sanctuary” is derived from the Latin word *Sanctus*, meaning “Holy.” The Sanctuary is a separate contained space where worship is focused on the Holy Eucharist. It is the center of the liturgical ceremony, and clearly distinct from the main body of the church – it represents the Heavenly realm.

In Christ Church on the Gospel side of the Altar is a small safe called the Ambry, which is built into the wall. The word Ambry comes from the Latin *Armarium*, meaning a chest or safe. The Ambry can be likened to a kind of symbolic tent where consecrated bread and wine is kept in reserve.

The Sanctuary Lamp burns to indicate that the sacrament is reserved, and that by its presence is the presence and holiness of Christ. The actual light in the lamp may be electric or a candle, but it is important that the light be seen and noted. If there is no sacrament in reserve, the light is extinguished (it is *always* extinguished on Good Friday).

A plaque in the Sanctuary of Christ Church commemorates the Lamp, and reads:

**Sacrament Light**  
**This lamp is given to the glory of God in constant remembrance of Father and**  
**Mother**  
**William Milligan and Helen Milligan**  
**By their daughter**  
**Mrs. Helen E. W. Rutherford.**

Mr. Milligan was one of the early members of Christ Church. For many years he was involved with the development of Christ Church's parish life. In April 1876 he was elected as a Vestryman, and served continuously in that capacity until his death. While Secretary of the Vestry, Mr. Milligan also taught a large Bible class, was the Director of the Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, and served as Treasurer of the Sunday School. He was a Christian of strong convictions, intelligent faith, and gentle spirit. His profession was a teacher in the Woodbury schools for 42 years; he was a Principal in that city for nearly 33 years.

William Milligan died on March 24, 1897 when he was 61 years old. At the time The Rev. A. L. Urban, 5<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church wrote of him in the April 1897 issue of *Our Parish Paper* (Volume 1, No. 5 Issue), a newsletter written and published by the Rector:

Christ Church has lost in the death of William Milligan a devoted communicant. For many years identified with the development of our parish life, as Vestryman, as teacher of a large Bible class, as Director of the Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, and as Treasurer of the Sunday School, we shall with a deep sense of loss long miss him. William Milligan was a Christian of strong convictions, and intelligent faith, and gentle spirit. Death for such a man means *life*.

As a teacher in the schools of Woodbury for 42 years, and Principal nearly 33 years, he was identified with the larger life of the community in perhaps the most influential of all ways, for none shapes character more influentially than the teacher; and it was his life-work to touch with the hand of the educator the life of this community as it has been the privilege of few to do in any community.

William Milligan's obituary appeared in *The Constitution*, a Woodbury newspaper published at the time of his death. The excerpt that follows, copied from this obituary, conveys how deeply he was admired and how much he would be missed:

Mr. Milligan was born in Philadelphia in 1836 of an honorable Scotch ancestry, and received his education in the private, public and High schools of Philadelphia, from the latter of which he graduated in July, 1855. He came to Woodbury in November of the same year, where he has since resided, and where he has been a teacher for nearly 42 years, and Principal nearly 33 years.

When he commenced his labors here in that position, with only two teachers to assist him, one of whom still survives him in the position where she began work with him nearly 33 years ago, he found an old school building illy adapted to the purpose and with very limited accommodations for the pupils, and now that he has finished his labors, he leaves behind three commodious school buildings, and one smaller one, equipped with all modern appliances, with full capacity to accommodate all the children of the city, in which a competent corps of teachers can do ample justice to their pupils, consisting of 18 teachers in charge of over 800 pupils.

Much credit is due for the accomplishment of these desirable improvements to the untiring earnestness and unflagging perseverance of William Milligan, and the people of this city owe him a great debt of fervent gratitude for his highly successful efforts in that direction.

During his incumbency and under his tutorship he has seen hundreds of boys and girls go out from the public schools of this city, prepared to receive a higher education, or to engage without further opportunity or preparation in the manifold occupations and duties of life, in every sphere of human action. He has seen them successfully enter professions and engage in other pursuits along different lines of employment.

It would be impossible to record in this article the names of those who have done great credit to their teacher, but any one familiar with the younger business and professional men and women of this city, can have no difficulty in recalling the names of scores of his old pupils who now occupy responsible positions in business and places of trust and importance. Middle-aged men can now recall their old teacher with love and gratitude, while the second generation of youth of these fathers, who also came under the teachings of Mr. Milligan, can do the same in a score or more years to come.

His work as a teacher will be his best monument, and will be as lasting as any bronze or marble testimonial.

William and Helen Milligan's daughter, Helen, was an early organist at Christ Church during the time when this instrument was pumped by hand. Helen later married and became Mrs. Rutherford.

In July 2005 the Sanctuary Lamp crashed to the floor of the Sanctuary during an attempt to change the small candle bulb in it. And that was a fortunate accident, since as a result it was discovered many of the links in the various chains from which the Lamp hangs were dangerously weak; some were already split.

Mr. Gene Zweigle, Master Silversmith, Restorer and Refinisher, was given the task of repairing the Lamp, an intensively detailed and delicate job requiring the disassembling of every part of it. During the repair, each link in every chain was silver soldered. The counter weight ball, filled with more than 25 pounds of lead shot, was disassembled, and all dents were removed. Each part of the Lamp was then polished to perfection, and finally the entire Lamp was lacquered. On August 10, 2005 a group of faithful parishioners and clergy assembled to once again hang the Lamp in its proper place in the Sanctuary – a task that took 5 hours to complete.

And now, the Lamp that in 1923 was given by Helen Rutherford in memory of her parents hangs once again in its proper place in the Sanctuary of Christ Church – more than a hundred years after William Milligan, her father and faithful parishioner, died.

## Chapter 11

### The Acolytes of Christ Church

The word “acolyte” is derived from the Greek word *akolouthos* (Latin: *sequens*) meaning a young servant or attendant who waits continually upon another, a follower.

About the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, or early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, other new offices below the order of deacons were introduced. One of these offices was that of Acolytes, although only in the Latin Church as a distinct order. In the rituals of the Greek Church the word occurs only as another name for the order of sub-deacon.

The form of ordination employed in the case of Acolytes is prescribed by a Canon of the Fourth Council of Carthage. “When any Acolyte is ordained, the Bishop shall inform him how he is to behave himself in the office, and when he shall receive a candlestick with a taper in it from the archdeacon, that he may understand that he is appointed to light the candles of the church. He shall also receive an empty pitcher to furnish wine for the Eucharist of the blood of Christ.”

From *The Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*  
Smith and Cheetham

In the early days of Christ Church, no records were kept listing the names of the men and boys who served in this capacity. In fact, no real organization of the acolytes even existed. The boys who served at the Altar were volunteers, and many served every Sunday. The first two Acolytes of record served under Fr. Howard E. Thompson (4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church); their names were Robert Poole and George Pierson. In fact, Fr. Thompson’s diary records the first instance of his being assisted by an Acolyte:

September 12 – 12 S. after Trinity. First Celebration at 7 A.M. with a server. Robert Poole, 12 years old, acting in that capacity.

An aside: In an early history of Christ Church, Mary Louise Whitall described the first two acolytes as follows:

“Robert Poole – very dark; George Pierson – very blonde. These boys were commonly called ‘Black & White’.”

As time passed, the older boys in the Sunday School expressed interest in participating in church services, and in the early 1950’s vestryman and Sunday School Superintendent Mr. Ralph Kurtz seized the opportunity. Under Mr. Kurtz’ direction, a group of 15



young men was organized and trained to alternate during each month at the 8 o'clock and the 11 o'clock services.

When a boy first joined the Acolytes, he sat in the Chancel and observed the more experienced servers in the Sanctuary until he (and Mr. Kurtz) felt he was ready to take a more active part in the service. He was then trained to receive the Offertory from the ushers. Next step: to learn the Communion Service; and finally, to assist the Rector. When a young man felt confident, he became a Crucifer. He also carried the flag at special services.

Scheduling was handled by Mrs. Shirley Freas (Mr. Kurtz's daughter), who made certain each young man had an equal opportunity to participate. Four or five mothers of these new Acolytes assisted Mrs. Freas, assuring the boys were properly vested.

By 1953, the boys had formed a group that held regular meetings throughout the year, and organized fundraising projects to finance various trips they enjoyed under the supervision of Mrs. Freas and Mr. Kurtz. The money earned was also used to replat the Cross carried in the procession, and they purchased metal lockers in which to hang their vestments.

Over the years, the corps of Acolytes has expanded to include young girls as well as boys (See Chapter 43 – The Rev. Douglas E. Anderson). In 2007, a total of 34 young people alternately serve on the Altar each week, trained by Acolyte Masters Bernie Lasoski, Jr. and Steve Lewis, and assisted by Mrs. Linda Lonabaugh and Mrs. Shannon Pass, who have assumed the role begun by Mrs. Freas so long ago.

In 2004 I had the opportunity to sit down and talk with Philip Lasoski, one of Christ Church's more experienced Acolytes, who was 16 years old at the time. It is important to note that Philip is a grandson in a family that spans three generations of parish membership, and his father is one of the two current Acolyte Masters. Philip was also trained to be a Crucifer, and has served as Thurifer when needed.

The information offered during the interview provides an insight into the thoughts and pressures experienced by a young person in today's world as Philip articulated his feelings about serving on the Altar at Christ Church:

- **When you were a small child and attended Church School, did you ever think about becoming an Acolyte?**

Yes. My older cousins were Acolytes, my Dad was an Acolyte and is now a chalice bearer. He has always been involved with Acolytes and their training. I wanted to follow in my family's footsteps.

- **How were you taught to be an Acolyte?**

I learned from my Dad (he's one of the two Acolyte Masters), and was also taught by the other Chalice Bearers. Usually we were taught after church.

- **Do you feel different when you are sitting in the sanctuary, compared to when you are sitting in the pew with the congregation? Why?**

I'm much more comfortable when I'm in the sanctuary than when I'm sitting in the congregation. It takes a lot more concentration when I'm on the altar, and I feel more a part of the service.

- **How has becoming an Acolyte made you feel about your relationship with God.**

I feel closer to God. I pay more attention to the words of the service because I'm listening for cues, so I hear the words more clearly. And they mean much more to me when I'm listening that closely.

- **Has serving as an Acolyte changed you in any way?**

I think it has taught me to concentrate, to be a better listener, to be more patient of the younger people who are also on the altar, and to be more sympathetic of their mistakes, because I make them too.

- **Would you encourage others to become Acolytes? Why?**

Yes I would. It's good training, and a way to become more involved. You also learn more about the meaning of the service, and understand why certain things are done at certain times.

- **Do you think you would have become an Acolyte if your parents had not come to church, or brought you as a child?**

Probably not. A lot of my friends are not involved in church service – many of them don't even go to Church. So I don't talk about my activities as an Acolyte or Crucifer or Thurifer with them, because they wouldn't understand, and probably wouldn't even be interested.

- **How do you feel about other kids who have no church or no knowledge of Jesus?**

I think they miss a lot. I especially like it when all my family is in church together.

- Do you think Church School set any pattern for your faithfulness?**  
 Oh yeah. That's when I started to learn about the church and service in the church because my older cousins and my parents were always there with me.
- What time of year do you like best to serve on the Altar? Christmas, Easter, any time at all?**  
 I like to serve on the Altar any time, but I like being there best on Christmas or Easter or any special Holy Day. Those services are more complicated. I have more to do, and have to pay much closer attention. There are cues in the words of the service for us to do certain things to assist the priest, and I have to listen closely to hear the cues – like when to ring the bells, when to process into the congregation for the reading of the Gospel, when to be ready with the wine and water, when to bring the offering plates forward to hand them to the ushers – there's a lot to do, and it has to be done right. And when I serve as Crucifer I try to carry the cross high and with dignity. The silver cross is pretty heavy, and a little hard to handle especially for the younger kids, but I try to hold it as steady as I can and walk at a measured pace because I'm leading the procession and I want to make a good first impression.
- If anything, what do you like least about serving as an acolyte?**  
 Making mistakes. I HATE that! I'm sort of a perfectionist myself, and I think to myself "I've done this long enough that I should know better. I've been an acolyte now for 8 years – more than half my life." But then I think I'll try harder to remember better the next time – at least I hope I do.
- I see you also serving as Thurifer at times. Who taught you how to do this? What does dispensing incense mean before the procession, at the reading of the Gospel, and around the Altar?**  
 Father Anderson (*then the 12<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church*) liked heavy incense during the services when it is used. He said he thought this is the way Heaven would smell. He and Mark Nester and Father Sullivan trained me in this role. I'm still learning, and hope to be more sure of myself as I serve more often. Dispensing incense before the procession, at the reading of the Gospel, around the altar and on the Priests is a way to help purify the surroundings. It's a kind of blessing, I think. I hope I'm getting better at this as I do it more often.
- I notice there seems to be a certain pattern followed by the Acolytes when lighting and extinguishing the candles before and after each service. Why do you follow that same pattern each time?**  
 Well, we try to, and most times we do, but sometimes it goes off a little. I was taught to light the candles from the Cross, moving outward because light always comes from the Cross, and it should go back to the Cross at the end of the service.
- Do you think the younger children who serve as Torchbearers receive a foundation in this role that prepares them to become future Acolytes?**

I think this is good training for the younger kids, because it teaches them how important it is to pay attention – to listen – and to know when to react. It makes me be a lot more alert, too. I feel it's my responsibility to help them because I'm older and more experienced. I also have to help cover up mistakes when they happen so the people in the congregation can't tell when one of us misses a cue.

- **Do you think Christ Church will be in your heart and mind all the years of your life?**

Yes. If I left Woodbury (for school or whatever), I would probably always come back to Christ Church if I could – especially if my family is all still here. And I would help out on the altar if they needed me.

- **Have you ever felt in your heart that you might like to be a priest some day?**

No. I never really thought about that. No, I don't think so. I don't think so...

God bless all of the young people who so faithfully serve on the altar in the midst of their busy schedules and pressures of everyday life faced by the youth of today.

## Chapter 12

### The Processional Crosses of Christ Church

In 2007 there are three Processional Crosses at Christ Church, one of which is carried at every service by the acolyte who precedes the choir and clergy into the church. Each cross was offered as a memorial by family members for loved ones no longer with us. One of these crosses is very plain, the second a bit more elaborate, and the third truly magnificent, and each is beautiful in its own design.

- In 1951, William A. and Adalaide A. Fisher offered a brass Fleurie design Processional Cross (or sometimes called a Patonce design cross) in memory of their son, William A. Fisher, Jr., who died “near Woodbury” on August 29, 1892 when he was 5 years, 10 months, and 17 days old. William was buried from his father’s home on September 1, 1892. The memorial inscription in his memory appears at the base of the cross, above the handle.

The floriated ends of this design cross suggest the Resurrection to that of sacrifice in the Cross itself.

- In 1953, Florence Bill offered a Junior Processional Cross in memory of her husband, Charles A. Bill. This brass Latin-style cross is not engraved, but the gift was inscribed in the Memorial Book of Remembrances in the Church.

Florence Bill was active in Christ Church’s Sunday School, and for many years directed the Pre-School children in their introduction to scripture and the meaning of the liturgy. She participated in and directed the Sunday School pageants held every year, and was always to be found surrounded by children, teaching, listening and learning much from their reactions.

A plaque in the hallway of the Ullrich Education Wing labeled “Past Benefactors of the Education Wing” commemorates Mrs. Bill’s devotion to children and to Christ Church, and reads as follows: *“In 1972 the Church School (Kindergarten*

*Room) was furnished and decorated through the generosity of Florence A. Bill, a gifted and devoted teacher (1886 – 1971)."*

Mrs. Bill died on February 12, 1971 and is buried in the Baptist Cemetery in Mullica Hill, N.J.

- The third Processional Cross is Celtic (also referred to as "Ionic") by design, and is the one used most frequently during services at Christ Church. Created specifically for Christ Church, the cross was handmade by a metal craftsman employed by Wippel & Company of Exeter, England.

This cross is embellished with 11 semi-precious stones – all cabochon cut, highly polished, but not faceted. Three of the stones are red, six are violet, one is grey, and one is green. Although hollow, the body of the cross is constructed of sturdy silver plate.

The cross was a gift to Christ Church from Miss G. Maude Courter in loving memory of her aunt, Helen Anderson Burkett, and was received and blessed at the close of the 11 a.m. service on Easter Day, April 10, 1966. Sadly, today little is known of G. Maude Courter, and even less can be found about her aunt, Helen Anderson Burkett. A search of historical documents reveals Miss Courter was born on July 28, 1881. She is listed in one of the Church Registers maintained by Canon Robert Williams as becoming a member of Christ Church sometime between 1923 and 1924, when she was in her early 'forties. Her last residence was at The Evergreens in Moorestown, where she died on January 13, 1971. Canon William Rauscher conducted her burial service on January 19, 1971; she is buried in Fernwood Cemetery, Jamesburg, New Jersey.

The selection and design of all three Processional Crosses is different, yet each offers a legacy of which the givers should be proud. Most important, each Cross is a treasure for all visitors and members of Christ Church – past, present, and future.

## Chapter 13

### The Organs At Christ Church

*“Men fashioned crude, simple prototypes of the traditional organ long before the dawn of recorded history. Pan pipes, made from reeds growing along waterways, figure in ancient mythology. In early ages, wind-blown “pipe organs” served many noble palaces. As the Christian church developed, the instrument was converted to liturgical use. From that time down through the centuries, a substantial pipe organ literature evolved. Bach, Handel, and Mozart all acclaimed the pipe organ as “the King of Instruments,” and even today their imperishable masterworks find fullest expression only on the traditional pipe organ.”*

From the program at the Dedicatory Recital of  
Christ Church’s Möller Organ in 1968

In 1878, in a former parishioner’s diary, mention is made of a choir, accompanied by an organ pumped by hand behind a screen by the sexton and his son.

Mrs. S. L. Ladd is presumed to have been the first individual to officially occupy the position of organist. Mrs. Ladd was a music teacher who lived in one of the Temperance Hall houses. She was succeeded by Miss Helen Milligan, and later by Miss Bertha Bond.

In October 1896, a committee was appointed by the vestry to meet with organ manufacturers for the purpose of procuring a new organ for the church. Two months later, the committee recommended approval of a pipe organ proposed by Hook & Hastings, which would be installed “complete” for the sum of \$1,150. Also approved was a schedule of payments: “one half in cash up front, and the balance to be paid in 3 equal notes maturing at intervals of 6 months apart, at the regular interest rate.” On November 21, 1896 approval was given to Hook & Hastings to install the new instrument.

At the December 14, 1896 meeting, the Vestry approved an antique finish for the new organ cabinet, with decorations (assumed to mean on the organ pipes) to be in a light shade of blue and gold.

Less than a month later, at the January 4, 1897 vestry meeting Fr. Abram L. Urban, Rector, asked the members of the St. Agnes Guild and The Christ Church Guild to offer whatever funds they had available to help pay for the organ, which was approved by the members of these two groups with the understanding the organ would be a memorial to Fanny Grant Twells (Mrs. John S. Twells). And so it was.

A note of interest: On April 19, 1919, a new problem with the organ was reported. Those fancy blue and gold organ pipes had somehow become filled up with dry evergreen needles and flower petals, and needed cleaning out. Hook & Hastings (the company that had installed the organ in 1896, and who since that time had handled the organ's maintenance under a contractual agreement) agreed to clean the pipes – *but* for an additional charge of \$80, citing the fact that those dry evergreen needles and flower petals were not covered under the contract. Two months later, on June 2, 1919, Hook & Hastings was discharged, and new arrangements were made for organ maintenance with a gentleman named Mr. Rodeau, whose contract cost \$40 – half the amount paid to Hook & Hastings – and apparently cleaning evergreen needles and flower petals from the pipes was included in this new contract, which was finalized in September 1919.

In 1950, the organ was rebuilt and paid for by the congregation. At the same time, chimes were installed as a memorial to Joseph John Summerill (born July 23, 1885 and died May 13, 1925), given by his wife, Altha. At the same time the church was redecorated under the direction of Mr. Ralph Kurtz, and the organ pipes were relocated from the Gospel side of the Nave to the loft above the Sacristy.

In 1968 a new M. P. Möller Double Artiste Pipe Organ, built by the Möller factory in Hagerstown, Maryland was presented to Christ Church by the Cornell Family in loving memory of their son, Ralph Bruce Cornell, known as Bruce by his family and friends. Bruce died on May 19, 1996 when he was 25 years old.

(An interesting aside: The company owned by the Cornell family, still located in Woodbury, NJ, is nationally known for their expertise in steel construction, and over the



years have been generous donors to Christ Church. In 1990 the sidewalk in front of the church on Delaware Street from New Street to Wood Street was replaced, presented by son Charles and his wife Dolores Cornell in thanksgiving for the life of Charles' father, Ralph Cornell. The Cornell family also provided necessary heavy equipment required for the installation of the new Tower Cross in 1995, given in memory of Margaret Hindsley Lewis by Stanley Lewis and Family).

Now back to the organ: The new Möller organ was blessed at the 11 a.m. service on Palm Sunday, April 7, 1968, followed by a recital on the instrument played by William P. Fenimore, III, guest organist for the occasion.

As a matter of record for future generations, specifications of this organ are as follows:

### **GREAT ORGAN**

#### **Unenclosed**

Principal	8'	80 pipes
Rohrflöte	8'	73 pipes
Gemshorn	8'	from Swell
Octave	4'	61 notes
Flute	4'	61 notes
Super Octave	2'	61 notes
Mixture	11 Rks	122 pipes
Trichter Regal	4'	61 pipes
Chimes (present bells, new action)		25 bells

### **SWELL ORGAN**

Gedeckt	8'	73 pipes
Gemshorn	8'	80 pipes
Principal	4'	73 pipes
Gedeckt	4'	61 notes
Larigot	1-1/3'	61 notes
Trompette	16'	80 pipes
Trompette	8'	61 notes
Tremulant	4'	61 notes

### **PEDAL ORGAN**

Bourdon	16'	12 pipes
Principal	8'	32 notes
Rohrflöte	8'	32 notes
Gemshorn	8'	32 notes

Octave	4'	32 notes
Gedeckt	4'	32 notes
Mixture	11 Rks	32 notes
Trompette	16'	32 notes
Trompette	8'	32 notes
Trompette	4'	32 notes

**COUPLER**  
**Swell to Great**

**PEDAL MOVEMENTS**

Balanced Expression Pedal – Swell Organ  
Balanced Crescendo Pedal

**ADJUSTABLE COMBINATIONS**

Pistons No. 1-2-3-4 Affecting Full Organ

In 2007, Richard Kurtz will have served as the Parish Musician for more than thirty years. Richard was born in Philadelphia, but has lived most of his life in New Jersey, primarily in Woodbury and Woodstown. His association with Christ Church began when he served as an Acolyte under Canon Williams.

Richard's parents, Ralph and Margaret Kurtz, were faithful and long-time active members of the parish, as are he and his wife Gloria, along with their daughters, Laura Maggi and Allison Kurtz. Besides being seated at the console for every service, Richard personally handles the maintenance of Christ Church's organ, assuring the instrument is continually in flawless condition.

In 1993, Richard and his wife Gloria added two stops to the organ in memory of his father, Ralph – an 8' Erzähler Celeste, and a 4-rank mixture.

Mr. James Hickman, Richard's predecessor, offered one additional enhancement to the organ. During Richard's early days "on the bench," Jim Hickman called to say it was his wish to offer a Cymbelstern as a gift to Christ Church. Jim's offer was accepted, and this enhancement adds further beauty to the music now enjoyed by all members of the parish.

There are several references to the organ in the Bible, thereby making it one of the oldest instruments used to proclaim the mighty works of the Lord. Christ Church is indeed blessed to have such a fine instrument and such a fine organist in our midst.

**Chapter 14**  
**The Entrance Doors of Christ Church,**  
**and**  
**Mr. William A. Stiles, Vestryman**

During the 1920's the subject of new doors for Christ Church had been under discussion for some time. In vestry meetings on March 5, 1928 and April 2, 1928 replacement of the interior and exterior church doors was mentioned, and a "Door Committee" was formed. Bids were requested, and it was discovered it would cost \$530 for new exterior doors and \$510 for new interior doors, or a total of \$987 if both were installed at the same time. It was further decided to recommend these replacements to the congregation at the Annual Parish Meeting scheduled for April 9, 1928. At this Parish Meeting it was moved and seconded that the Vestry proceed with the purchase of new doors "when funds were available." But there was a problem: at the same time the church needed a new floor, some of the pews were getting old, and there were still no choir stalls. Besides, in 1928 the Prayer Book was changed at the General Convention, and new Prayer Books had to be purchased. Subsequently the floor, pews and Prayer Books took precedence, and were repaired and/or replaced.

The next year at the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 1, 1929 funding for new entrance doors was once again discussed, but still no action was taken. Finally at a Vestry meeting on May 6, 1929 the subject of the doors was once again raised. At this meeting it was also noted that an appeal to the Parish through a letter for subscriptions had been sent out requesting funds for a memorial commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. The memorial itself had not yet been decided upon, but new entrance doors "were looked upon favorably."

Between May and October 1929 the fund-raising continued, and new exterior and interior doors were finally delivered and installed. Early pictures of the church show the original doors were "just doors" – nothing fancy, plain wood, functional, probably very practical, something to keep the cold out. According to the Secretary of the Vestry, both exterior

and interior doors together cost considerably less than originally estimated, and all that was needed was a can of varnish to complete the job. Now Christ Church was warm, but these new doors were not suitable as a tribute commemorating the Church's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

And now we meet William A. Stiles, Vestryman and his daughter, Mabel.

Mr. Stiles was a well-known citizen of Woodbury who lived at 175 Delaware Street, and a long-time and devoted parishioner of Christ Church. He was associated with Strawbridge & Clothier's Department Store in Philadelphia where he was employed for nearly 30 years, and according to his obituary was highly esteemed by his business associates.

Little is known about Mr. Stiles' wife, Hettie W., who died while a young woman on October 18, 1890, leaving her husband a widower when he was only 29 years old. Mrs. Stiles was buried "from the home of her husband on Delaware Street," but there is no record of her burial in Christ Church's Registers. The Stiles' had one daughter, whom they called Mabel A.

On April 5, 1915, William Stiles was elected to the Vestry of Christ Church, where he served on The Finance Committee and the Clergy Pension Committee. Faithful to the end, Mr. Stiles attended his last Vestry meeting on January 3, 1927. After a short illness he died two weeks later on January 20, 1927 at the age of 66 years. On January 24, 1927 he was buried in Harleigh Cemetery in Camden at the service conducted by Canon Robert G. W. Williams. The only survivor listed in his obituary is his daughter.

On February 2, 1931, Miss Mabel Stiles offered a gift to Christ Church to pay for a memorial to her father, and immediately new entrance doors were suggested. Also under consideration was a new Baptismal font; a third possibility was replacement of all the pews in the church.

Obviously The American Seating Company, located at 1211 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia, had previously been contacted about the possibility of constructing new doors; on January 30, 1931 (several days before Miss Stiles offered her gift) the company had sent a letter of specifications to Canon Williams and the Vestry as follows:

“The woodwork is to be executed in our Ecclesiastical shops at Grand Rapids, Michigan, and shall be made of carefully selected, evenly matched for grain and texture, Highland White Oak throughout in any color of finish that may be desired. The tracery and carving shall be worked from the solid and all lines shall be clear and crisp and well defined.

“The special wrought iron work indicated on design and included in our estimates is to be made by Samuel Yellin, famous metal worker of Philadelphia. The wrought iron work shall not only include the strap hinges, ring handles, etc., indicated on the design, but also ring handles for the interior side, door stops, hooks, etc.”

The original design included leaded glass windows at the top 4 panels of the doors, which were finally decided against for practical purposes. Also, to make the doors even more elegant, the proposed wrought iron strappings and handles were worked in heavy brass rather than iron.

In the letter quoted above, note the strappings and handles were to be made by Samuel Yellin, who was a leader in the revival of crafts that Philadelphia experienced in the early twentieth century. Among others, Yellin’s clients include Washington National Cathedral (D.C.), Cathedral of St. John the Divine (N.Y.), Grace Cathedral (S.F.), Yale, Princeton, Harvard and Columbia Universities, and The University of Pennsylvania. The company, which Samuel Yellin founded in 1909, continues to operate today under the direction of Clare Yellin, Samuel Yellin’s granddaughter.

Final cost of the doors: \$1,135.

This same letter also included estimates for replacing all the pews in the church, as well as sketches for a new Baptismal Font and cover. The Vestry recommended using Miss Stiles’ gift to replace the pews, but after she reviewed the designer’s sketches, she

decided the magnificent doors through which we now enter the Church would be a fitting tribute to her father, and that was that.

On the inside of the right door facing all who leave the church is an inscription carved into the door that reads:

**In Loving memory of William A. Stiles  
Presented by Mabel A. Stiles**

As it had been hoped, this beautiful memorial to William A. Stiles was also a suitable memorial commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Christ Church, and was dedicated by the Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Paul Matthews, D.D., on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1931.

Through meticulous care, over the years the grain in the wood has grown even more beautiful, and the hinges and door handles appear to glow from within. The entrance to Christ Church has been the subject of numerous sketches and paintings. It appears on the City of Woodbury's website, on the cover of *The Jersey Episcopalian* (the Quarterly Magazine published by the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey) and on the Diocese of New Jersey's website. The Church's entrance also appears on stage as part of a scenic design at the Larcom Theater in Beverly, Massachusetts.

It is interesting to note these doors were handcrafted in the Grand Rapids, Michigan Ecclesiastical Shops of The American Seating Company – the same company that designed the Reredos in Christ Church. Recently the original sketches for the proposed Baptismal Font mentioned above were discovered among some files stored in the church, and indicate a beautiful design compatible with the Reredos already in place.

Seventy-six years later (in 2007) these unique solid Highland White Oak doors continue to weather the elements. They have become a signature piece in the city, and many who pass by the church stop to admire the carvings, the glowing brass strappings, and the unique circular handles.

**Chapter 15**  
**The “New” Parish House**  
**(Built in 1914 to Commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of Christ Church)**

During the early 1900's the need to replace the existing small and outdated Parish House with a new larger building had been recognized. Obviously there had been on-going discussion about this for several years, because on December 11, 1912 there was conversation as to whether the sexton's quarters should be included in future plans for the proposed Parish House, which was still in early talking stages, instead of building a separate house for him.

When Fr. Stuckert became the 9<sup>th</sup> Rector in April 1913 a new Parish House was still a gleam in the eyes of the congregation and Vestry, although in the April 17, 1911 issue of the *Gloucester County Times* there was a notice announcing a Minstrel Show scheduled for April 20 in Green's Opera House “with the latest songs and best jokes ever” for the benefit of Christ Church's Parish House. In October 1913 serious discussions about the limited size and scope of the existing building began. Sketch plans were presented at the December 1913 meeting, and a budget for this project not to exceed \$12,000 was approved.

On January 26, 1914 a special Parish Meeting was held, at which time consideration was given to commence building a new Parish House and Cloister at a cost not to exceed \$13,000, exclusive of plumbing, heating, and lighting. At this same meeting ways and means of “financing the building of a new Parish House, and for raising by subscription whatever is needed for the same” was discussed. Pledges were requested and received from interested church members to finance the project.

On February 2, 1914 the Vestry agreed at least 6 architects should be invited to submit plans and specifications for the new Parish House and Cloister; 8 responses were received. The prior month's resolution for the cost not to exceed \$13,000 was rescinded, and the estimated total cost was raised to approximately \$15,000.



On March 2, 1914 at the regularly scheduled vestry meeting the cost of this new building was again discussed, and an estimated total of \$17,000 was determined to be more accurate. Senior Warden Speakman (a dedicated gentleman who had been closely associated and heavily involved with Christ Church for more than 20 years) said he was “in complete and total disagreement with the policy presently being pursued in connection with the new Parish House” because he considered the cost too high – and besides he felt his health was beginning to fail. So he RESIGNED! At this same meeting, the number of architects bidding on the project was narrowed to 4, and these plans, all of which had been submitted anonymously by request, were reviewed. Sealed envelopes with the name of each bidder were given to Fr. Stuckert to hold.

Four days later the vestry met again, and the proposal was made by Mr. C. Walter Shivers, another vestryman, to reject all previously submitted plans, and to select a Woodbury architect to draw up new plans in accordance with the Vestry’s specifications, with bids open only to Woodbury contractors. This suggestion caused a great deal of dissent at this stage of the game, and was supported by only two members of the vestry. Finally after much discussion the proposals from four gentlemen were nominated as potential architects for the Parish House. Still unknown was the fact that one proposal came from Mr. J. F. Stuckert (the Rector’s father); another was submitted by Mr. C. H. Shivers (a vestryman’s brother).

On April 13, 1914 the Annual Parish Meeting was held, led by a frustrated Fr. Stuckert who suggested holding the meeting in the church, but that suggestion was quickly tabled. As a result, despite Fr. Stuckert’s protestations, the weary vestry and an angry congregation ended up in the old Parish House to try and resolve this situation once and for all.

Mr. Speakman was asked to reconsider his resignation as Senior Warden, and was again nominated for this position; his response was thanks, but no thanks. Then Mr. C. Walter Shivers, another dedicated and long-time communicant was nominated for this position.

Mr. Shivers stated he agreed that a new Parish House was needed, but said he was totally against the expense being contemplated for this building. As a result he received a total of only 6 votes. He was then nominated as Junior Warden, but he said no thanks to that, too. He further explained he was disappointed to learn his brother (who was one of the four anonymous architects bidding for the Parish House project) had been rejected. In further protest Mr. Shivers resigned from the vestry then and there.

The same month after the Annual Meeting two parishioners who had pledged large sums of money to support the Parish House project sent letters stating they were withdrawing their pledges. In the same mail was a letter from the Public Service Gas Company asking why the church's gas bill in the amount of \$1.62 hadn't yet been paid.

An architect was finally selected to design the new Parish House, and the winner was Mr. J. Franklin Stuckert, the Rector's father! In fairness, it should be noted that no one knew the designer's name since the plans had been submitted under the pseudonym "Architect Hope."

On April 20, 1914, letters were received from parishioners Mrs. J. H. Flanagan and Mr. E. H. Rigg (formerly secretary of the vestry, and still a vestryman at the time), withdrawing their pledges to the Parish House Fund.

And still the battle raged! At the May 14, 1914 meeting Mrs. C. Walter Shivers and her daughters withdrew their contributions not only to the Parish House project, but also their donations to the General Fund. But the project moved forward, and in June 1914 a motion was carried, authorizing Fr. Stuckert to draw up and enter into a contract with Joseph B. Best to build a parish house according to the plans and specifications of Architect Stuckert. The following article announcing the awarding of this contract appeared in a local paper dated June 25, 1914:

#### Parish House Contract Awarded

The Vestry of Christ Church last evening awarded the contract for the new Parish House to Mr. Joseph B. Best of this City, for the sum of eleven thousand eight hundred dollars (\$11,800), the building to be completed in four months. The other bids were:

J. W. Draper (Camden) - \$11,960  
Bottoms & Sons Co. (Philadelphia) - \$12,484  
F. L. Hoover & Sons (Philadelphia) - \$12,970

The cost of heating and lighting is extra, making the total cost of the building about \$13,000.

The building will be 73 feet long and 45 feet wide, one story and basement, connected with the church by an extension of the sacristy. It will be built of frame and plaster with stone corners and chimney, and a slate roof. The windows will be large with Gothic heads and obscured glass. The first floor will contain an auditorium with a seating capacity of 300. Classrooms will be provided for Sunday School purposes. There is a large stage with dressing rooms attached. There will also be a Guild Room and Vestry Room. In the basement will be a good sized gymnasium, men's locker room with shower baths and ladies cloak room, kitchen, choir room and boiler room. The building will be heated by steam and lighted by both gas and electricity. It will be set back 62 feet from Delaware street, leaving a fine lawn in front. The building will commence at once.

Work started in July 1914, and despite innumerable delays the Parish House was completed in December of that year at a total cost of \$14,000, including furnishings. The following article appeared on Page One in the Gloucester County Democrat announcing the dedication of this magnificent new structure:

#### OPEN NEW PARISH HOUSE

Christ Church Places a Fine New Building at the Service of the Whole  
Community  
60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Annual Fair and Supper

It is not often that a church is able to erect a Parish House and place it at the service of the town or community for benevolent, philanthropic and educational purposes. Christ Church, Woodbury, enters upon a new stage of its existence with the opening of its fine new Parish House.

The building is 45 feet wide by 73 feet long, one story and basement, part stone and part stucco. The building will be lighted by both gas and electricity and heated by the Broomell Vapor System, which is the best system obtainable for the purpose. Heat may be gotten up more quickly

than in any other system, and it can be regulated so finely that a fourth part of any radiator can be turned on or off.

The interior plastering is a sand finish. All the interior wood finish is of oak, the beauty of which is unsurpassed. The gymnasium in the basement is wainscoted in oak over seven feet high. Triple flooring is laid in the basement, which makes it as dry and warm as the upper floor. On top of four inches of tar concrete was placed a two inch hemlock floor and on top of that tar felt and a first class maple floor. The gymnasium which has a ceiling twelve feet high, will also be used for a dining hall and connected with it is a thoroughly modern kitchen, 26 feet long and 14 feet wide, equipped with dresser, an eight burner gas range, drop tables, enamel sink and windows for serving.

Great care has been exercised even in the placing of the lights to meet every need of the work. Provision has been made for drawing off the odors of the kitchen by an electric fan. The locker room is provided with shower baths and cement floor. The choir room which is exceptionally large and accommodating, being 16 by 33 feet, is connected with the church through the Sacristy which has been enlarged and rearranged.

The auditorium upstairs will seat 250 people and has a stage 24 feet wide with curtains. Two drawing rooms each 15 feet long equipped with hot and cold water, makes this auditorium the finest in Woodbury, if not the largest. It's hoped that there will be frequent requests for its use for lectures, concerts, and entertainment for philanthropic and religious purposes. The Rector's office and the Ladies' Guild room are also on this floor. The latter room contains an open fireplace. There are three large storage closets besides others. The electric fixtures are of exceptional beauty. Only by a visit to it can one appreciate the attention given to details, the substantial workmanship, the beautiful interior finish and the completeness of this building. Many constructive features have been employed which have never before been seen in Woodbury.

The total cost of the building including the furnishings is \$14,000. Mr. Joseph B. Best, of this city, is the contractor, and the architect for it is Mr. J. Franklin Stuckert, of Philadelphia. Mr. Theodore W. Muller is furnishing the heating plant and Mr. Thomas Hutchinson the electric wiring.

And so began a new phase of expansion in the life of Christ Church and its parishioners.

## **Chapter 16**

### **About Christ Church's Sunday School**

From the time of Fr. Norris' arrival in Woodbury "to undertake the establishment of Christ Church," he recognized the need for a Sunday School was critical. Children were the future of the new church, and since the first rector was a strong advocate of education, this was an essential component of his vision, along with the church's development and subsequent growth.

In 1854, like the early worship services, the first Sunday School classes were held in The Upper Room of Temperance Hall. That same year Benjamin F. Carter, Esq. assumed the role of Superintendent of the Sunday School, a position he held for the next 33 years.

In May 1857 Fr. Norris noted in his diary there were ten Sunday Scholars. By May 1858 the church building had been completed, and Fr. Norris noted in his diary there were then 30 Sunday Scholars, taught by five teachers ("1 male, 4 females") in classes still held in The Upper Room.

By 1875 the number of children attending classes had outgrown the allotted space, and in September of that year work was begun on a new Sunday School Chapel, located on the old Lippincott property on the south side of Delaware Street across from the Church. On November 26, 1875 the chapel was opened in a ceremony led by The Rt. Rev. John Scarborough, Bishop of New Jersey.

In her diary, a former parishioner fondly remembers a particularly fine Christmas Eve service held in the new Sunday School Chapel. The children and their teachers met several times during the week before Christmas to practice carols. Finally it was Christmas Eve, and the Sunday School room was decorated with a wonderfully large tree "trimmed with real lighted candles," while Mr. Samuel Twells and Mr. Samuel Ladd stood on guard beside the tree, each holding a long pole with a wet sponge on the end "ready to extinguish any candle that misbehaved." After the service Mrs. John S. Twells

provided a treat for each child – a basket filled with candy, a small pound cake, an orange, and an apple, and gingerbread honey cakes were distributed to all.

In 1886 the Sunday School Chapel was moved from the south side of Delaware Street to the church property behind and between the rectory and the church, and in 1888 this Chapel was enlarged to accommodate the young families of the rapidly growing congregation. In 1893, during the rectorate of The Rev. Howard E. Thompson, a formal Sunday School Constitution and By-Laws was adopted. Article I of this document proclaims: “The name shall be the Sunday School of Christ Church Parish, Woodbury, New Jersey.” (A framed copy of this original document today hangs in the entrance to the Florence Ullrich Education Wing of the Parish Hall.)

And still the limited space available for growth of Sunday School classrooms remained a problem. In 1914, during the rectorship of Fr. Howard M. Stuckert, the new Parish House was constructed (See Chapter 15) which afforded more space for expanded classrooms, and for the foreseeable future the problem appeared to be resolved. As a result of this expansion, in February, 1917 the old Sunday School Chapel was sold to the Seventh Day Adventists, and eventually moved to a site on W. Barber Avenue. But by the mid-1940’s, Christ Church once again faced the need for additional space for the Sunday School students. This was a problem everybody talked about, but no one seemed willing to assume responsibility for the project. Until ...

...On February 7, 1946, Mr. Ralph S. Kurtz was elected to the vestry to fulfill the unexpired term of a member who had died, and in today’s vernacular, Mr. Kurtz “hit the ground running.” His first assignment on the vestry was to assume the role of Property Chairman, a position that required much time and effort in a church property that was obviously in need of repair and renovations. Then on October 7, 1948 Mr. Kurtz was elected Sunday School Superintendent; now it was not only his charge to begin plans to revitalize the interior of the church itself, but also to develop a strategy to once again fix the on-going “problem” of an overflow of children in the Sunday School with insufficient space to accommodate the badly needed classrooms.

Undaunted by the prospect of raising funds in a parish that was already stretched to the limit financially, in November 1950 Mr. Kurtz proposed adding a wing to the existing Parish House to accommodate the needed classrooms at a total cost of \$15,500. By February 1952, a little over a year later, under Mr. Kurtz's direction the new wing was completed.

Beginning with Benjamin F. Carter, Esq., Ralph S. Kurtz is another of many dedicated men and women who over the years have served as Sunday School Superintendents and teachers in Christ Church. Under the direction of Mary and Margaret Imbrie, and continued by Florence M. Ullrich, devotional services were instituted for Sunday School students which continued for many years. During these services the children were introduced to the basics of the more formal adult worship, affording them an easy transition when they entered the Church as young adults. In 2001 the wing added under Mr. Kurtz's direction nearly 50 years before was once again renovated, refurbished and dedicated as The Florence Ullrich Wing (See Chapter 17) to accommodate the ever-growing number of students of various ages.

Mention must be made of two other recent Superintendents of Christ Church's Sunday School:

- On September 13, 1987 Linda Davison Rosser accepted the responsibilities of this position. Ms. Rosser, who was already a long-time and faithful parishioner, spent the next fifteen years teaching and guiding the children of Christ Church.

She resigned her position in May 2002; however, an indication of her continued dedication to children is evidenced by her custom of standing in the Sacristy each Sunday and greeting every boy and girl as they leave the altar after receiving Communion (or a blessing) to go to their respective classrooms. This is a practice Linda continues even today.

She is currently a coordinator and instructor in the Passport Program initiated by the current rector to prepare the children for Confirmation.

- In June 2002 Mrs. Sharon Bowen assumed the role of Superintendent. Under her guidance the Sunday School program was revised and updated, and a new curriculum was introduced that is recognized as leading the field in Christian Education circles. Mrs. Bowen resigned her position in January 2007.

In 2007, seventy-five children are registered in seven Sunday School classes, taught by a staff of 8 teachers at Christ Church. Now each week the children attend the service of Holy Eucharist in the Church, and then go to their individual classrooms for instruction and related activities. In September 2007, Ms. Emily Withstandley was appointed Christ Church's current Sunday School Superintendent, the latest in a lengthy list of individuals who have devoted their time, talent, and treasure towards the continuing education of the children who worship and learn in Christ Church.



**Chapter 17**  
**The Mahley, Ullrich and Carney Families**  
**The Florence Ullrich Education Wing**

Henry (1883-1950) and Florence Mahley (1885-1968) are the parents of Horace Mahley, Dorothy Mahley Carney, and Florence Mahley Ullrich.

As a young man, Henry Mahley was employed in the hosiery business in Philadelphia, where he met his wife Florence and their son and two daughters were born. In 1919 the Mahleys acquired property in Woodbury, where the family spent weekends and summer vacations. In 1923 the family settled permanently in Woodbury. For the next five years Henry commuted daily to work in Philadelphia, until in 1928 he entered into a business agreement with several acquaintances. Together the men established the Sheertex Hosiery Company in Woodbury, with Henry named the primary owner.

Florence Mahley was a life-long Episcopalian, and became a member of Christ Church. Her husband, who was raised a Lutheran, continued in that faith until he was an adult when he was confirmed in Christ Church after attending classes conducted by Canon Williams.

Henry and Florence advocated honesty, faithfulness in marriage, strength through family loyalty, devotion to God, love of church, and community support. This family was so respected by the Woodbury city fathers that Mahley Drive in Woodbury was named by the city in tribute to them.

Both parents were also firm believers in the importance of education, and passed this love of learning along to their children.

The love that binds the Mahley family serves as a tribute to their parents. Son Horace Mahley died in 1990, but the devotion of his two sisters and their families for their brother and his family remains as strong today as in their childhood. This love of family,

perpetuated through several generations, was a catalyst that provided the impetus for the creation and donation of the *Christ and the Children Window*, located in the Baptistry at the entrance to the church, and dedicated on September 26, 1976 to the Glory of God and In Loving Memory of Florence and Henry Mahley by their family. The window was designed and executed by the Kenneth A. Crocker Studio International, located in Philadelphia. The result is a work of art, and a magnificent tribute offered by a devoted family as a lasting symbol of their love for their parents, for their church, for each other, and for future generations of children.

Henry and Florence Mahley loved children – *all* children of all ages, all races, and all creeds. When the design of the window was under discussion, the family made it clear the theme must stress Christ's love for children. The location of the window was also important to the family – if possible, it should be in the Baptistry of the church, the entrance to Christian membership and life.

Which brings us to the next generation of the Mahley family: daughters Florence Mahley Ullrich and Dorothy Mahley Carney.

In Advent 2002 the Florence M. Ullrich Christian Education Center was dedicated in thanksgiving for the teaching ministry of Florence Ullrich, a woman without peer in the history of Christian education in Christ Church's parish.

For 55 years Florence Ullrich served as a teacher and a leader of positive influence upon the children of Christ Church. Her affiliation with Christ Church began when she was 9 years old, and was registered by her parents in the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls' Class. For the next eleven years she studied, learned, and allowed her life to be shaped by the invaluable teachings of two dedicated teachers – Margaret Chew Kurtz and Alice Williams (Canon Williams' wife).

Influenced by her two teachers, Florence became a Church School teacher herself in 1942. From the beginning she enjoyed working with children of all ages, but found most

satisfaction from teaching the younger group, and concentrated her efforts for many years with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Class.

In 1957 Florence assumed the responsibility for the continuing development of the Children's Worship Service, originally instituted by Canon Robert G. W. Williams, the 10th rector of Christ Church. This Worship Service, which preceded the Church School classes, was an important part of Christ Church's weekly schedule. Its purpose was to introduce the children to the basics of the more formal adult worship services, and afford them an easy transition to regular adult worship.

Through Florence's creative efforts, Church School students grew to know, love, and understand Scripture lessons, church symbolism, service structure, and church etiquette. They also developed an appreciation of the mystery inherent in the liturgy.

Under her leadership, scores of children – and later on, *their* children – received instruction and religious training for a foundation that would last throughout their lifetime. Over a thousand students were influenced by the teachings of this dedicated and beloved instructor. Her creativity, diligence, and dedication helped children become aware of God's love and care, and led them toward further participation in the Family of God. Dozens of acolytes, altar guild members, lay readers, chalice bearers, and other lay participants in the weekly worship services at Christ Church attribute their continued devotion to early training by Florence Ullrich.

Underlying all of Florence's teaching were two themes: love of God, and devotion to family. The hundreds of children's lives she has touched over so many years are the children she never bore, but who will always be a part of her, and she of them.

Florence also served as a member of Vestry, elected in 1976, and one of the first two women to serve in that capacity. At the expiration of her term, she was nominated and reelected for further service.

On October 31, 1999 Christ Church's Jubilee Garden was dedicated. The hand-carved marble Statue of Christ, especially designed and shipped from Carrara, Italy, and the focal point of the garden, was a gift of Florence and James Ullrich and her sister Dorothy Carney to the Glory of God and in loving memory of their parents. Through Florence's thoughtfulness and as a tribute to her sister, the installation of central air conditioning in the recently renovated rectory has been completed. In addition, the renovation currently underway in the Rectory's 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, an area that has been unused for many years which will now serve as comfortable space for visiting clergy, students, and visitors to Christ Church, is another tribute to Dorothy Carney through her sister Florence.

Throughout the years, Florence Ullrich's generosity to Christ Church has been unparalleled – always quietly, constantly unassuming, steadfastly faithful. She and her husband Jim have been major benefactors to a church that has always been foremost in their hearts and prayers.

What motivated Florence to give such faithful service for so many years? "I love the Lord, Christ Church, and all those who have taught me and taught with me. It has always been my home away from home." And what has she gained from so many years of hard work and dedication? She says, "My reward was in the doing."

Like her sister, Dorothy Mahley Carney's life was also spent in devotion to and working for Christ Church. Dorothy's entire life was devoted to the field of Education. A 1934 graduate of New Jersey State Teachers College at Glassboro, she began her career as an elementary teacher at Repaupo Grade School. She was subsequently hired by the Woodbury Board of Education, and taught at the Walnut Street School, then moved to the Central School to teach Junior High students. After completing a course in remedial reading at the University of Pennsylvania, "Dot" became the first Remedial Reading teacher in the Woodbury Public School System. Eventually she became Principal of the Central School, and finally advanced to Elementary Supervisor of the Woodbury Schools. She was also active in the Order of the Eastern Star, and was Past Matron of Woodbury Chapter 109.

For more than 40 years Dot was a member of Christ Church's Altar Guild. As part of this service she trained new members of the Guild and scheduled the placement of weekly Altar Flower Memorials. She also taught Sunday School under Canon Williams and Canon Rauscher.

When her beloved husband George Carney died in 1981, Dorothy established The George Carney Fund – a fund specifically designated for the purchase of, replacement of, or renewal of vestments and/or altar hangings within Christ Church. This fund continues today, and is the source of so many of the beautiful frontals and vestments worn by our Priests and admired by present congregations and visitors to the church.

In 1986 Dorothy donated two Savonarola style chairs to Christ Church, which are still in use. One of these chairs is in the Sacristy at the top of the stairs leading down to the Choir Room. The other is in the Goodfellow Lounge.

Dorothy Mahley Carney died in the morning of June 28, 2004, but her devotion to Christ Church serves as a perpetual memorial in tangible as well as intangible ways. Florence continues to be a faithful member of "The Eight O'Clockers," and is a quiet presence each week as she kneels in her usual pew, deep in devotion to the God she has so loved and followed all her life.

Future generations will long benefit from the generosity, thoughtfulness, and kindness of this fine family, who for many, many years have given so much of themselves to Christ Church – the place of worship dear to all of their hearts.

## **Addendum**

**Dorothy Mahley Carney**  
**May 3, 1912 – June 28, 2004**

There is no greater satisfaction an educator can receive than a tribute offered by a student who has succeeded in life due in large part to the mentor's interest and efforts.

At Dorothy Mahley Carney's burial service held at Christ Church on July 2, 2004, Edward S. Ferrell, then Treasurer of the Church, requested permission "to say a few words about Mrs. Carney." Below is his eulogy, exactly as delivered that day:

Everyone here has a story they could tell about Dorothy Carney. But I felt that I *owed* it to Dot to share mine. Very few people know this story, and I tell it now somewhat reluctantly because, even though it happened over forty years ago, it remains both a source of pride, but also embarrassment to me.

Many of you who attend Christ Church recognize me as a chalice bearer, and as the current church Treasurer. Some of you may also know me as a past member of the Vestry of Christ Church (which is our board of directors for you non-Episcopalians). I was also the Senior Warden when Canon Rauscher retired as rector of this parish, and a chair of the Search Committee, which brought us our most recent rector, Father Anderson.

Now you might be thinking why I am standing here talking about me? Actually I'm tempted to tell you every single accomplishment in my life, because I firmly believe that I would have had a totally different life, and a lesser life, had not the life of Dot Carney touched mine.

As a child in today's world, I might have been diagnosed as having a learning disability. I got off to a bad start in school. Perhaps it was a result of missing time due to a couple of hospitalizations. But for whatever reason, I fell further and further behind. At the age of ten, I could not read. I couldn't even recite the alphabet! I had already repeated the First Grade, and would repeat the Third Grade as well.

Back then there wasn't a special education teacher in every school. In fact, you may have read in Dot's obituary that she became Woodbury's first special education teacher, teaching Remedial Reading at the Central Elementary School, which is right next door. Unfortunately, I attended the Walnut Street School, way down the hill and almost a mile away in North

Woodbury, and there being no busing back then the only way I could get the help I needed was to wait until I was old enough to walk to the Central School on my own.

So it was at the age of ten, when many thought me simply stupid, and when some good teachers had failed in their attempts to help me and a few bad teachers had done me more harm than good, I was allowed to walk to Central School for a class in Remedial Reading with Mrs. Carney. *She* would have reminded you that I did that in rain and cold and snow, but for me that was never a burden. I was finally learning!

To this day I have no idea what she did or how she accomplished it, but over the next two school years I would achieve a reading level equal to my peers. I became an enthusiastic reader, and in time I recovered my enthusiasm for learning. I would graduate both high school and college with academic honors.

It was many years before the life of Mrs. Carney and mine would cross again. In fact, it was when I became a parishioner here at Christ Church. She would sit in the congregation and I would stand up here and read the Epistle and we would both be proud of each other.

I have been fortunate to know a number of people who have richly enhanced, and even changed the course of my life. But today as we celebrate the life of Dorothy Carney, I would have to count Dot as having been the single *most* influential person in *my* life.

At the end of this tribute to his beloved teacher, Ed Ferrell quietly returned to his seat.

For the next few minutes there was not a sound in Christ Church. We who had listened in rapt attention to this tribute, offered in humility and with gratitude by one of Dorothy Mahley Carney's former students, recognized the true greatness of this gifted teacher, and the emotional response was overwhelming.

(The above tribute to Dorothy Mahley Carney reprinted by permission of Edward S. Ferrell.)

## Chapter 18

### **The Apostles' Window Above the Altar**

When Christ Church was constructed there were actually three windows above the altar – a large vertical window in the center, and two smaller vertical windows on either side. The Reredos had not yet been installed, and the altar and retablo behind it stood in front of a drape suspended from a brass rod that served as a backdrop.

Under the direction of Canon Williams, in 1951 the properties of Christ Church were improved and expanded, and during the alterations the interior of the Church was redecorated under the supervision of Vestryman Mr. Ralph Kurtz. Still, these three windows remained untouched.

Over the years the condition of the original three windows deteriorated, until by the late 1960's it was determined additional repairs were no longer practical, and total replacement seemed more feasible.

Dora Vellenoweth Demme, a long-time resident of Woodbury and a faithful parishioner of Christ Church, recognized the need for appropriate reconstruction and replacement. When the original three windows were removed, the glass was so old it literally crumbled. Mrs. Demme seized the opportunity, and had small ornaments made from many pieces of the original glass, which were sold at that year's Christmas Bazaar. These ornaments are still to be found in some of today's parishioners' homes.

And then Mrs. Demme went even further. With her husband, Haines Demme, she offered **The Apostles' Window**, now located above the altar To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Elizabeth White (Dora's mother). This window was designed by Kenneth Crocker, the same artist who designed the Rauscher Window, the Children's Window, Canon Williams' Window, the Alpha and Omega Window, the Cherubs' Window over the back door, the four gable windows in the roof, and the two windows in the Sacristy. Like the others, The Apostles' Window was then fabricated by The Willet Studios in Philadelphia. Upon completion, the window was dedicated in 1970.



This was a tremendous undertaking, and required the talent of a stonemason to replace the stones on the exterior church wall, as well as remodeling and reconstructing the church's inside wall above the altar.

A Celtic style cross is found in the center of this window. The circle, an emblem of eternity, suggests the eternal quality of Redemption. In the center is the Lamb, shown with the banner of triumph. To represent the Four Evangelists, four rivers flow down from the Cross: the River Gihon is ascribed to St. Matthew, the Tigris to St. Mark, the Euphrates to St. Luke, and the Pison to St. John.

Inside the circle are the traditional symbolic shields of the 12 apostles. Starting at the center top shield and moving clockwise:

1. **St. Peter** – represented by keys, and the manner in which he was crucified upside down during the reign of Nero.
2. **St. James the Greater** – the shell indicates pilgrimages made by sea for Jesus. James was a fisherman, and the first of the 12 to die.
3. **St. John** – in this shield is a chalice and serpent. John is the only apostle to live to an old age and die a natural death.
4. **St. Andrew** – patron saint of Scotland and Russia, who was crucified on an X Cross.
5. **St. Philip** – recalled by a cross and two loaves of bread, representing his role in the story of the feeding of the five thousand.
6. **St. Bartholomew (Nathaniel)** – who was, according to tradition, flayed to death. The knives in his shield represent the instruments used to skin him alive.
7. **St. Thomas** – supposedly shot by arrows while at prayer.
8. **St. James The Less** – this shield depicts a carpenter's saw, for it is believed he was sawed to pieces.
9. **St. Matthew** – in his shield are three moneybags, representing his position as a tax collector.
10. **St. Jude** – a widely traveled missionary, supposedly murdered in Persia. The ship in his shield denotes his travels.

11. **St. Simon** – a fisher of men by the power of the word of God. In his shield are the book and ancient Christian symbol of the fish. Tradition implies he was either beheaded or sawed into pieces.
12. **St. Matthias** – the apostle who replaced Judas, and who is believed to have been stoned and then beheaded. His call is the word, and his martyrdom is the knife.

There are no known memorials to Judas Iscariot in all of Christendom.

In 1970 Dora Vellenoweth Demme and her husband moved to Sun City, Arizona to spend their retirement years. Ten years later Haines Demme died, and Dora elected to remain in the area and climate she had grown to love. As the years passed, Dora's daughter, Dora Marine (who is also a member of Christ Church) moved to Arizona to care for her elderly and now widowed mother. Mrs. Demme lived to celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in early 2000; she died on November 21, 2003. Following her mother's death, her daughter Dora returned to Wenonah, N.J., where she presently resides.

## Chapter 19

### Six More Facets Inside “The Gem”

There are many memorials and gifts within Christ Church, too numerous to include in this publication, but each one, and the person or persons who are remembered through these gifts, are significant parts of the Church’s history.

Of particular interest are the following six memorials:

On the wall of The Goodfellow Lounge in the Parish House is a large engraving in a gold frame. This engraving is Raphael’s **“Disputation Of The Holy Sacrament.”** It is also called **“The Triumph of Religion.”**

Raphael (whose “proper name” was Raffaello Sanzio) was an Italian artist, born in Urbino, Italy in 1483. Although he lived only 37 years, his numerous works, frescoes and oil paintings are found in most of the public and private museums of Europe. The painting (which was accomplished between 1508 and 1511) from which this etching was derived was the first work Raphael executed in the Vatican.

This engraving in Christ Church’s Parish House was presented to Christ Church in 1962 by Eleanor B. Speakman Stratton, for many years a devoted parishioner. Mrs. Stratton, now deceased, was born on September 27, 1889. She, her husband, and their two sons (who were also parishioners of Christ Church) lived in a large house at 71 Euclid Street in Woodbury. The engraving was offered to Canon Rauscher as a gift to the church when Mrs. Stratton disposed of many of her possessions before she moved to Medford Leas.

Mrs. Stratton’s great uncle was Robert Draper of Draper Welch & Company, founders of The American Bank Note Company. The etching is by an artist who was with Draper Welch & Company. Working from Raphael’s famous painting, the artist took ten years to engrave the plate. Only two copies were made before the engraved plate was destroyed in a fire: one copy was given to the Empress of Austria as a wedding present; the other copy hangs in the Parish House of Christ Church. The fresco itself is located in

the Stanza della Segnatura, the library of Pope Julius II in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace, opposite Raphael's fresco called "The School of Athens," and represents Christianity's victory over the transformation of the multiple philosophical tendencies shown in "The School of Athens" fresco. It depicts how the theologians of the Disputation make up the Church's architecture – how they form one united body in an ethereal apse, flanking the Trinity and the Eucharist which, when the Host is consecrated, becomes The Body of Christ.

The center point of the etching is The Most Holy Sacrament on an altar, which is overshadowed by a dove (the Holy Spirit). Portraits representing key figures from the Old and New Testaments – Saints, Doctors of the Church, theologians, and literary personages – are found in this marvelous piece of art.

Fathers of the Latin Church, including St. Gregory, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine, sit on either side of the dove. Nearby are the most eminent theologians and divines, while at each side a crowd of laymen listens attentively to the tenets of the church. These groups contain portraits of several familiar faces. Raphael has represented himself and Perugino (an Italian painter and Raphael's teacher) is in the background on the left. Nearby, leaning on a parapet and holding a book, is Bramante, the architect. In the right corner is Dante in profile, crowned with laurel. Close to him are St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventura. On the same side behind Dante is Savonarola (an Italian Reformer), who wears a cowl or hood. The Pope in front is Sixtus IV.

The Trinity is depicted in the upper part of the setting, with the Virgin Mary and St. John the Baptist surrounded by a group of figures representing patriarchs and the Evangelists. Moses holds the tablets, David has his crown, St. Peter is shown holding keys (The Keys of the Kingdom), and St. Paul carries a sword. Surrounding each of their heads is a nimbus, or halo. From the top of the engraving, angelic images appear in descending rays. Above all is Christ, who reigns in glory.

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Two **Eucharistic Candlesticks** stand on the windowsill behind the Baptismal Font in the rear of the church on either side of the Memorial Cross dedicated to the memory of The Rev. William Herbert Norris, founder and first rector of Christ Church. For many years the candlesticks were used in the Sanctuary, where they were placed on the windowsills. For festival services and funerals they were on the Altar.

These Eucharistic candlesticks are a memorial given by family and friends of **Donald R. Bennett**, who was born October 30, 1919 and died May 5, 1986. They are exquisitely fashioned of solid brass, and stand 24" high. A brass banding which fits around the candle itself reads **"In Loving Memory of Donald R. Bennett, Christ Episcopal Church, Woodbury, New Jersey 1987."**

Donald Bennett and his wife Virginia Batt Bennett (who is the daughter of the late Virginia and Albert Batt) were married in Christ Church in May 1946. As a child Donald regularly attended Christ Church Sunday School classes, and as an adult he served faithfully and frequently as an Usher. The Bennetts are the parents of 4 children: son Richard, who attends Christ Church with his mother, and like his father serves as an Usher on a regular basis. (Incidentally, Richard's son Jeffrey is a former acolyte at Christ Church). Another son, Robert, now living in Glassboro, was for many years Assistant Superintendent of Christ Church's Sunday School. A third son David also served as an acolyte, and now lives in West Deptford. The Bennett's only daughter, Betty Underwood, resides in Florida.

Virginia's mother and father (Virginia and Albert Batt) were long-time members of Christ Church. Both sang in the choir for many years, and after Virginia died Al (who is still fondly remembered by many as "a perfect gentleman") continued singing under the direction of George Mitchell, who was then Organist and Choir Director.

These Eucharistic Candlesticks are lighted during each Baptismal service, and stand as a testament and a loving memorial to the father of a family who has faithfully worshiped at Christ Church for many years.

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On a shelf beside the door leading from the Nave into the Sacristy is a reproduction of Michelangelo's **PIETA**.

This sculpture was placed in loving memory of **Gladys M. Finney** by her son William Cooper and his wife Janice on February 24, 1985. Gladys Finney, born Gladys Drain on September 18, 1903, was the daughter of Agnes Clark Drain of Millsboro, Delaware, and a granddaughter of one of the early chiefs of the Nanticoke Indian tribe. After her marriage to Lanier Cooper, Gladys lived in Philadelphia where she worked for 30 years as a dietician in the dining room of Gimbel's Department Store. In 1974 she moved to Woodbury to live with Bill and Janice, and like them became a communicant of Christ Church. A gracious lady who was proud of her heritage, she died on September 19, 1984. Following a viewing in the Parish House Assembly Room and burial service at Christ Church, she was buried in Eden Cemetery, Collingdale, Pennsylvania.

Michelangelo's original Pieta is in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, and was carved from a rough block of marble found in the quarries at Carrara. The statue in Christ Church is an exact replica, and was handcrafted in Italy.

And now a bit of American history: The name "Nanticoke" is derived from a term meaning "People of the Tide Water." The history of the Nanticoke culture as it was first encountered by the Europeans dates back nearly 3000 years. Members of this tribe once roamed the area of the Eastern banks of the Chesapeake Bay, with family hunting territories that extended as far east as the Atlantic Ocean in what is now Maryland and Delaware. Over the years the Nanticoke nation became nearly extinct through theft of their land by the influx of European settlers in the United States, and from diseases carried here by these new arrivals. In 1856 through the efforts of Lydia Clark (*another of Gladys Finney's ancestors*) the Nanticoke Nation "rose from extinction," and was officially recognized by the State of Delaware. In 1881 what remained of the Nanticoke community formed a legal identity known as "The Incorporated Body," and in 1904 (*the*

*year after Gladys Finney was born*) the Nanticoke people were recognized as such, and “The Act to Better Establish the Identity of a Race of People Known as the Offspring of the Nanticoke Indians” was passed. Later The Nanticoke Indian Association that exists today was formed to preserve the tribal heritage, and received a charter in 1922 as an incorporated tribe from the State of Delaware.

As mentioned above, Mrs. Finney’s grandfather was Chief Clark, an early Chief of the Nanticoke Indian Tribe. Bill Cooper, her son and parishioner of Christ Church, is a descendant of Chief Clark, and an enrolled member of the Nanticoke Tribe.

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An exquisite wood carving hangs at the foot of the Sacristy stairway lading to the Goodfellow Lounge. This carving, titled **The Way of the Cross**, was presented to Christ Church in 1987 by Canon William V. Rauscher, Jr. and his mother Marie, in loving memory of William V. Rauscher, Sr. (1907 – 1986). It was designed and carved in pine by Ron Frazee, a parishioner well known for his talents and many accomplishments both inside and out of Christ Church.

The beauty of this carving is the manner in which it lends itself to different interpretations by each viewer. At first glance you see people, objects, and animals. But actually the carving is a symphony of Gospel readings and teachings.

Across the top of the carving are the heads of four men (*think of the Four Apostles*). At the top left side is a building (*perhaps the Inn where there was no room for the birth of the Christ Child – St. Luke 2:7*). Three sheep graze in the lower left-hand corner (*representing the Lamb of God, the Book of Revelations’ favorite name for Christ – or possibly recalling Christ as The Good Shepherd (St. John 10:11-16)*).

On the right of the carving a woman kneels next to a water jar (*recalling the woman of Samaria who came to draw water from Jacob’s Well, who conversed with Jesus as he traveled back to Galilee (St. John 4: 1-29)*). Next to the woman is a large jar. (*This may*

*signify Jesus' first miracle when he turned water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. The stone jars which held the wine at this feast were large enough to hold 8 gallons, or the size of half a barrel (St. John 2:6).*

Positioned in front of the Inn on the left is an Angel who strengthens and ministers to Jesus as he kneels in prayer. *(Probably depicting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane – St. Luke 22:43).*

On the right, next to the water jar, stands a man whose arm is raised in anger with his fingers curled into a fist. *(Maybe one of the mob who shouted “Crucify him!” – St. Luke 23:21).*

Central to the carving is the image of Jesus, who has fallen while carrying his heavy cross on the way to his crucifixion. A woman, obviously in great distress and sorrow at the horror unfolding before her, kneels before the suffering Savior. *(Possibly Mary his mother – or his mother's sister, Mary, wife of Cleophas, or Mary Magdalene (St. John 19:25). Close behind this woman is a man. (Could this be John, the Beloved Disciple, who was with Mary at the crucifixion? (St. John 19:26-27). Two centurions, each armed with a spear, are on either side of the fallen Savior. (Probably two of the many guards who escorted Jesus to Calvary. Perhaps one of them is the centurion who, at the time of Jesus' death, realized the enormity of the event and glorified God saying “Truly this was the Son of God.” – St. Matthew 27:54).*

At the top right of the carving is the head of a horse. *(Could this signify one of the four horses mentioned in Chapter 6 of The Book of Revelation?*

(Note from the author: The italicized comments after each image described above are the author's interpretation; however, each image in this carving becomes personal to the individual viewer.)



This is a powerful design, transformed by Ron Frazee from what was once the top of a coffee table into a mysterious piece of art which, when allowed, draws each viewer into another dimension.

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Finally, above the entrance doors of the Church are two **Carved Angels** beneath the arms of **Carved Cross**. These Angels, which are mirror images of each other, were hand-carved by a master artist in Italy, and then covered with Gold Leaf. They were dedicated on January 26, 1986 in memory of Robert H. Smith.

On the side of the left door is a plaque that reads:

**Carved Angels in loving memory of Robert H. Smith.  
Presented by his family.**

These beautiful figures symbolically lend the support of the invisible world during Christ's crucifixion – *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.* ( St. Luke 22:43) and again, *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?* (St. Matthew 26:53)

Robert H. Smith (born on June 6, 1911) and his wife Agnes I. Smith are the parents of Henry Smith, a long-time parishioner who for many years has served as Coordinator of the Ushers in Christ Church. Robert and his wife attended Woodbury High School; both were graduates of the Class of 1930. While a student at WHS, Robert was a 3-letter athlete for 3 years. Life-long Episcopalians, Robert and Agnes attended St. Luke's Church in Westville, New Jersey for many years. After Agnes' death in 1963 on St. Valentine's Day, Robert began attending Christ Church with his son Henry, where he served as an usher beside him. He died on March 24, 1985, and was buried from Christ Church on March 29, 1985.

An interesting aside – while Robert was a student at Woodbury High School he was coached in sports by Clarence A. "Cap" Paine. On the same wall in the church close to the plaque identifying the Angels is a second plaque inscribed:

**Carved Cross – Christ as Priest  
In Loving Memory of Clarence A. Paine  
Presented by his wife, Doris**

Clarence “Cap” Paine was born on September 30, 1900 and died January 10, 1974. The **Cross** in his memory depicts Christ as Priest with symbols of the four Evangelists on the top, bottom, and both sides. It, too, was hand carved by an artist in Italy, and is covered with Gold Leaf.

“Cap” Paine was a graduate of Ursinus College in Pennsylvania. During the early 1920’s he joined the staff of Woodbury High School, where he coached the football, basketball, baseball and track teams. He was Woodbury High’s first Athletic Director, and during the 1959/1960 school term “Cap” was honored by having the school’s gymnasium named for him in recognition of his long and devoted service to the students and the school. His wife Doris also taught at WHS – her subject was Latin.

Both “Cap” and Doris were long-time active and devoted communicants of Christ Church. “Cap” taught Sunday School (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade boys), was also an Usher, and served on the Vestry. Doris was a member of the Altar Guild, and served on the same team with Dorothy Carney. Their four children attended Sunday School each week; their two sons also served as Acolytes.

Both of these memorials in Christ Church are especially meaningful to present parishioner Henry Smith and his family. In Henry’s own words: “It’s interesting to look at the placement of these Angels and the Cross. For so many years my Dad looked up to “Cap,” who was his trainer, mentor and friend. And now the Angels in memory of my Dad look up toward the Cross in memory of “Cap.” I like that.”

## **Section IV**

### **The “Guilds” of Christ Church**

**O Lord, our heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; we beseech thee to bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of their fellow men. Endue them with wisdom, patience, and courage to strengthen the weak and raise up those who fall; that, being inspired by thy love, they may worthily minister in thy Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the sake of him who laid down his life for us, the same thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The 1928 Book of Common Prayer**

## Chapter 20

### **The Early Guilds of Christ Church (The Mite Society, The Parish Guild, St. Agnes Guild, The Altar Guild, Trinity Guild and The Episcopal Church Women)**

In 1875, during the rectorship of The Rev. William H. Lewis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector of Christ Church, the first Guild of Christ Church was organized at a meeting held in one of the Sunday School rooms. The name chosen for this new organization was **The Parish Guild of Christ Church**, renamed soon after as **The Christ Church Guild**. An interesting aside: the Sunday School room referred to above in which this group first met was The Upper Room in the Temperance Hall, still in use at that time.

The object of the Guild was to assist by every means in its power the growth of the parish in numbers and efficiency, to aid the rector and officers in parish work, and to undertake missionary and charitable offices in the church. The first officers of the Guild were: President, Mrs. Mary S. Snow; Vice President, Miss Mary Levan; Secretary, Mrs. William Milligan; and Treasurer, Mrs. Benjamin F. Carter. Nearly 70 ladies of the parish (including a few gentlemen parishioners, too!) became members of the group. First order of business: a committee was formed to assist the Rector in visiting the sick and needy of the parish.

Prior to the inception of the Guild, a group called **The Mite Society** had been organized within the church, and one of Fr. Lewis' first actions was to combine The Mite Society with the new Christ Church Guild. Meetings were held every 2 weeks, and dues were 5 cents. These dues were devoted to providing for the sick and needy, keeping the church clean, and paying the individual(s) who pumped the bellows for the organ. Any surplus was to be used at the members' discretion.

During the Guild's first years, the organization paid to restore Christ Church's ceiling. They also purchased a Rood Screen, covered with greens and used at Christmas services. The Guild also cared for the Church linens, and collected money for Easter flowers. The members were charged with decorating the church on special occasions, and did much

mission work outside the Parish. When Bishop Scarborough consecrated the new Sunday School Building in 1876, the Guild paid for his visit.

**St. Agnes Guild** was organized within Christ Church on February 24, 1885 by the 4<sup>th</sup> Rector, The Rev. Howard E. Thompson, with the purpose of bringing the younger women of the Church into more active service. First order of business: a set of By-Laws was drawn up and approved, in which the organization's objectives were described as follows:

Object: (1) The Glory of God in the deepening of the spiritual life of its members, and the growth of grace and purity.

(2) The accomplishment of parochial and other good work according as there may be need and opportunity.

At the initial meeting, it was further decided membership should include "Any baptized girl not under 12 years of age, and of virtuous character."

The head of this organization was Miss Lydia Pierson, elected Superior at the first meeting. Each member was given a badge that they wore with honor. The group was supported by a monthly dues payment of 10 cents from each member, together with voluntary contributions and proceeds from work they did.

For many years Miss Pierson and the members of her group assumed sole responsibility for the care of the altar. During the early years of the church, most of the hangings used on the altar were handmade by Miss Pierson, assisted by two or three members of this group who enjoyed sewing. There is also an occasional reference to these women laundering the altar linens.

On June 22, 1886, the St. Agnes Guild celebrated its first anniversary, with a service of Holy Eucharist, followed later in the day with a service of Evening Prayer. This anniversary celebration marked the first of many celebrated each year thereafter.

On February 6, 1919 St. Agnes Guild and Christ Church Guild were combined, and Miss Lydia Pierson was made Honorary President of the new organization for life. The responsibility for the altar, vestments, linens, etc., was now shared, and Miss Pierson remained actively involved for several more years. She died in 1923, and at that time the members of the Christ Church Guild donated a beautifully carved Altar Chair, now located in the room at the top of the stairs where the acolytes vest. The plaque on the chair is inscribed: "To the glory of God and in memory of Lydia G. Pierson – 1846-1923. A tribute from her family and associates in Christ Church Guild."

Bake sales, birthday boxes, rummage sales, quilting, making aprons, fashioning fancy trinkets for the annual Christmas sale, cutting and tying greens to decorate the church, covering the Chancel Rail cushions, – all these activities were sponsored by The Guild to raise funds. During World War I, the ladies of the Guild prepared surgical dressings for use on the battlefield, and sent cards to the men in the Armed Services on a regular basis.

In 1953, seven women were actively engaged in caring for the altar at Christ Church. The names of several of these ladies are still familiar to a few of today's worshipers, and they are remembered with deep gratitude for their devotion to the church. They are: Bertha R. Twells, Josephine Ward, Mary Imbrie, Margaret Imbrie, Margueritte Bickerstaff and Matilda Bairstow.

**Trinity Guild** is a "newer" organization within Christ Church, begun in April 1931 by three young women: Grace F. Twells, Elise E. Morris, and Adele Fiske. The purpose of this organization was to further friendships and aid the Church Mission of Help. The first meeting of this new group was held on April 7, 1931, with 22 ladies present. The name "**The Young Women's Club of Christ Church**" was selected, officers were elected, and dues were set at \$1.00 per year, with meetings held every 2 weeks in the evenings.

Sewing for the Mission was the first project of this newly formed group. To provide funds with which to purchase materials, a card party was held in the Parish House on

October 9, 1931 of that year, the first of what was to become an annual affair that continued for many years.

The membership of this new group steadily increased, and at the first annual meeting it was reported there were 45 members. By that time, two hundred garments had been made and donated to the Church Mission of Help, along with \$10 in cash. The ladies had also provided 12 shirts and some toys that were sent to the American Indians in Utah. The sum of \$60 was given to the treasurer of Christ Church to use as was needed. Benefit card parties were held during the year, and the members of the Guild attended Holy Communion as a corporate body twice during the group's first twelve months.

Over the years the membership numbers increased, and many varied charitable services were performed. Lenten classes were held, to which well-known speakers were invited. Repairs in the Rectory, including shelves in the library, were paid for by members of The Guild. This organization also helped pay the Church's coal bill when necessary.

On November 18, 1937, it was decided the name of the organization no longer adequately described the group's purpose, and the decision was made to adopt the name **Trinity Guild of Christ Church** – a name signifying the threefold interests of the group, i.e., missionary, civic, and parish activities.

In 2007 Trinity Guild still exists within Christ Church, with meetings held in the evening. Membership is extended to every woman in the parish.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another organization worthy of mention is **The Episcopal Church Women of Christ Church**, a member of the Woodbury District of the New Jersey Diocese. The ECW is a division of the national organization, whose beginnings can be traced back to 1871.



Extensive research reveals the first mention of the ECW within Christ Church is at the annual Parish Meeting held on March 30, 1959 when a report was given of their activities.

The purpose of the national organization is “to assist the women of the Episcopal Church to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world, and to take their place as leaders in the life, governance, and worship of the church.” The national and local groups are comprised of women of all ages, ethnic origins, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

On a Diocesan level, each year the ECW offers a monetary Student Service Award in appreciation for deserving young people’s service to the church and community. The church Periodical Club ministry of the ECW provides books and related materials, including theological and education texts, audio and videotapes and software to deserving persons. They also coordinate the annual United Thank Offering. Additionally, on a local level our parish ECW members are regular visitors to parish shut-ins.

Over the years, Christ Church’s ECW has earned money and donated to the Kitchen Building Fund, which in 2007 totaled \$46,000. They also contribute to the Seamen’s Church Institute, The Emanuel Cancer Fund, and the National Life Center. More recently, they contributed monies to Christ Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a parish that suffered devastating losses during Hurricane Katrina.

Since its inception in Christ Church, the Episcopal Church Women’s organization has always met in the afternoon. Like Trinity Guild, membership in the ECW is extended to every woman in the parish.

**Chapter 21**  
**The Altar Guild of Christ Church**  
**In the Year 2007**

*There are a faithful few who work unseen  
and unobtrusively give of their best;  
Who spend their lives perfecting little things  
which often pass unnoticed by the rest.  
Theirs are the hands that dust the altar rails  
and change the flowers and keep the linen fair.  
They sweep the aisle with cheerful reverence  
and polish silver with a murmured prayer.  
They are the quiet ones who freely give their time  
and thought and love with glad accord;  
Who softly tread the byways of resolve,  
and share the peace of God for their reward.*  
Author Unknown

The Altar Guild of Christ Church is a growing organization of dedicated, active women, who quietly and diligently perform their duties throughout the entire year.

Although the organization is nearly as old as Christ Church, the women who have served as “head” of this group, training and coordinating the efforts of their fellow guild members are few in number, since each of them has been so dedicated that their years of service are lengthy. Over the years, a few names are outstanding for their service in this Guild: Mrs. Sarah D. Ladd, Miss Bertha Twells, Mary and Margaret Imbrie (succeeding their mother, who also served in this capacity for many years), and Mrs. Jeannette Carter. Each of these ladies was untiring in her devotion to the altar.

It should be noted that Mrs. Carter, who retired on December 31, 2005 as Directress of the Altar Guild, had served in this capacity for 38 years under three rectors through many challenging times. At a ceremony held on the occasion of her retirement, Mrs. Carter was presented with a Letter of Commendation written by The Rt. Rev. George E. Councill, 11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New Jersey, as requested by The Rev. Brian K. Burgess, 13<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church. A ceramic bowl and pitcher set, now used during the church’s Maundy Thursday foot-washing ceremony, was commissioned honoring the event of

Mrs. Carter's retirement, and serves as a fitting tribute to a woman who gave so much of herself to the glory of God and to the benefit of Christ Church.

Since January 1, 2006 the Altar Guild has been under the guidance of Directress Mrs. Helen Tomeo, who herself has devoted more than 39 years of service to this organization, and who continues to provide training for newcomers to the organization. The current Altar Guild members (currently 24 ladies, with 7 in training) have committed themselves to be available 365 days each year to perform their proscribed ministry behind the scenes before and after every service conducted in the church.

The altar is the center of the Church's life, and is the Altar Guild's major concern. The Guild is in no way a social group, and no member of the Guild considers her responsibilities a chore or a job. To serve in this capacity is a privilege and a vocation that requires dedication and self-effacement.

According to *The Devotional Manual for Altar Guild Members* prepared by the Diocese of New Jersey:

"It has been said that the women of the altar guild are the spiritual descendants of the women who ministered to Our Lord, and it is in that spirit that one approaches this work, whether it is arranging flowers or cleaning the church, making vestments, or embroidering. The work is empty without a holy intention, and is always approached as a high privilege and in the attitude of prayer.

"When this work is performed in solitude, there are fewer distractions from remembering God. When performed in groups, silence is always observed in the sanctuary. In other places, conversation is gentle and reverent, with underlying charity.

"All work is offered to the glory of God, and may be offered in *adoration*, simply because one loves Him and wishes to do something for Him. It may also be offered in *thanksgiving* for some particular blessing, in *intercession* for specific needs for others, in *petition* for the needs of ourselves, or in *contrition* for some misdeed.

“Altar Guild work may also be offered in *reparation* (to make up for) our sins and the sins of the world, for the indifference of so many to Our Lord’s loving Sacrifice, and for the many irreverences toward Our Lord’s Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament.”

Every member of Christ Church’s Altar Guild personifies the dedication to service described above.

At Christ Church, Woodbury, the responsibilities of the Altar Guild members include:

- Making certain the Altar, pulpit and lectern are appropriately dressed every day according to the proper season or occasion;
- Preparing and laying out the priests’ vestments in proper order in the sacristy so they are ready to wear;
- Assuring that a supply of Altar candles is available and correctly set out;
- Assuring that the wine and wafers are available for consecration by the priest;
- Filling the cruets with wine and water;
- Correctly veiling and positioning the Chalice on the Altar, along with the priest’s host which must be readily available on the paten atop the Chalice;
- Preparing and placing the lavabo bowl and towel on the credence table so the priest can wash his fingers immediately before the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist;
- Meticulously cleaning the vessels after each service;
- Periodically polishing the previous silver vessels that have graced the Altar for many years, being ever mindful of the value and safety of all silver appointments;
- Making certain the alms basins are available before each service.
- Picking up and arranging the Altar flowers;
- Preparing the Baptismal font when appropriate; and finally
- Delivering flowers to sick and shut-in members as directed.

Unfortunately the ministry of the Altar Guild is often overlooked because of the quiet and unobtrusive dedication of its members, and the duties performed by the teachers and neophytes are often taken for granted. Sadly, in some churches the importance of training for new members is also overlooked, which is apparent to experienced observers and certainly by a priest at the Altar. This situation does not apply in Christ Church: not then, not now, and not ever.

Many members of our church’s Altar Guild have served for more than 30 years, and the clergy and parishioners are sincerely grateful for their selfless dedication to this ministry.

On June 30, 2007 a luncheon was held to honor six ladies who had retired from the Altar Guild during the last year and a half – Mrs. Ann Lasoski, Mrs. Barbara Wells, Mrs. Rosalind Rheiner, Mrs. Dorothy Landberg, Mrs. Florence Ullrich, and Mrs. Ethel Goldy. These ladies had served a combined total of 194 years, or an average of 34 years each. This is a remarkable example of dedication and devotion to the Church and the altar they love.

## **Chapter 22**

### **The Brotherhood of St. Andrew Society In Christ Church**

Almighty God, who didst give such grace to thy holy Apostle Saint Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay; Grant unto us all, that we, being called by thy Holy Word, may forthwith give up ourselves obediently to fulfil thy holy commandments; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The 1928 Book of Common Prayer

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a worldwide ministry to men and boys in the Episcopal/Anglican communion.

The Society saw its beginnings as a Prayer and Bible Study group led by layman James L. Houghteling at St. James Episcopal Church in Chicago, Illinois. The first meeting of this group was held on St. Andrew's Day in 1883, and was attended by 12 men. The name was suggested at one of the early meetings after the purpose of the group was defined. Like St. Andrew, the members' goal was to reach out to their brother(s) and bring them to Christ.

During the next several years the word spread, and the group that started in such humble beginnings experienced rapid growth across the country. By 1886, at the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in Chicago, nearly 100 chapters had been formed in the United States, and a few in Canada.

On May 30, 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt, through an Act of Congress, incorporated The Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the United States. At that time the purpose of The Brotherhood was defined as follows:

The sole object of said corporation shall be the spread of Christ's kingdom among men and boys through the disciplines of Prayer, Study and Service.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew was introduced to Christ Church by The Rev. Howard E. Thompson, 4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, sometime during his rectorate (see Chapter 26: The Reverend Howard E. Thompson). At that time the membership was comprised of 15 men and the Rector. A St. Andrew's banner is clearly visible in a photograph on an interior wall of the old Parish House sometime between 1886 – 1917. (Ed. Note: In November 2007 this same original banner was restored by parishioner Jeanne Webb and encased in a glass frame through the auspices of the present members of The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, who presented it for blessing and hanging in the present Parish Hall.)

Over the years as membership in the parish Society dwindled The Brotherhood of St. Andrew in Christ Church finally ceased to exist. In 2006, The Very Reverend Brian K. Burgess (the 13<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church) suggested this inactive but valued Society should be resurrected. Responding to his encouragement, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew's Society was reinstituted in May 2006, and after many years this organization is once again a vital, active group of 35 men and boys in the parish who meet monthly for Bible study and project planning.

In the wake of damage wrought by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, one of their first projects in 2006 (and again in 2007) was for three teams of members from this organization to travel on three separate occasions to Covington, Louisiana to assist in the renovation of buildings which house an organization sponsored by Christ Church, Covington. As a result of this outreach, the repairs are now complete, and Christ Church, Covington considers Christ Church, Woodbury their "companion church."

At home, in 2007 with Fr. Burgess' blessing, the Brotherhood rebuilt and refurnished the parish house of St. Luke's Church in Woodstown, New Jersey, in an attempt to revitalize this smaller parish and help them experience new growth and increased membership.

In 2006, several Brotherhood members participated in repainting the church ceiling at St. Paul's, a large Episcopal church located in the heart of Camden, New Jersey, recognized as a focal point for feeding the needy of their community each week.

In December 2007 a group of men and boys from the Society are building a new crèche to be displayed in Christ Church's Jubilee Garden during the Christmas season.

Several Brotherhood members also assisted in the renovations of the Rectory's third floor, working with the contractor and providing whatever assistance is required.

Encouraged by Fr. Burgess, all members of the Brotherhood are available to assist in home repairs and heavy lifting required by older and/or otherwise handicapped Christ Church parishioners, as well as members of the local community, who are themselves no longer able to fulfill the necessary maintenance needs of their own homes, but who wish to remain independent as long as possible.

Each member of Christ Church's chapter of The Brotherhood of St. Andrew wears a small pin on their left lapel, in their left collar, or on their tie as a reminder that he is a Brother with a clearly defined purpose in life. The pin is designed in three parts:

- A Gold Circle symbolizing God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and reminding each member of the **Discipline of Prayer**;
- A Blue Field symbolizing each member's faith in Jesus Christ, reminding each of the **Discipline of Study** of the Holy Scriptures and Christ's teachings;
- A White saltire cross ("X") symbolizing Andrew, who took his brother Peter to meet Jesus. Andrew was crucified on an "X" cross because he felt he was not worthy to be crucified on the same style cross like Jesus. The white cross reminds each Society member of their **Discipline of Service** in their efforts to bring others nearer to Christ.

Years after the beginnings of the first Brotherhood of St. Andrew Chapter in Chicago, Illinois, founder James Houghteling said: "God stirred up the wills of the little company, that dozen insignificant folk, so that they started out to do something ... and didn't they though!"



It would certainly appear they did, as evidenced by the enthusiasm generated by the men and boys who participate in The Brotherhood of St. Andrew Society in Christ Church, Woodbury over 124 years later.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.*

Ephesians 2:8-10

## **Section V**

# **Reflections on The Windows of Christ Church, Woodbury**

**O Almighty Father, Lord of heaven and earth, the entrance of whose  
work giveth light: Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to accept these  
Windows at our hands for the adornment of thy house and praise of  
thy holy name; and grant that they who worship here, being drawn by  
the love and contemplation of heavenly things, may be confirmed to  
the image of thy dear Son, To whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be  
all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.**

**Service Book for the  
Diocese of New Jersey, Page 121  
Pub: Princeton, New Jersey, 1940**

## **Chapter 23**

### **The Windows in Christ Church**

When Christ Church was consecrated in 1857 the windows in the church were a mixture of tinted and frosted glass. It was not until January 2, 1905 that a committee was appointed to secure memorial windows for the church, and supervise their installation. This committee consisted of Messrs. Speakman, Merritt and Shivers “with such others as the above Committee may call to their assistance.”

Between 1905 and 1907 nine windows had been designated as memorials to replace those of plain glass, and the first memorial windows are designated within this chapter by a cross (+) preceding their description. All other windows described within the following pages were installed and dedicated at later dates, ending with the installation of the Rauscher Window, dedicated on September 13, 1998 by The Reverend Douglas E. Anderson, the 12<sup>th</sup> Rector. Details regarding each window in the church and a bit of history about the individual(s) in whose memory the windows were given follows.

The first double window is located within the Sanctuary on the Epistle Side of the church. For ease of identification, this window is considered as #1 (although it was not one of the original nine memorials).

#### **Window #1: THE SCRIBES’ WINDOW (the sepia painted window located inside the altar rail facing the altar)**

***To the Glory of God and in Memory of Henry Clay Clark, M.D., by members of Christ Church Guild.***

Henry Clay Clark was born in Paulsboro, NJ on November 21, 1832 and was educated in Woodbury schools. He was the son of Charles French Clark, also a successful physician who practiced medicine in Paulsboro in the early 1820’s. Dr. Charles Clark, who died on October 17, 1875 was buried in Eglington Cemetery following a burial service in Christ Church conducted by The Rev. William H. Lewis, Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector of the church.

Son Henry (in whose memory The Scribes' Window was given) received his early education in the Woodbury schools. He then graduated from Hopewell Pennsylvania Academy, and from the University of Pennsylvania in 1853. Immediately upon his graduation Dr. Clark opened his medical office in Woodbury.

In 1861 he was appointed assistant surgeon of the Second Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, and for three years was with the New Jersey boys in the army of the Potomac, serving with the Third New Jersey and the Thirty-Seventh Regiment. He was taken prisoner at the Second Bull Run and again at Salem church when he was acting Brigade Surgeon.

When he returned from the war Dr. Clark married Miss Lucy I. Wood, and resumed the practice of his medical profession in Woodbury. The Clarks' were the parents of a daughter, Alice W. Clark, and a son (who also became a member of the medical profession), Dr. H. H. Clark.

Dr. Clark's wife Lucy died in 1898; six years later Dr. Clark died on December 28, 1904 at the age of 72 years. He had been a member of the vestry of Christ Church since the organization of the Parish in 1874, and a warden since 1895.

*(Ed. Note:* The framed reproduction of the Murillo *Madonna and Child* painting located on the wall opposite the Clark windows was a gift to Christ Church from Dr. Clark's daughter, Alice Wood Clark (1865-1925). The painting was accepted by the vestry in March 1907).

**+ Window #2: AFTER THE RESURRECTION WINDOW (the first window on the Epistle side of the church immediately outside the door leading to the Sacristy).  
*In Memory of Benjamin F. and Elizabeth M. Carter by their son and daughter Mr. Samuel Carter and Mrs. Lewis Renshaw.***

See Chapter 3 – Benjamin F. Carter, Esq.

**Window # 3a – FAITH WINDOW**

**Window #3b – FORTITUDE WINDOW**

The first of these two windows was installed in 1905 as one of the nine original memorial windows in memory of Charles W. Starr. At that time the window was described as the **+CROSS AND CROWN WINDOW**, offered as a memorial by Charles' wife Fannie, and by his sons Lewis and Arthur.

Charles W. Starr was an early member of Christ Church. When the number of vestrymen was increased from 9 to 10 in April 1894, Mr. Starr was duly elected to serve as the newest member. Charles died in April 1900.

Charles' son Arthur served as the City Clerk in Woodbury, and was a member of the vestry for many years. He served as Secretary of the vestry from 1905 to 1907, and in 1906 was elected a Delegate to the Convocation Meeting.

A note of interest: During the construction of the "new" Parish House, Fannie Starr lent Christ Church \$1,000 for a term of 15 years at 4% interest, payable semi-annually, to help pay for the building.

When Fannie died on May 27, 1922 the members of the congregation contributed to a suitable memorial for her, so an adjoining window in her memory was installed next to that of her husband in late 1923. One problem: Fannie P. Starr's name was misspelled on the new window! By January 1924 the correction had been made and the two windows were in place.

\* \* \*

Eleven years later Charles and Fannie's son Lewis died on November 5, 1934. Louella, his wife, had predeceased her husband; she died on February 17, 1933.

The Honorable Lewis Starr served as a County Prosecutor and Judge of the Common Pleas Court, and on April 17, 1922 was appointed Chancellor of the Parish of Christ Church by the rector and the vestry. He was described as “a man of charming personality, culture, and refinement. He and his wife were the parents of three children: Abbott Starr, Mrs. Marguerite S. Summerill, and Mrs. Kathryn Johnson.

In December 1936 at the family’s request the original windows were replaced, and in their place the double window that we see today was designed by the Dascenzo Studios in Philadelphia. The window on the left, now called the **FAITH WINDOW**, is in memory of Charles W. and Fannie P. Starr. To its right is the **FORTITUDE WINDOW**, in memory of Judge Lewis Starr and his wife Louella.

Finally the memorials to Charles and Fannie, and to their son Lewis and his wife Louella, were in place, conlocated and correctly identified.

#### **+ Window #4: THE GOOD SHEPHERD WINDOW**

*In Loving Memory of Emma Elliott Speakman by William E. Speakman.*

William E. Speakman was a longtime member of the vestry, for many years a warden, a gentleman very much involved in Christ Church’s early years, and frequently mentioned in the early pages of Christ Church.

Mr. Speakman was a chemist by profession, and spent a great deal of his early years in Europe. He lived with his wife Martha and their daughter at 103 Euclid Street in Woodbury at the corner of Euclid and Hunter Streets on the property adjoining that of the Carter family. His mother, Emma Elliott Speakman, died on May 22, 1887, and The Good Shepherd window was presented by the Speakman family and dedicated in her memory.

William Speakman died on May 13, 1915 from Bright's Disease. The Speakman property on Euclid Street has since been demolished.

**+ Window #5: THE DOVE AND CHALICE WINDOW.**

***In Loving Memory of Frank I. Foote, Sallie C. Foote, and Alice K. Foote by Henry C. Foote.***

Although the church records indicate the window was in memory of the above three individuals, Alice K. Foote's name does not appear on this window. The records offer no information concerning Sallie C. and Alice K. Foote, but indicate Frank I. Foote died of consumption in March 1876 at the age of 24 years.

Henry C. Foote was one of the oldest citizens in Woodbury, who died on January 24, 1912. He was a member of Christ Church during its earliest days, and served as a vestryman and a Junior and Senior Warden. According to a diary kept by The Rev. Howard E. Thompson, 4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, a reception for him on the evening of his arrival in Woodbury was hosted by the Foote family, attended by 125 members of the church. It was also not unusual for the vestry to hold meetings at the Foote residence.

Historical records also indicate Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Foote had a son Charles, who died on March 9, 1875 when he was 4 years old.

**Window #6 – Painted BROWN ANGELS WINDOW (behind Baptismal Font)**

***In Memory of Martin Philip Grey, Jr. by Norman Grey***

Norman Grey was an attorney and a member of Christ Church. He was elected to the vestry on April 8, 1912, serving through 1914.



This window was received by the vestry in a meeting held on November 5, 1906, offered by Norman as a memorial to his father, Martin Philip Grey, Jr.

Martin Philip Grey, Jr. was born on December 12, 1841 – the third son of Philip Grey. He was buried from his son Norman's home in Woodbury, with services conducted by the Rev. F. L. Llinchbaugh of Salem, and interred in Colestown Cemetery.

**Window #7: - CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN WINDOW**

*To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Florence and Henry Mahley by their family.*

(See Chapter 18 The Mahley, Carney and Ullrich Families)

*(Ed. Note:* This window replaced one of the original nine windows installed between 1905 and 1907, presented by the Christ Church Guild and dedicated as a memorial to Mrs. Rebecca A. Colson. Rebecca, who died at her home on Cooper Street on January 17, 1903 at the age of 78 years, was the widow of the late Asa Colson. Both Rebecca and Asa were members of Christ Church. Over the years this original window, described as a +**PASSION VINE** design, was so deteriorated that total replacement was the only option.)

**Window #8: - CHRIST AS PRIEST HOLDING CHALICE (located high above the vestibule entrance doors).**

*To the Glory of God and in Memory of Clara A. Blake.*

Clara A. Blake was the widow of Tyler Blake (See Window #12), who died on January 3, 1916 at the age of 78 years. She and her husband were the parents of three daughters and

one son. This memorial window was offered by Miss Adelle Blake and Miss Alice Blake in October, 1917.

**Window #9- THE CHERUBS' WINDOW (located in the entrance arch over the two swinging doors at the inside vestibule of the church).**

***Dedicated to the Glory of God and In Loving Memory of Andrew C. and Georgeanna Gray and Rachael Wilgus, and as a living memorial to George Wilgus – Presented by Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Gray on November 20, 1966.***

Andrew C. and Georgeanna Gray were the parents of Edward J. Gray (who died on February 27, 2004) and Andrew Gray, both members of Christ Church. Rachael Wilgus and George Wilgus were the parents of Anna J. Gray, Edward Gray's wife, also a member of Christ Church who presently resides in Clarksboro, New Jersey.

**Window #10 – THE ARTS AND SCIENCES WINDOW (located on the back wall on the Gospel side of the church).**

***To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of The Twells Family – Presented to Christ Church by Those Who Love them.***

(See Chapter 6 – The Twells Family of Woodbury)

**+ Window #11: – THE ANNUNCIATION WINDOW**

***In Memory of William D. Nash and Lucena Clark Schumo - Presented by Mrs. Lucena Nash in memory of her husband and her mother.***

Lucena Clark Schumo (Lucena Nash's mother) died on July 22, 1896 at the age of 79 at her daughter and son-in-law's home.

William Nash (Lucena Nash's husband) was a member of the vestry from April 9, 1890 until his death on May 24, 1898 at the age of 51 years. Cause of his death was listed as Bright's Disease.

**+ Window #12: HARP AND SHEAF OF WHEAT WINDOW**

***In Loving Memory of Tyler R. Blake by The Blake Family.***

Tyler R. Blake died on June 14, 1892. (See the Memoriam to Mr. Blake, spread across the vestry minutes and quoted in Chapter 24 of this book.)

**Window #13 – THE CHURCH MILITANT AND THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT WINDOW**

***In Memory of David Shivers and Lavinia Cloud, presented by Mrs. Julia Shivers.***

David Shivers and his wife Julia were charter members of Christ Church, and were the parents of six children. David died on December 31, 1899 at the age of 74 years.

Lavinia Cloud (Julia Shivers' mother) died on April 4, 1896 at the dawn of Easter when she was 84 years old. She was also a member of Christ Church .

Julia Shivers was one of two surviving charter members of Christ Church at the time of her death in March 1921 after an extended illness. Helen Shivers (one of Julia and David's children), born on December 15, 1867 and also a member of Christ Church, died on January 26, 1932.

**+ Window #14 – LAMB, ANCHOR, AND CROWN WINDOW**

*In Loving Memory of Cornelia McMaster Herbert, presented by Miss Herbert, Theodore Herbert, Arthur Herbert, and Mrs. W. A. Flanigan in memory of their mother.*

Cornelia Herbert, the widow of Henry Herbert, died on December 4, 1902. Daughter Mrs. W. A. Flanigan was the widow of William A. Flanigan, who died in April 1915 at his home on Euclid Street in Woodbury. Son Arthur Herbert, who had lived most of his life in Woodbury, died in June 1912 in Mexico.

**Window #15 – CHRIST AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD WINDOW**

*Presented by parishioners and friends commemorating the life and ministry of The Reverend Canon William R. Rauscher, 11<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, following his retirement in 1996, and dedicated on September 13, 1998.*

(See Chapter 34 – The Reverend Canon William R. Rauscher)

**Window #16 – THE SAINT DAVID WINDOW**

*Presented in 1965 by parishioners and friends, and dedicated to the memory of The Reverend Canon Robert G. Wynne Williams, 10<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church.*

This window celebrates Canon Williams' ministry and his Welsh heritage. It is located next to Canon Rauscher's window, behind the organ console and next to the pulpit.

(See Chapter 31 – The Reverend Canon Robert G. Williams)

**Window #17 – ST. BENEDICT OF NURSIA, A.D. 530 Window (located in the Sanctuary on the Gospel side)**

***To the Glory of God in Memory of Charles Augustus Warren and Mary Day Warren.***

This memorial window was received in 1917, given by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Herbert Warren, members of Christ Church.

**Window #18: - ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, A.D. 596 WINDOW  
(conlocated with Window #17)**

***To the Glory of God and in Memory of Frederick Oscar Augustus Knipe and Isabel Miller Knipe.***

As of this writing, this window and the man and woman it memorializes are a mystery. One bit of information uncovered during this writing further complicates the situation: On November 4, 1907 a Mrs. E. Bradford Clark (also unknown by the author) asked the vestry's permission to place a memorial window in the sanctuary opposite the window in memory of Dr. Clark, and her request was approved. Since this is the only window unaccounted for after extensive research, perhaps it is the one presented by Mrs. Clark. But who was she? A member of the Clark family? And who were Frederick Oscar Augustus Knipe and Isabel Miller Knipe? A search of the church records provided no information on the Knipe family; neither is there any record of them in the Gloucester County Historical Society. *May they all rest in peace.*

**Window #19 – ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, A.D. 1208 WINDOW (located in the Sanctuary behind the altar rail on the Gospel side)**

***To the Glory of God and in Memory of Erwin Iwerson.***

This window was offered as a memorial by Mr. and Mrs. George Iwerson, and installed in October 1917, as a memorial to their son Erwin Iwerson, who was 10 years old when

he died “of rheumatism” on February 2, 1917. Erwin was buried from Christ Church by The Rev. Howard M. Stuckert, 9<sup>th</sup> Rector of the church.

**Window #20 – ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, A.D. 1265 (conlocated with Window #19)**  
***To the Glory of God and in Memory of Lewis Middleton Allen.***

Lewis Middleton Allen died in September 1853 when he was 3 years old. He was the son of William and Henrietta Allen. This memorial was offered in October 1917 by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Allen.

**Window #21 – Circular Sanctuary Window over the Altar depicting the SHIELDS OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES**  
***Offered to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Elizabeth White – Presented by Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Haines Demme.***

(See Chapter 18: **The Apostles’ Window** Above the Altar)

**Two windows face each other in the Church Vestibule:**

**+ THE ALPHA & OMEGA WINDOW.**

***Presented by Mr. J. Standley Twells in Memory of Mary P. Locke,*** who died on February 17, 1884 at the age of nine years of Scarlet Fever; and

**The CHI RHO WINDOW**

***In Memory of Gladys V. Dobbs,*** the eleven-year-old daughter of Edward H. and Elizabeth B. Dobbs, who died on January 28, 1905. Parishioner Florence M. Ullrich

recalls the Dobbs' farm (now no longer in existence) was located on Kings Highway across the street from what is now Mahley Drive.

**Four windows representing the FOUR EVANGELISTS (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were installed and dedicated in 1977. These memorials replaced the plain glass windows installed in the dormers of the church roof while Fr. Malcolm Taylor was Rector of Christ Church:**

**ST. JOHN WINDOW:** - *In memory of Leroy Lewis – presented by his family and friends;*

**ST. LUKE WINDOW:** - *In memory of Marie E. Jonnson – presented by her husband Nils;*

**ST. MARK WINDOW:** - *In memory of Florence and Frank Hagner – presented by their daughter Marjorie;*

**ST. MATTHEW WINDOW:** - *In memory of Edward E. Guidara, Jr. – presented by his family.*

With the exception of the **St. John Window**, all of these windows are given in memory of former parishioners of Christ Church. Leroy Lewis was the father of Canon Robert J. Lewis, friend of the parish.

## **THE ACOLYTES AND ALTAR GUILD WINDOWS**

Two windows are located in the Sacristy area where the Priests vest – one window depicts the theme of an **Acolyte**; the other, the theme of the **Altar Guild**. These windows were offered *In Memory of Lowell R. Moss, Jr., Joseph Summerill Moss, and Edgar E. Moss, who served as Acolytes and Crucifers in Christ Church – Presented by their mother, Mrs. Lowell R. Moss, Sr. (Gertrude) in 1968.*

A plaque beneath the window states: *“And that I may go unto the Altar of God, Even unto the God of my Joy and Gladness.”*

One last window is found in the Glass Door located on the New Street entrance to the Parish House. This is one of the original frosted glass windows from the church, In Loving Memory of Mary V. Clark who was born in 1812 and died in January 9, 1884. She was buried from Christ Church with burial services conducted by The Rev. George M. Bond, 3<sup>rd</sup> Rector.

Mary V. Clark was Henry Clay Clark, M.D's. mother and Dr. Charles French Clark's wife. The original window was offered as a memorial by Mary L. Whitall.

This window was saved and framed in 1998 by parishioner Mr. Ron Frazee, and installed in the Parish House entrance as a lasting reminder of one of the Christ Church's earliest parishioners.



## **Section VI**

### **The Clergy of Christ Church, Woodbury**

#### **Past and Present Shepherds of Our Flock**

**Give me the Priest whose grace shall possess  
Of an ambassador, the just address  
A father's tenderness, a shepherd's care  
A leader's courage, which the cross can bear  
A ruler's awe, a watchman's wakeful eye, A  
pilot's skill, the helm in storm to ply  
A fisher's patience and a laborer's toil,  
A guide's dexterity to disembroil,  
A prophet's inspiration from above,  
A teacher's knowledge and a Savior's love.**

**From the writings of Thomas Ken  
Bishop of Bath and Welles during the 17<sup>th</sup> Century**

## Chapter 24

### **The Reverend William (Guilielmus) Herbert Norris** **Missionary** **1<sup>st</sup> Rector of Christ Church** **June 4, 1854 – September 1873**

*(Ed. Note: This chapter concerning Fr. Norris might be considered lengthy, but during my research many new facts were uncovered concerning his rectorship. So that the readers may be fully informed and aware of these findings, I have included the additional details along with those previously recorded.*

*It is my hope that this more complete history may evoke some sympathy for the major turmoil and grief that occurred in the life of this family who was so important to Christ Church's earliest days.)*

*From an historical standpoint, it also seemed appropriate to include an Addendum to this chapter documenting the life of Edward Carlyle Norris, the eldest son in the Norris family.*

William (Guilielmus) Herbert Norris was born in Virginia in 1814, the son of the Reverend Oliver Norris and Sarah Herbert Norris. Sarah, his mother, was a direct descendent of John and Sarah Carlyle, of Fairfax, Virginia and Alexandria, Virginia, and it appears Fr. Norris' early life was one of relative financial ease. He was a graduate of Yale College, and while in New Haven, Connecticut, worshipped at Trinity Church in that city.

Following his ordination, he became rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he served from December 1841 until October 1850, during one of the stormiest periods in St. John's history. According to the book *The Spire on the Square*, which records the church's history:

“William Herbert Norris was a man of intense faith who masked deep insecurities under a façade of studiousness, a man who found the path to salvation not by interaction with his fellow man, but in a lonely study of texts and treatises where he could come to inflexible, self-righteous conclusions that in turn could have startling and upsetting outcomes. Reverend Norris stood as stiffly as an iron rod, unwilling to bend no matter what the cost.”

Fr. Norris arrived in Carlisle, Pennsylvania with his wife, Juliet Rawle, whom he had married in 1839, and their son Edward, accompanied by an elderly relative (perhaps an aunt), and by an orphaned niece whom Fr. Norris had promised to raise and educate. (*Ed. Note: The Norris' may in fact have assumed the responsibility for raising **two** nieces – Fanny Wright and her sister Cecelia. Information about these girls is sketchy, but both are referred to in a letter written by Fr. Norris in 1876 to Mr. George Manley, one of the founders of Christ Church who apparently remained loyal to him.*)

The Norris' son, Edward, had been born in Virginia; Herbert and Francis, the two younger sons, were born in Carlisle during the time Fr. Norris was rector at St. John's. It is assumed the elderly relative was brought along to care for the children once the family was settled in their new home.

During the 1830's and 1840's, strong anti-Catholic sentiment existed in Carlisle. Before Fr. Norris' arrival, many of the parishioners had defected from the Methodist Church in Carlisle, attracted by the services at St. John's that would have been considered "low church," and the slightest intimation of "Popery" introduced into the services at St. John's was met with active and open criticism and dislike. Some changes in the services that might have been considered major (i.e., the addition of music) had already been made during the 1820's, so Fr. Norris probably (and obviously incorrectly) surmised any further changes he might initiate would not meet with strong objection.

In September 1842, in an effort to become actively involved in her husband's new church, Fr. Norris' wife Juliet joined with two other ladies to formally organize themselves into the Sewing Society of St. John's Church for the express purpose of obtaining "by the manufacture and sale of fancy articles, the means of assisting in the purchase of a parsonage House and of whatever may be necessary to the same." Mrs. Norris was named Directress of this group, and for a while peace reigned.

Meanwhile, Fr. Norris began what became a long-standing practice of holding baptisms on weekday holy days, and was the first of St. John's rectors to make note of a child's

Godparents. Gradually he introduced increasingly ritualistic (or “high church”) services, including the display of a cross, and wearing a clergy stole over his surplice. This was totally different from the Methodist and other Protestant services in the area, and the congregation grumbled, but didn’t offer strong resistance, until one Sunday in 1844, when Fr. Norris placed lighted candles on the altar during the service, and according to St. John’s historian, “All hell broke loose.”

One woman in the congregation whom Fr. Norris described as “one singular woman, by profession a Calvinist, but as far as the eye can see, utterly irreligious,” a lady who was a relatively recent convert to the Episcopal faith, led a movement to have the rector ousted, a proposal supported by many members of the congregation, but totally opposed by the vestry. Fr. Norris then became involved in a feud with Dr. John Price Durban, a local charismatic Methodist minister, which further alienated him from his own flock. As a result, Juliet Norris’ Sewing Society was disbanded (and along with it all thoughts of the purchase of a rectory), and three-fourths of St. John’s congregation left. Fr. Norris’s salary was dramatically decreased, and by the end of the year he was looking to move elsewhere.

But no other position materialized, and the remaining few Oxford Movement influenced parishioners at St. John’s encouraged him to remain with them, for fear his successor would not be a Catholic-minded man, particularly since his Bishop wasn’t “high church” himself.

Fr. Norris remained at St. John’s for 5 more years, and things gradually returned to normal. The congregation grew a bit during that time, but when he finally left in October 1850, there were only 40 communicants listed in the Parish Register.

These last years eroded Fr. Norris’ self assurance, and he admitted the problems he had endured had clouded his judgment and prevented him from having “a free and intimate intercourse with the congregation, which is a necessary and true process in the discharge

of pastoral functions.” Although the vestry issued warm resolutions of thanks, it was obvious Fr. Norris himself considered his ministry in Carlisle a failure.

Meanwhile New Jersey Bishop George Washington Doane must have been aware of Fr. Norris’ beliefs and tribulations in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. By 1854, the need for regular and organized services of the Episcopal church in Woodbury had become apparent to the Bishop, who until that time had been making annual visits to the city, holding worship services in the Old Court House. The following excerpt appears in Bishop Doane’s journal in the Spring of that year:

April 10, 1854

In the evening, in the Court House, at Woodbury, the Rev. Mr. Smith read prayers, and I preached. The Rev. Mr. Stratton was present.

According to a handwritten note by Mary Louise Whitall, an early member of Christ Church, she (as a child), her mother and her grandmother attended these services in the Old Court House. Miss Whitall recalls her grandmother had eleven children, so the congregation in the Court House was swelled by that family alone.

During the rest of the year, the local worshippers were under the spiritual direction of the rectors of Clarksboro and Chew’s Landing (Frs. Richard Hall and J. Glancey Jones) – a situation that was acceptable, but far from desirable. Bishop Doane realized the local worshippers were increasing in number, and the need for a regular place of worship was rapidly becoming a priority.

In what some might consider a giant leap of faith, in May 1854 Bishop Doane commissioned The Reverend William Herbert Norris as a Missionary to Woodbury. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month Fr. Norris arrived in Woodbury with the following letter of introduction written to Benjamin F. Carter (see Chapter 3: Benjamin F. Carter, Esq.):

Riverside, 15 May 1854

My dear Mr. Carter,

This will introduce to you the Rev. Mr. Norris. He is instructed to remove to Woodbury and undertake the establishment of a Church there. I commend him to your kindness. You will show him the cure and aid him in its accomplishment.

Your faithful friend,  
/s/ G. W. Doane

When Fr. Norris arrived, he soon realized his task would once again not be an easy one, but he plunged right in to a nearly overwhelming assignment. On June 4, 1854 he began his missionary work at Temperance Hall, a building that had been erected by the Samaritan Lodge Division #47 of the Sons of Temperance. This building stood to the east of what would later become Christ Church. It was three stories high, with a two-story dwelling on either side of a central hall. The entire third floor was comprised of one large room, used for lodge meetings during the week, and for Episcopal worship services on Sunday mornings. This third-story place of worship came to be called the “Upper Room” by those who attended services there.

These early services were humble, yet dignified, and to those faithful communicants who had waited so long for regular worship, Fr. Norris’ small pocket communion set completely satisfied their longing. Fr. Norris noted (I believe with some satisfaction) the following in his parochial report:

“The Mission at Woodbury was begun on the Feast of Pentecost in 1854. The service was celebrated in the Upper Room.”

Buoyed by the enthusiasm of his new “flock,” the Missionary-In-Charge set about his task with vigor to determine the organization and building of a church. A committee consisting of Fr. Norris, Benjamin F. Carter, John K. Wright, George Manley, and John Downing was formed, with Judge Carter appointed Treasurer. On a motion from Mr. George Manley, it was resolved that the organization, when complete, should be called *Christ Church*, and thus the first steps were taken toward the Church we worship in 150 years later. On February 19, 1855 Bishop Doane wrote in his journal:

On Monday I first visited the new Mission at Woodbury. Morning prayer was read by the Rev. Messrs. Boggs and Bartlett, and I preached, and

confirmed twelve persons; the Missionary, the Rev. Mr. Norris, reading the Preface.

Fr. Norris and Messrs. Manley and Carter's next task was to procure a suitable lot on which to build the new church. Meanwhile, regular services continued in the Upper Room of the Temperance Hall – a room that was never forgotten by those early worshipers.

Nine months later, on March 24, 1855 Fr. Norris purchased from Benjamin Lord the lot on which Christ Church now stands, together with the house on the corner of Delaware and Wood Streets that was to become the Rectory, for a total cost of \$3,250. Two days later Fr. Norris deeded the lot (exclusive of the house) in consideration of \$500 to William Herbert Norris, John K. Wright, George Manley, Edward Pierson, and Benjamin F. Carter, in trust for the purpose of building a church. (See Chapter 1: The Construction of Christ Church).

On April 12, 1855, Bishop Doane again recorded in his journal:

On Thursday, April 12, in the Upper Room occupied by Christ church, Woodbury, the Rev. Messrs. Bartlett and E. K. Smith read morning prayers. The Minister, the Rev. Mr. Norris, catechized the children, and I examined them, preached, and confirmed five persons. Thus, within a year, seventeen have been confirmed in this new Parish. A lot of ground has been secured, and a Church is to be erected at once. We have never had a more auspicious commencement of a Parish.

Despite numerous setbacks and delays, the present structure was completed in 1856, and then consecrated by Bishop Doane on Thursday, September 17, 1857. Five years after the consecration of the new church, Fr. Norris personally purchased Temperance Hall from the Franklin family at a cost of \$1,700. This was done with the idea that money obtained from rentals or use of Temperance Hall would provide funds with which to build his dreamed-of schoolhouse.



During Fr. Norris' leadership there were no organizations other than the Board of Trustees. The Holy Eucharist was celebrated weekly, and for most of the year daily prayers were held. The number of worshipers grew, but the financial situation was difficult. Christ Church had been established as a Free Pew Parish – no pledges, no regular payment by parishioners; in other words, the church was supported by those who felt moved to do so, which made budgeting extremely difficult. Donations from the parishioners were irregular, and much of the financial support was dependent to a large part on monies from Fr. Norris himself. In fact, much of the property, including the rectory, was owned by Fr. Norris and his heirs; in his Will written at that time all of the property he owned was designated to be given to the church at the time of his death.

On October 20, 1866, Josiah Lippincott and his wife deeded a lot on the south side of Delaware Street opposite the church to the Trustees of Christ Church. This lot later became the site of the Sunday School Chapel (which later became the Old Parish House), and on this spot Fr. Norris saw the perfect future location for a schoolhouse, owned and operated by Christ Church and which was so important to his future plans. In fact, he was so anxious to accomplish this schoolhouse that he added a Codicil to his Will that stated: "The bequest in the Will to the Trustees of the lot of ground adjacent to the church is still further conditioned upon the building of a schoolhouse on the lot on the opposite side of Delaware St. now owned by the Trustees: on that lot and on no other one."

Over the years the stress and the enormity of the task Fr. Norris had undertaken took its toll on the already previously weakened rector. Tragically, two of his three young sons died while the family lived in Christ Church's rectory. Their youngest son– Francis (Francisus) Rawle Norris, born February 14, 1845, died on Sunday morning, November 24, 1861 at the age of 17 years, and was buried in Christ Church's Churchyard. Burial services for this young man were conducted by The Reverend Samuel Con of Philadelphia.

Less than two years later, the Norris' oldest son Edward Carlyle Norris, born on June 21, 1841, died on May 12, 1863 as a result of injuries received in the Civil War when he was 22 years old. The Addendum at the end of this chapter offers more complete information on Edward Norris. (Ed. Note: In Christ Church's first Register is the notation regarding the death and burial of his two sons, written by Fr. Norris' own hand. This is the most heartbreaking historical fact I uncovered while researching this entire book.)

In September 1873 Fr. Norris resigned his appointment as Missionary due to ill health (most likely directly related to the loss of his two sons within 2 years), and announced his intention to travel in Europe for a year. Once his resignation was finalized, Messrs. Neff, Foote, and Ladd were elected to fill the vacancies on the Board of Trustees. Benjamin F. Carter became Senior Warden, Henry Foote was appointed Junior Warden, and the remaining offices were filled by Messrs. Samuel Ladd, Henry Clark, David Cooper, and Theodore Glover. The Rt. Rev. William H. Odenheimer, Bishop Doane's successor as Bishop of New Jersey, appointed The Rev. William H. Lewis as Christ Church's new Missionary-In-Charge, effective October 1, 1873.

Before leaving Woodbury, Fr. Norris graciously offered his successor the use of his house, his furniture, and his library without any charge, an arrangement that continued for 2-1/2 years.

But more heartbreak was in store for the embattled first rector. When Fr. Norris returned to New Jersey, he resumed residence in his house, but found himself an outsider at the church. Fr. Lewis had moved quickly to establish Christ Church, Woodbury as an incorporated parish, and had already set in motion changes from the celebration of the Eucharist every week to a less frequent service. This act so infuriated Fr. Norris that he wrote to Fr. Lewis, threatening to change his Will which still bequeathed all property in Woodbury in his name to ultimately revert to Christ Church.

And then a final blow: fearing Fr. Norris would follow through on his threat to change his Will, the vestry suggested they buy all church property held in his name, and transfer

it to the church's name, since the original negotiations for the property had been handled by the trustees in that manner to affect a lower price. These men, whom Fr. Norris had trusted implicitly, further stated in their opinion every foot of land Fr. Norris owned in Woodbury was actually held by him "in trust" for the Church, anyway – so why not transfer the title right now? This, Fr. Norris calculated, would result in him receiving a value that was one-half to two-thirds of the property's value.

This suggestion resulted in a serious split between Fr. Norris and the vestry members in whom he had placed his trust – among them, Benjamin Carter, Samuel Ladd, and William Neff. His dream of one day knowing he was responsible for the establishment of a private school operated and run under the leadership and guidance of Christ Church vanished. In fact, he learned plans were already underway to tear down his house and build a new rectory on the lot on the other side of Delaware Street, allowing space for more expansion of the Church itself.

Ultimately, Fr. Norris realized he was locked in a battle that could only result in harming the church he had worked so long and hard to establish. Still resisting the vestry's suggestion, he and his wife moved to Philadelphia, and July 1876 finds them living at 313 South 18<sup>th</sup> Street in the Rittenhouse Square area.

Fr. Norris died on February 18, 1880, and his widow Julia Rawle Norris inherited the Norris house (the present Rectory). When she died in 1883 the house was passed on to her son, Dr. Herbert Norris, along with the old Temperance Hall building.

With both his parents and his two brothers dead, and presumably to put an end to an ongoing difficult and unhappy situation, on December 21, 1885 Dr. Herbert Norris deeded the Norris house to the vestry at a price of \$4,300. And then the vestry attempted to finalize another awkward situation, and asked Dr. Herbert Norris to consider selling them Temperance Hall, which he had inherited from his father. On March 18, 1886, Dr. Norris deeded Temperance Hall to the vestry for \$3,500, thus ending an era of dissention and financial manipulation and maneuverings.

That same month the Sunday School Chapel was moved from across the street to a location behind the Rectory (the Norris house). The property on the south side of Delaware Street (the lot on which Fr. Norris had dreamed of building the schoolhouse) was sold to a Mr. Harry Neilson for \$1200, and eventually became the site of two new houses.

Many of Fr. Norris' dreams had vanished before his trip to Europe; the rest of his hopes disappeared rapidly after he and his wife moved from Woodbury to Philadelphia. The loss of two of his sons became even more tragic by the family having to disinter both bodies from Christ Churchyard for reburial in St. James the Less Cemetery in Philadelphia. These sorrowful events, complicated by the apparent ongoing conflict with vestry members in whom he had placed implicit trust, constituted a sad ending to a life lived mostly in a state of emotional turmoil.

Which begs the question: with all of Fr. Norris' financial and emotional contributions during the earliest stages of Christ Church, why did the vestry turn against him as evidenced by correspondence written in his own hand? Unfortunately, we shall never know.

*Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord. Even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

## **Addendum**

### **Edward Carlyle Norris Eldest son of The Reverend William H. Norris and Juliet Rawle Norris**

Edward Carlyle Norris was born in Alexandria, Virginia on June 21, 1841. He was 13 years old when his father undertook the responsibilities involved with the founding of Christ Church, and with his family moved to Woodbury, New Jersey. In 1860, the census record for the Boro of Woodbury lists William H. Norris (45 years of age), Juliet, (age 49), Edward (age 19), Herbert (age 17), and Francis (age 15).

Edward spent two years at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. Early in 1862 he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers. In April 1862 he fell ill with typhoid fever, from which he recovered. (Ed. Note: Perhaps this is the same illness that caused the death of his younger brother Francis on November 24, 1861.)

The 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment was one of those groups involved at the Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862 during the Civil War. Edward was a 1st Lieutenant in Company G, 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment, in command of his company during this fierce struggle, often described as the bloodiest single-day battle in American history, with nearly 23,000 casualties suffered by both the North and South. Edward was seriously wounded in his breast in this battle during a barrage that lasted eight minutes. He survived for 8 more months, during which time he was commissioned a Captain in his Regiment on March 1, 1863. He died from his injuries on May 12, 1863, when he was nearly twenty-two years of age.

Edward was buried in Christ Churchyard “in the presence of a large number of friends.” His funeral was conducted by The Reverend Daniel Raynes Goodwin, D.D., the former President of Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, where Edward had been a student. In his eulogy Dr. Goodwin praised Edward for his patriotism and his bright, well-balanced character. He described Edward as “not only a military and moral hero in the conflict between right and wrong which demands more daring than the field of carnage,

but he also dared to do what he thought was right, ever trusting to the sure guidance of heavenly Wisdom.”

How amazing this is! Although Edward Carlyle Norris was born in the South, this brave young man chose to fight on the side of the North during the Civil War “for nothing more and nothing less than the restoration of the authority of the Constitution and laws throughout the entire Union.” Though short in years, Edward’s life serves as a great tribute to his upbringing by Fr. and Mrs. Norris, and is another example of the fine character of this family.

*They shall not grow old  
As we that are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them  
Nor the years condemn  
At the going down of the sun.  
And in the morning  
We will remember them.*

From “For The Fallen”  
By Laurence Binyon  
Written in 1914

## **Chapter 25**

### **The Reverend William H. Lewis, Jr. 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector of Christ Church October 1873 – 1878**

In the fall of 1873, Fr. Norris resigned his appointment as missionary-in-charge of Christ Church due to poor health, saying he intended to travel throughout Europe for a year to recuperate and regain his strength. When he announced his intention to Bishop William H. Odenheimer (Bishop George Washington Doane's successor), the Bishop appointed The Rev. William H. Lewis to take Fr. Norris' place, effective October 1, 1873.

Before Fr. Norris' departure, he must have been in communication with Fr. Lewis. As a result, on October 28, 1872 Fr. Lewis, who was then living in Philadelphia, wrote to the Trustees of Christ Church:

Gentlemen:

The Rev. Mr. Norris has communicated to me the result of your kindly deliberations at your late meeting, and has been pleased to add many pleasant words of his own.

I am sincerely grateful to you for your good opinions and for the expressed wish that I should become your Rector. As I have already informed Mr. Carter, it will not be possible for me to give an immediate answer, and I am sure you will not expect it. I will make arrangements to be with you for one Sunday, and would name the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November as the day, hoping then to meet with all the parishioners as far as possible.

Yours faithfully,  
W. J. Lewis

Obviously Fr. Lewis accepted the appointment, and shortly thereafter became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector of Christ Church. The new rector, his wife, and their three sons moved into the rectory, still referred to as the Norris house and still belonging to Fr. Norris, who as previously stated graciously allowed Fr. Lewis and his family to use his house, his furniture and his library at no charge until he returned from Europe.

Once he was established in Woodbury, Fr. Lewis began the necessary planning to establish Christ Church as an incorporated parish. On April 10, 1874 the corporation

titled “The Rector, Wardens, and Vestrymen of Christ Church in the City of Woodbury” was formed. This organization was duly sanctioned at a parish meeting, when the first election of a vestry occurred. As a result, the following officers were duly elected and approved by the congregation:

The Reverend William H. Lewis, Jr., Rector  
Messrs. Robert K. Neff and Benjamin F. Carter, the Wardens;  
Messrs Henry C. Foote, Samuel H. Ladd, David Cooper, Samuel G. Twells,  
Theodore Glover, Henry C. Clark, and Frank I. Foote, vestrymen

It is interesting to note that the original vestry consisted of only 7 members, plus 2 wardens.

On May 16, 1874 The Charter of Incorporation was duly recorded at the County Clerk’s office. (See the reproduced copy of the original Charter, obtained from the Gloucester County Historical Association, in The Gallery of Pictures section). Diocesan Convention that year proper papers were presented, and the Parish was duly admitted into union with the Convention. Twenty years after the name “Christ Church” had been decided upon at a meeting held in Fr. Norris’ home, Christ Church was now established as a full-fledged parish.

From 1873 to 1878, under Fr. Lewis’s leadership, the church grew. Large congregations filled the church every Sunday, and this period marked one of Christ Church’s most prosperous times.

In October 1874 Fr. Lewis began services at Mantua, New Jersey, intending to make that a mission of Christ Church. In April 1875 a subscription was started to erect a suitable chapel there, and by June 1, 1875 the amount subscribed was close to \$1,000. On August 27, 1875, the chapel (which later became the Mission Church of St. Barnabas in Mantua) was opened by Bishop Scarborough. Now to quote from “The Red Book” regarding this momentous occasion: “How incredible that was! Christ Church, in the same year it achieved parish status, was already thinking of the spiritual needs of others.”



In June 22, 1875 Fr. Lewis organized and presided over the first meeting of the Christ Church Parish Guild. First order of business: to merge the existing Mite Society of the Church with the Guild. Officers were elected from the 50+ members (including some of the member's husbands who were listed as associate members), and By-Laws of this new organization were drawn up and approved. Dues were decided upon in the amount of five cents a week. The funds from the Guild were to be used in cooperation with the Rector in visiting and providing for the wants of the sick and needy of the Parish, keeping the church clean, and paying expenses of the organ blower (with a special notation that this individual should be reimbursed five cents a day during Lent). Among the projects assumed by the Guild were making aprons and fancy articles for sale at Christmas, purchasing coverings for the Chancel Rail cushions, cutting and tying greens for Christmas decorations, collecting money for Easter flowers, and taking care of church linens. On April 19, 1876 Fr. Lewis and his wife thanked the Guild for providing some new furniture for their use in the rectory, and then presented the members with an invoice for payment in the amount of \$175.99!

Many donations were given by the Guild toward building a Sunday School Chapel that was to be located on the old Lippincott lot on the south side of Delaware Street. Construction on this Chapel began in 1875, and the Chapel was opened in a ceremony led by The Rt. Rev. John Scarborough, Bishop of New Jersey.

And so Christ Church continued to grow, but a definite split began to escalate among the congregation members. There were those who were loyal to the new Rector, who evidently planned to abolish the weekly celebration of the Eucharist and replace some of those services with Morning Prayer, and those who remained faithful to Fr. Norris, who upon his return from Europe realized he had been replaced permanently and was now without a church. Part of the congregation identified themselves as Norrisites, and part were Lewisites. One oft-repeated story is that at Easter the Lewisites wouldn't use the white Altar Cloth made by the Norrisites, and instead borrowed a large tablecloth from

Paul's Hotel. Gradually these differences resolved themselves, and the parishioners once again worked together toward their common goal – building Christ Church into a special place of worship, to be passed on to their own future generations.

In 1878 The Reverend William H. Lewis, Jr. accepted a call from another church, and resigned as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector of Christ Church, leaving with “some unpaid debts,” according to an early parishioner's diary.

**Chapter 26**  
**The Reverend George M. Bond**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**1878 – 1884**

When Fr. Bond arrived at Christ Church in 1878 he was unmarried, and was accompanied by his mother and sister, Bertha. The Bonds lived in the Rectory on the corner of Delaware and Wood Streets, which was at that time still owned by and referred to as “Mr. Norris’s house.”

According to early writings by several ladies of Christ Church, the Bond ladies were charming women. Bertha Bond sang in the choir, and occasionally played the organ, which at the time was pumped by the sexton nicknamed “Little Peter Zell,” and by his son, who was called “Big Peter Zell”.

Apparently Fr. Bond was quite nearsighted, and according to early parishioner Mary L. Whitall, whose parents' house stood just opposite the church, when Fr. Bond passed by on the street he usually raised his hat in case anyone was standing by the window. Mrs. Whitall also recalled, “They do tell Fr. Bond once ran into a tree and said, ‘Excuse me!’ ”

During Fr. Bond’s rectorate, Mr. William Milligan (see Chapter 10: The Sanctuary Lamp in Christ Church) was principal of the schools, as well as a member of Christ Church’s vestry. Mr. Milligan’s daughter, Helen, also played the organ, which introduces another personal note: A young lady named Miss Elizabeth H. (“Lizzie”) Merritt sang in the choir, along with Fr. Bond’s sister, Bertha. And that was how the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rector of Christ Church met Lizzie, whom he eventually married.

While Fr. Bond was rector, Fr. William Herbert Norris, the former Missionary to Woodbury and first “rector” of Christ Church, who by this time had moved to Philadelphia, died on February 18, 1880.

Under Fr. Bond's direction, two days after Fr. Norris' death the vestry of Christ Church passed and published the following resolution:

Christ Church, Woodbury, N.J.  
February 20, 1880

At a meeting of the wardens and vestrymen, held this evening in reference to the death of the Rev. William Herbert Norris, it was

Resolved, That the vestry of this church has received with deep regret the intelligence of the death of the Rev. William Herbert Norris, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, which occurred in the city of Philadelphia on Wednesday last, the 18<sup>th</sup>, inst.

His long connection of twenty years with this parish as its founder, benefactor, and its first minister; his life of sacrifice and devotion during those years in the cause of Christ and His Church; his faithful and learned teaching of the Word of God; his warm sympathy in the time of trial and affliction will not and cannot be forgotten.

Resolved, That the church be suitably draped in mourning for a period of thirty days.

Resolved, That these proceedings of the vestry be attested by the secretary, published in The CHURCHMAN, and communicated to the family of the deceased.

/s/ Edwin D. Mullen  
Secretary of the Vestry

There was an immediate proposal to place a plaque within the church commemorating Fr. Norris' service and dedication; however, there was one stipulation. The location of this plaque was to be within the altar rails, and this proposal met with immediate opposition. By whom or why this memorial was opposed is not clear; one can only assume it was probably related to the complicated and unhappy situation involving several of the original founders and members of the vestry that occurred following Fr. Norris' resignation and subsequent move to Philadelphia. At any rate, this left Fr. Bond with a problem that obviously had to be resolved – tactfully, and as quickly as possible.

Apparently those in opposition were so vocal that Benjamin F. Carter, Esq., warden of Christ Church's vestry, finally wrote to the Rev. Dr. T. F. Davies of St. Peter's Church in

Philadelphia, seeking his opinion regarding the proposed location for the memorial plaque. It should be kept in mind that by the time Fr. Norris died, any friendship and trust that had formerly existed between him and Judge Carter no longer existed. And that's another mystery: why would Judge Carter solicit an answer to this query from the rector of a church in another state – particularly since St. Peter's, Philadelphia was considered at that time to be "low church"? Why not correspond with the Rt. Reverend John Scarborough, Bishop of New Jersey, with whom Carter was personally acquainted, and who was a frequent and welcome guest at the Carter residence?

In response to Judge Carter's letter, on April 7, 1880 Dr. Davies responded as follows:

Philadelphia  
717 Pine Street  
7<sup>th</sup> April 1880

My dear Sir,

The objection to placing a Memorial tablet within the rails of the Altar, to the memory of a former Rector, is new to me, but I confess that it comes home to me with considerable force. At the same time the usage of the Church both in England and America has given a degree of sanction to such a similar memorial within the Chancel.

Thus in Trinity Church, New York, the Astor Reredos upon which is inscribed the name of the late Wm. B. Astor; and an instance comes into my mind as I write of a Brass Altar Cross to the memory of the late Bp. Odenheimer which has been recently presented to my own Church. In Trinity Church, New Haven, Conn., which the late Mr. Norris attended while a student at Yale College, Bishop Jarvis, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bp. of Connecticut is buried beneath the Altar, and beside the large Chancel window, I think within the Altar rails, is the Tablet to his memory. I think therefore that if you decide upon the position within the rails that you have precedents to justify the decision: at the same time I like the idea of the why association connection with the Altar and its immediate surrounds being that of the One Great Sacrifice.

I am, dear Sir  
Very respectfully yours,  
Thomas F. Davies

Benja. F. Carter, esq.

So during the rectorate of Fr. Bond, the Memorial Tablet to Fr. Norris was placed inside the Altar rail in line with the original proposal. The inscription on the Tablet reads:

**In Memory Of  
The Reverend William Herbert Norris  
Born Novr. 4. 1814  
Died Feby. 18. 1880  
The founder of this Church  
And its constant benefactor;  
He served faithfully at its altar,  
For twenty years.  
Erected by the Parish.  
A.D. 1880**

In 1884, four years later, Fr. Bond resigned as Christ Church's 3<sup>rd</sup> Rector, and became the Rector of St. Thomas Church in Newark, Delaware. The following year, on April 8, 1885, Fr. Bond married Elizabeth Merritt, daughter of Anna E. and the late Edwin A. Merritt of Woodbury, New Jersey at St. Mark's Church, Philadelphia. Their marriage was solemnized by Fr. Bond's former Bishop in New Jersey, The Rt. Rev. John Scarborough, D.D.

## **Chapter 27**

### **The Reverend Howard E. Thompson 4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church November 30, 1884 – November 8, 1895**

Howard E. Thompson was born in Bordentown, New Jersey in 1850, the son of Samuel Thompson and Mary Loviere (Heyl). He was educated in private schools, and graduated from the General Theological Seminary in New York City in 1878. He was ordained a deacon that same year, and a priest in 1879, by The Rt. Reverend John Scarborough, 4<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New Jersey.

Fr. Thompson's first charge was St. Timothy's, Roxborough, where he served from 1878 to 1880. His next move was to St. Timothy's, Woodbridge, (1880-1884). On November 30, 1884 he became Christ Church's 4<sup>th</sup> Rector.

On the day of his arrival in Woodbury, Fr. Thompson wrote in his diary:

Thanksgiving day – first day of residence in Woodbury – arrived at 3:45 p.m. – took possession of rooms at Newton's Hotel, Nos. 34 and 35 – was tendered a reception in the evening at residence of Mr. Henry C. Foote, Junior Warden – about 125 in attendance – very pleasant.

According to a diary kept by Mary L. Whittall, a parishioner at the time, the rectory was rented at the time of Fr. Thompson's arrival. Since he was unmarried when he arrived in Woodbury, the Newton Hotel, located on the corner of Delaware and Broad Streets, probably provided a very comfortable place in which to live.

On November 30, 1884 Fr. Thompson wrote:

Advent Sunday – first Sunday of Rectorship. Large congregation, wore vestments for the first time here. First Sunday night service. Began course of sermons on the Four Last Things.

On December 5, 1884 Fr. Thompson initiated Friday services, which he described as "well attended." On December 20, 1884 he wrote:

First set of linen Eucharistic Vestments completed by Miss Lydia Pierson, from pattern furnished by the All Saints Sisters of St. Clement's Parish, Philadelphia.

A month later, on January 4, 1885, he instituted a children's service, which was held at 3 p.m. that first afternoon.

Several church organizations were begun during Fr. Thompson's rectorship. Christ Church Guild, St. Agnes Guild, Youngmen and Boy's Bible Class, an Acolytes Guild, Guild of Holy Innocents, A Guild for Men and Boys – all these flourished under his leadership. Also under Fr. Thompson's direction the Brotherhood of St. Andrews organization was admitted to Christ Church. At that time, membership was comprised of fifteen men and the Rector. A note of interest – in 1889 the umbrella rack, which in 2007 still stands in the Church's vestibule, was presented as a gift by this organization.

On March 27, 1885 Fr. Thompson made the first use of a private communion set (presented by Mrs. William Speakman) when he visited Mrs. S. D. Ladd. Another entry in his diary written on September 12, 1885 records his first service with an acolyte to assist him at the 7 a.m. Eucharist:

12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity. First celebration at 7 a.m. with a server. Robert Poole, 12 years old, acting in that capacity.

During his rectorate many physical improvements and additions to the church were made including the installation of gas lamps, and numerous gifts and memorials were given. However, it was also under Fr. Thompson's rectorate that many members of the congregation became disgruntled, describing him as "too high" and having a "brass phobia." Most of the brass in the church today was put in place during Fr. Thompson's time, including the pulpit and light above it, the brass eagle lectern, and even a processional cross. According to "The Red Book" and confirmed in Miss Whitall's diary, "The candles were too high. The brass Processional Cross was awful. One older lady, Miss Livan, wouldn't go to a service if she knew it was to be carried. One day she was caught. She sat about 3 pews from the front, and the cross was carried past her



before she realized it, but at the Recessional she headed the Procession and marched out of the church ahead of the Cross.”

Also according to Miss Whitall: “There was another ‘character’ in Fr. Thompson’s flock: Tommy Cade had been a drummer boy in the war of 1812 and got out his drum and played it on holidays. He was a regular at the 11 o’clock service on Sundays. Tall and thin, white hair, black frock coat, high linen collar, high silk hat. Always carried his Bible and Prayer book tied up in a clean white handkerchief. He also carried a cane. He always sat in the far corner of the pew because he was too polite to make people crawl over him.”

In 1890, under Fr. Thompson’s supervision, the present altar was erected. (See Chapters 5 and 6: The Altar At Christ Church, and The Twells Family). Another historical fact: while Fr. Thompson was rector, the Font was moved from the front of the Nave to its present location. While the Font was in the front of the church, it was the principally decorated spot at Christmas and Easter, filled with greens at Christmas and with flowers at Easter. Mrs. John G. Whitall was the first person ever baptized in this Font.

According to “The Red Book,” Fr. Thompson extended the work of the Church in Paulsboro by serving as missionary there. In 1890 the men of his parish, themselves, began to spread the Gospel. Again quoting from Fr. Thompson’s diary:

February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1890 – Quinquagesima Sunday. St. Faith’s Chapel at Red Bank opened after years of disuse. The work to be conducted by young men of the Saint Andrew’s Brotherhood. Frank Cramer and Frank Boulter there the first Sunday. About 25 souls in attendance.

Later, an organ, hymnals and prayer books, and a lectern and prayer desk were obtained for this Chapel.

On June 14, 1892 the parishioners of Christ Church suffered another loss. Tyler R. Blake, a member of the Church and of the Vestry since its inception, died. At a special Vestry meeting, the following memoriam was unanimously adopted:

In Memoriam

Tyler R. Blake, a faithful and devout communicant of the church, and since its organization a valued member of the Vestry of this Parish. Entered into rest on Tuesday, June 14, 1892.

In view of this event, we the surviving members of the Vestry assembled in special meeting on this first Sunday after Trinity, June 19, desire to record our sincere estimate of our brother's character and life, and our understanding of the event that has removed him from our midst.

Of him it may be said in a Christian sense: "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." He was without question by conviction, confession, and practice a true child of God, a loyal and devout son of the church, a Christian in faith and in life. He had moreover that guilelessness and simplicity of character which, while he was no less a man of affairs and so diligent in business that he fell at his post, yet saved him from the strife of tongues and gave him power for good in the church and in the world. No man had aught to say against him, but many are ready to rise up and call him blessed for his uprightness of life and the greatness of heart that prompted him to many kindly deeds of which none knew save those who were blessed by them.

Into the house and family so stricken by his departure we send our greeting of heartfelt sympathy. For the victory of his faith we thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the Parish and as a Vestry we deplore this vacant place; praying that by our greater faith the cause of Christ may be saved from suffering by his removal. Especially of the youth of this Parish do we beg this, that they will ever hold gratefully before them the example of a mature, manly, and devout servant of God.

"Lord all pitying, Jesus blest  
Grant him Thine eternal rest."

We direct that this memorial be entered upon our Minutes, and a copy sent to the family of our departed brother, and be published in the local papers.

/s/H. E. Thompson, Rector  
Benjamin F. Carter, Sr. Warden  
H. C. Foote, Jr. Warden  
Belmont Perry, Secretary of the Vestry.

In 1893 under Fr. Thompson's direction a formal Sunday School Constitution and By-Laws was adopted. Article I proclaimed: "The name shall be the Sunday School of Christ Church Parish, Woodbury, New Jersey." A copy of this original document was subsequently framed, and today hangs in the entrance to the Florence Ullrich Education Wing of the Parish Hall.

On March 16, 1894 it was moved and seconded that the number of vestrymen be increased from 9 to 10. At the Parish Meeting on April 13, 1894 this proposal was accepted and finalized.

And still financial problems continued to plague Christ Church. By now better ventilation of the church had become another issue to be resolved, and another expense to be addressed. On June 8, 1894 the Vestry approved sending a circular to the congregation asking the people to increase their contributions to a General Fund for the support of the Church, thus doing away with the Rector's Fund. With the passage of this recommendation, all expenses of the church would be taken from this Fund, and cards were to be sent to the parishioners requesting their pledge in support. In July 1894 it was reported a total of 8 cards pledging financial support were all that had been received. It was also reported at this meeting that the Vestry hoped Fr. Thompson would remain as rector. This was the first indication in writing that Fr. Thompson was not satisfied with the way things were going, and that perhaps the congregation wasn't too happy with him either.

And then another blow: In October 1894, Benjamin F. Carter, Senior Warden, died. (See Chapter 3 outlining Judge Carter's life and contributions to Christ Church).

On November 8, 1895 Christ Church's 4<sup>th</sup> Rector, The Rev. Howard E. Thompson, sent his letter of resignation to the vestry, where it was read and accepted.

From December 1895 until 1900, Fr. Thompson served as rector at Emmanuel Church in Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

And now another note of historical interest: While still in Woodbury, serving as the 4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, Fr. Thompson met Matilda Roberts French, the daughter of Samuel Gibbs French, who was Major General in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. General French had been born on a farm near Mullica Hill in 1818, and after the death of his second wife, the now-retired and elderly general spent his summers in Woodbury with his family at their home on the corner of Aberdeen and Broad Streets, and in Freehold.

Despite Fr. Thompson's departure from Woodbury for Allegheny, Pa., the couple's romance continued to flourish. On Thursday, January 7, 1897 he returned to Christ Church, Woodbury to marry Matilda Roberts French at noon in the church where they had first met. The marriage ceremony was performed by The Reverend Benjamin F. Thompson (Fr. Thompson's brother), who was assisted by The Rev. A. L. Urban, the 5<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church who had succeeded Fr. Thompson. Robert C. French and Miss Matilda Whitall witnessed the marriage ceremony.

Another fact of historical interest: Mrs. John G. Whitall (the first person baptized in Christ Church's font, referred to earlier in this chapter) was General French's sister, and therefore Fr. Thompson's wife's aunt. Mrs. Whitall, a long time parishioner of Christ Church who in 1926 lived on Delaware Street in Woodbury, remembered returning to Woodbury with her family at the end of the Civil War, and being greeted with disdain and hatred by the local residents who knew the family's sympathies were with the South.

Besides his role as a priest, Fr. Thompson was quite a history buff. In 1911 he wrote an extensive history of the life of General French (his father-in-law), and on July 11, 1911 read his work before the Historical Society of Gloucester County. In it he refers to his father-in-law on a personal basis, discussing conversations, visits, and events they shared. Interestingly, General French was another individual who was caught between two worlds in the Civil War, with family loyalties on both sides of the struggle. After the war ended, he was pardoned by General Grant, and declared himself "loyal to the

Constitution and rights of the United States.” At his burial in Pensacola, Florida, the General’s casket was wrapped in mingled Federal and Confederate flags.

From 1900 until 1910, Fr. Thompson was Rector of St. Peter’s, Freehold, New Jersey. In 1911, he and his wife returned to Woodbury, where he was rector of St. Luke’s, Westville; in 1919 he became rector of St. James, Paulsboro. He served as Secretary of the Diocese of New Jersey from 1909 to 1923, and Registrar from 1916 to 1923.

Fr. Thompson died on July 2, 1924 when he was 73 years old. He was laid to rest on July 5 of that year in Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia after services held at Christ Church, Bordentown, conducted by The Rt. Rev. Paul Matthews, Bishop of New Jersey, Fr. Thompson’s brother Benjamin (who was by then Archdeacon of the State of Delaware), and The Rev. Edward L. Sanford, Rector of the parish. In addition to his brother, Fr. Thompson was survived by his wife.

*Most merciful Father, who has been pleased to take unto thyself the soul(s) of these, thy servants; Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that having served thee with constancy on earth, we may be joined hereafter with thy blessed saints in glory everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer  
1928

**Chapter 28**  
**The Reverend Abram L. Urban**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**April 1896 to June 1, 1902**

In December 1895 Christ Church was still without a rector. That month two candidates were being considered – The Reverend Dr. S. H. Meade, and The Reverend Allen C. Prescott from Hammonton, New Jersey, but the vestry's final decision was that neither man would satisfactorily fill the role.

Finally a committee consisting of vestrymen Dr. Clark and Messrs, Foote, Speakman, Twells, Nash, Shivers, and Merritt were sent to hear The Reverend Abram L. Urban preach. The committee returned with a favorable response, and on March 10, 1896 a call was extended to Fr. Urban.

Fr. Urban was notified that upon his acceptance the Paulsboro Mission established under the direction of his predecessor (Fr. Thompson) and supported financially by Christ Church would not be his responsibility, therefore allowing an additional \$200 to be added to his salary, making his total annual salary \$1,200. He was also offered the rectory where he and his family could live. These conditions were satisfactory, and in April 1896 Fr. Urban became the 5<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church

During Fr. Urban's rectorate, the rectory was completely remodeled and veneered with stone. In 1897 a new pipe organ was installed. This was a grand new instrument, the pipes of which were decorated with a light blue and gold design. The organ was powered by a water motor, eliminating the need for the existing hand pumped instrument which was placed in the Sunday School.

Old church records indicate both Fr. Urban and his wife were small in stature. They had 2 daughters and 5 sons, and each of the Urban children was considered gifted by all who knew them. On January 1, 1900, the vestry adopted and signed the canonical certificate recommending Ralph Ernest Urban (the rector's son) for admission to the Sacred Order

of Priests. Ralph Urban was the first man from Christ Church to become an Episcopal priest, and was a source of joy and pride for the Urban family, as well as the entire parish family. Thirty-two years later, on November 11, 1932, Fr. Urban's son was consecrated as Suffragan Bishop of New Jersey.

But still the financial problems that plagued Christ Church continued. On February 22, 1900, the Finance Committee reported that upon examination of the books they found a growing deficiency increasing from year to year; the total deficit amounted to \$600 at that time. To meet existing conditions, the Vestry recommended decreasing Fr. Urban's salary to \$1,000 for the coming year, with the understanding if financial conditions improved, a reimbursement would be paid to him at an amount not to exceed \$200 a year in addition to his reduced salary. Fr. Urban (who was not present at this meeting) was so notified.

On April 12, 1900 the Rector wrote to the Vestry:

"In view of all the facts, I do not see my way clear to enter into a new contract which would be necessary, but as I have tried to lead the people in right believing and in right doing I am prepared to say and wish it to be on record that I can lead them also in voluntary giving. Although the salary is not a large one and I find it very difficult to support my family as the family of your rector ought to be supported, I can promise that if the circumstances next year require it I will voluntarily give even to the extent of your requirement."

Apparently this was acceptable to the vestry, and Fr. Urban's suggestion was approved.

But then the final chapter of Fr. Urban's rectorate at Christ Church began to unfold. On July 2, 1900 an organist named W. Lane Hoffman was hired for one year at an annual salary of \$275. On January 18, 1901 his title was changed to "Choirmaster," and on April 1, 1901 Mr. Hoffman resigned, hired a lawyer and filed a suit against the parish, apparently feeling his job as organist had been misrepresented since he now also had the responsibility to lead a choir. This suit dragged on for a year, and when finally settled in March 1902 it cost Christ Church \$25.

Also during the April 1, 1901 meeting Fr. Urban proposed the following: that in consideration of the vestry allowing the \$200, making his salary for the past year \$1,200, he would accept a salary of \$1,000 for the ensuing year or pro-rata for such part of the year as he would remain a rector.

Meanwhile, to fill the empty position of organist Fr. Urban appointed Miss Florence Urban (his wife? perhaps his daughter?) as organist at a salary of \$100, to serve until a successor was found. This appointment caused another furor to an already rather unpleasant situation. At the next regular vestry meeting on October 11, 1901 the motion was made that the vestry should offer Fr. Urban \$200 for the preceding year to take effect by June 1, 1902 or earlier if Fr. Urban would resign. This offer was amended to include an additional \$100, raising the total of the vestry's offer to \$300, but action on this additional \$100 was deferred. So that left Fr. Urban with the \$200 – if he would but go!

That same day, on October 11, 1901, Fr. Urban tendered his resignation in a rather terse letter that reads:

“To the Vestry of Christ Church Parish, Woodbury, Diocese of New Jersey:

I hereby tender my resignation as Rector of the Parish, to take effect June 1, 1902 or earlier.”

/s/ Abram L. Urban

Fr. Urban's resignation was accepted by the vestry, and that was that.



**Chapter 29**  
**The Reverend Malcolm Taylor**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**March 15, 1903 – December 31, 1905**

In the absence of a Rector, The Reverend W. G. Ware conducted weekly services on a temporary basis until the next Rector was appointed. Meanwhile, financial problems continued to plague Christ Church until finally on July 7, 1902 at a special meeting of the Vestry, the following resolution was adopted and sent to all communicants and regular attendants of the church:

**To the Members and Others Interested in Christ Church,  
Woodbury, N.J.**

The Wardens and Vestry, at a special meeting adopted the following resolution, and ask that a quick and generous response will follow.

RESOLVED, Having carefully examined into the finances of Christ Church, we find such a gross deficiency in our subscription list that we feel unwarranted in calling a Rector under the present conditions without first making this statement and appeal.

We would ask that all communicants and regular attendants make pledges or guarantee suitable amounts to support of the Church. At the present time only a small proportion of the members of Christ Church regularly subscribe. A great many feel no responsibility whatever.

To those who already subscribe we would ask an increase where possible. To others we would ask a careful consideration and a generous response. It is earnestly requested that you will make the pledges asked for on Blanks you will find enclosed in addressed envelope. This we ask you to do at once that a second call on our part may not be necessary.

NOTE: Resolution passed at special meeting of Vestry, Sept. 30, 1902  
/s/ J. T. Kirkbride, Secretary

By the following October the financial situation must have eased a bit, and several candidates were under consideration for the next rector. On January 5, 1903, The Reverend G. Sherwood Whitney was formally called at an annual salary of \$1200 and offered the use of the rectory without having to pay rent. The Vestry also offered Fr. Whitney an additional \$50 to pay for his moving expenses if he accepted. As a further

enticement, on January 20, 1903 his proposed salary was raised to \$1250. To the vestry's dismay, Fr. Whitney declined.

By February 1903 two other candidates were under consideration – The Reverend Mr. Kind of North East, Pennsylvania, and The Reverend Malcolm Taylor, who lived at 115 Montague Street in Brooklyn, New York. Fr. Taylor was offered an annual salary of \$1,000, and the use of the rectory. On March 15, 1903 he accepted, thereby becoming the 6<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church.

In a diary kept by long-time parishioner Mary Henry Sharp, she recalls her early days in Christ Church while Fr. Taylor was Rector:

My earliest recollection of Church and Sunday School date from the time Mr. Taylor was rector here. I remember Mrs. Fannie Starr taught the primary grades in what we called “the little room” of the old Parish House. She must have been especially good at teaching little folks, because my memories of being in her class are all very happy ones. Sometimes she gave us large cards with beautifully colored biblical pictures on them – probably for good attendance.

Then, of course the Christmas celebration was something I never forgot. The tree was always immense and stood at one end of the big room. We were given half-pound boxes of candy and an orange, besides a special gift from our teacher. This always took place after the carols were sung, at four o'clock on Christmas Eve.

Being promoted to the big room was quite a thrill! Miss Katherine Rachor was my teacher then. She was very blond and, I thought, beautiful, and I lost my heart to her completely. Her father was the owner of Newton's Hotel. One afternoon each week she had us all meet in the hotel parlor, and give us a course in table etiquette – how to hold our fork, and how to eat our soup, etc. Then once or twice we were invited to eat dinner with her in the big hotel dining room to see how well we had learned our lessons.

When Christ Church was erected, the ceiling was painted blue. There were no windows in this ceiling, so ventilation was poor, especially during the summer months. While Fr. Taylor was rector four triangular windows were cut into the roof of the church and the ceiling was covered with hard pine. These windows were plain glass, and could be

opened to allow for ventilation. One disadvantage: when the windows were open, birds sometimes flew through them into the church.

During Fr. Taylor's rectorate, the interior of the church was redecorated and new carpet was laid. One problem: There was a total of \$90 in the treasury for this redecoration, including repainting the walls of the church. So Mrs. Walter Shivers, long time parishioner of the church stepped up and offered to pay for the repainting, with one condition: the walls must remain the same color as had been selected by Fr. Norris. This caused a tremendous amount of discussion in the Vestry. In February 1904 the matter of color was resolved by leaving the decision to the judgment of the Property Committee. By this time the Christ Church Guild had contributed \$400 toward the cost, so the work was completed, but the color that was finally decided upon for the walls must remain an unknown.

In December 1904 Dr. Henry C. Clark, another long-time faithful parishioner died. There are two stained glass windows in Dr. Clark's memory to the right of the altar next to the Norris memorial plaque. The following tribute was written in the January 2, 1905 vestry minutes:

Whereas, the Rector and Vestry of Christ Church are filled with sorrow at the death of Dr. Henry C. Clark, who has been a member of this vestry since the organization of the Parish in 1874, and a Warden of the Church since 1895; and

Whereas, Dr. Clark has been prominent in our councils, faithful and unselfish in service, generous in the gifts of those and money from the time he became a member of this body until the days of his last sickness; and

Whereas, Dr. Clark was universally loved and honored by the members of this Parish:

Therefore, be it Resolved: That we, the Rector and members of the Vestry of Christ Church sincerely mourn the loss of our beloved associate, Dr. Henry C. Clark; that we honor his record as a Churchman, as a citizen, and as a member of this Vestry; and that we thank God for his unselfish example of devoted service to Christ Church; and be it further

Resolved: that a copy of this resolution be presented to his family, and that it be spread in full upon our minutes.

/s/ Malcolm Taylor

Joseph A. Merritt

John T. Kirkbride

In December 1905 Fr. Taylor resigned, citing as his reason that he “felt it his duty to leave Woodbury.” During the January 1906 Vestry meeting, a resolution was drafted to express the Vestry’s regret over Fr. Taylor’s decision, and to offer their appreciation for the excellent work carried on by him throughout his rectorship.

One final note: It was reported in the May 11, 1929 issue of the *Woodbury Daily Times* that The Reverend Malcolm Taylor attended the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Christ Church held that month. According to the newspaper clipping:

“A former rector, Rev. Malcolm Taylor, who in the early years of his life began his pastorate here a quarter of a century ago, preached the morning sermon at the anniversary celebration and bridged the years in his kindly way, and renewed the warm feeling of friendship which he had won.”

**Chapter 30**  
**The Reverend James O. McIlhenny**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**June 11, 1906 – October 1908**

From December 31, 1905 until June 1906 Christ Church was once again without a Rector.

In April 1906, several vestry members visited Glassboro, New Jersey to hear a candidate, but decided against him. A second candidate from Marlborough, New York, spoke at St. Matthew's, Philadelphia, and again several vestrymen went to hear him. This time they were favorably impressed and offered to call him at an annual salary of \$1,200. To everyone's disappointment, this candidate declined.

On June 11, 1906 the decision to call The Reverend James O. McIlhenny was unanimously agreed upon by the vestry, and seven days later on June 18 Fr. McIlhenny presented his acceptance as Rector of Christ Church, thereby becoming the 7<sup>th</sup> Rector.

In November 1906, a report by the Treasurer indicated the parish was "in good financial condition." At this time the construction of a permanent cloister built of stone and located along the east side of the church was discussed, but finally rejected because of space limitations.

The following month the choir was vested for the first time. A choir room was built beneath the church, with a stairway coming up into the church in the back of the Nave where the Baptismal Font is now located, and where the ushers assemble to greet the parishioners and guests. This stairway was removed several years later when it was considered a fire hazard.

In November 1907 the old gas lamps installed during Fr. Thompson's time were converted, and electricity was introduced in the church for the first time.

It was also during Fr. McIlhenny's rectorate that a lot was purchased in Eglington Cemetery and the remains of those interred in Christ Churchyard were removed to that space. (See Chapter 8: Christ Churchyard). This in itself took a tremendous amount of time and effort on the part of the Rector, the Vestry, the sexton, and all of the parishioners. Imagine the intensity of feelings, the emotional turmoil, and in several instances the anger at having to approve the exhumation and reburial of loved ones. This was an overwhelming project, but once again Christ Church survived.

On September 21, 1908 Fr. McIlhenny informed the vestry he was considering a call from The Church of the Resurrection in Philadelphia, and then left the room. After discussion, the following Resolution was passed:

“In view of the fact the Reverend Mr. McIlhenny contemplates accepting a call to another parish – we as a Vestry unanimously regret that he should think of leaving Woodbury, appreciating the good work that he has already accomplished and believing that it would be to the detriment of Christ Church Parish should he leave it with his work unfinished. We as a vestry, and expressing the wishes of the congregation, hope he will refuse the call and remain with us for a long time to come.”

But Fr. McIlhenny had decided to go. On October 5, 1908 his formal resignation was read and accepted with deep expressions of regret by the vestry and parish that he felt it his duty to sever his relations with Christ Church. His letter of resignation reads:

After due consideration of the claims of your parish and the call to the rectorship of the Church of the Resurrection, Philadelphia, I have decided it is my duty to accept the call of the Church of the Resurrection, so I hereby tender my resignation as rector of Christ Church, Woodbury, to take effect October 31, 1908.

It is needless to say that I am sorry to leave here. My two years have been years of happiness and profit, and will ever be cherished among my pleasant memories.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your willing cooperation with me in forwarding the work here.

Assuring you of my deep interest in the welfare of Christ Church Parish,  
and praying for its continued prosperity, I am

Faithfully yours,  
/s/ J. O. McIlhenny

And so once again Christ Church was without a rector.

*(Ed. Note: Fr. McIlhenny remained at The Church of the Resurrection in  
Philadelphia until his death on July 29, 1939.)*

**Chapter 31**  
**The Reverend Edgar Campbell**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**February 1909 to February 1912**

On January 15, 1909, Fr. Edgar Campbell was called as the 8<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church. At the time of his call, Fr. Campbell was living at 4742 Kingsessing Avenue in Philadelphia (as of this writing his church at that time is unknown). On January 20, 1909 Fr. Campbell wrote the following letter of acceptance to Mr. John Twells, Secretary of the Vestry:

My dear Mr. Twells:

I had put off answering your letter notifying me that I had been elected rector of Christ Church, Woodbury, N.J., until I was able to see Bishop Scarborough. This I did to day and with his cordial approval I accept the call tendered me to become rector of the parish.

In doing so, however, I cannot but express the wish that as rector, with the vestry and people we may be able to do good work for the upbuilding and growth of the Church, and that we may be mutually comforting to one another. I cannot forbear using as an illustration the words of a great scholar which I heard some time ago. On retiring at night he was wont to say, "O God, You and I have been the same good friends to-day that we have been for many a year," and I trust that in our mutual relations we may all hold the same idea of one another, as day by day we are engaged in work for God and for His Church.

God willing I shall be ready to begin my duties on the first Sunday in February, and I hope to be in residence after February 3.

Very sincerely,  
/s/ Edgar Campbell

Hopefully unrelated to the introduction of electricity into the Church in 1907, a notable event also occurred during Fr. Campbell's years as rector: in April 1911 there was a fire in the church. The following account appeared in a local newspaper that recorded the event:



“Women communicants of Christ Episcopal Church, at Woodbury, braved the fire which attacked the building today, and rescued the altar cloth, Bible, and bishop’s chair from the burning altar.

“The fire started in the basement from the heater and quickly communicated to the body of the church by way of the flues.

“When the smoke was seen issuing from the roof, Mrs. Edgar Campbell, wife of the rector, and several other women parishioners forced their way into the blazing building and saved what they considered its most valuable contents.”

Fortunately, the church was saved. Today, in the undercroft of the church directly beneath the altar, the burn marks on the church’s foundation walls are still visible – scars of what could have been a terrible tragedy.

On May 1, 1911 William E. Speakman, a member of the Vestry, moved “that the Vestry donate \$25 to St. Agnes’ Guild for renewal of altar linens damaged in the recent fire.” The motion passed.

Overall, the years of Fr. Campbell’s rectorship appear to have been rather stormy at times. The vestry minutes dated November 13, 1911 reflect some serious financial difficulties facing Christ Church, and the church’s indebtedness was “considerably in excess of available funds on hand.” In fact, William Speakman offered to pay personally one of the bills for having the New Street sidewalk restored (or perhaps paved for the first time?) if the Vestry would take steps to raise the money necessary to meet the Delaware Street assessment.

And the biggest problem of all – during his tenure, Fr. Campbell began a mission in Woodbury Heights without the approval of Christ Church’s vestry. The expense caused by support of this mission obviously caused a great deal of consternation to the vestry and parishioners, eventually involving Bishop Scarborough.

On January 19, 1912, Henry C. Foote, who was Senior Warden of the Christ Church, died. The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Vestry at a special meeting held in the rectory on January 20, 1912:

Henry C. Foote, aged 91 years and 7 months.

Like a full sheaf, ripe and ready for the harvest, there passed into life everlasting, January 19, 1912 Mr. Henry Foote, Senior Warden of Christ Church, Woodbury and a member of the Vestry from its beginning.

There was no shock in the transition; not a shock physical or mental marked the passing from this world to the next of a soul which was given to good and earnest and faithful service while on earth. His was a singularly quiet, steady, and sober life, full of earnestness and sincerity, and a beautiful example to all those who wish to do their duty in the present world.

The Vestry of Christ Church at a special meeting held on January 20, 1912, desire to put these things on record and to pay a last tribute to him as a mark of respect for all he was able to do for the church. His praise is of God for all the faith and hope he had; we desire to give testimony of his life and therefore we order that this record be spread on the Minutes of the Vestry, and a copy be sent to his family.

/s/ Edgar Campbell, Rector

Ernest H. Rigg, Secretary

Five days later, on January 25, 1912, Fr. Campbell wrote the following letter to the Vestry:

“I hereby present my resignation of the rectorship of your parish, asking that it take effect February 20, 1912.

“I leave a parish in which in spite of what has been said, by far the greater part was sympathetic towards me which rejoiced in my work, which wished me well. The opposition of the very small minority I was unaware of, as no hint was ever given me of it, or I should have immediately taken it.

“To those of the Vestry who are looking for one whose “conduct of the services is all that can be desired,” “against whose moral character there is nothing to be said,” and shall at the same time be above all criticism, I

truly wish success. My reading of history shows that such a thing is impossible.”

Very sincerely,  
/s/ Edgar Campbell

Fr. Campbell’s resignation added to an already difficult situation. He left at a time when the Woodbury Heights Mission was growing, and seeking its own independence, and Fr. Campbell’s leaving left Christ Church’s vestry, the Woodbury Heights Mission, and Bishop Scarborough in the middle of a muddle. But Fr. Campbell had already decided to go, and at a special Vestry meeting called on January 29, 1912, he officially resigned as the 8<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church.

It is evident the Bishop was indeed quite displeased at the Vestry’s “method of parting” with Fr. Campbell. In fact, he sent a letter to the Vestry so stating, to which they responded stating their belief he (the Bishop) had been “grossly misinformed” on the subject of the rector’s resignation.

Fr. Campbell eventually became rector of Trinity Church, Swedesboro. Meanwhile, the search began for the next rector of Christ Church.

**Chapter 32**  
**The Reverend Howard Morris Stuckert**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**April 10, 1913 to August 31, 1918**

Christ Church was without a Rector from February 1912 until April 1913. In the interim, William Speakman, Senior Warden who had been appointed Chairman of Christ Church in the absence of a rector, traveled to the Church House in Philadelphia and made arrangements for The Reverend C. C. Parker of 940 S. 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia to take charge of church services during Lent while the search for the next rector was ongoing.

And now more drama: On Easter Day, 1912, Fr. Parker was “stricken while performing his duties at the Altar,” and had to be carried from the Church. Fortunately two gentlemen were among those worshiping at Christ Church on that fateful day – one of whom was The Rev. Howard E. Thomson, the former 4<sup>th</sup> rector of Christ Church and now Secretary of the Diocese, who apparently with his wife was visiting her family in Woodbury during Easter celebration. The other, Mr. H. S. Weir, was a licensed lay reader at Christ Church who also happened to be in the congregation. Both these men reacted immediately to the situation, and the Easter service continued. Meanwhile, Fr. Parker was “attended to” by the Misses Kircher and Stradling, who also happened to be in the church that fateful Sunday until further medical treatment could be provided. Both ladies were sent a letter of appreciation by the vestry.

During the period without a rector many visits, much travel, many long conversations, and several actual calls were undertaken – all without success. Several viable candidates at that time included:

- On January 6, 1913 a call was extended to The Reverend Joseph Mannel of St. Luke’s, Philadelphia to become Rector at an annual salary of \$1,500, but he declined the end of that same month.

- Another candidate under consideration at the same time was The Reverend C. B. Dubell, but Fr. Dubell was on his way to Europe and couldn't respond until he returned in May.
- In March 1913 The Reverend John L. Holah, who was then supplying at Haddonfield, New Jersey, submitted his name for consideration, and the vestry considered his offer at the March meeting.
- At that same meeting a letter was read from The Reverend G. L. Richardson "cordially commending The Reverend H. M. Stuckert for consideration."

On March 24, 1913, a call was extended to Fr. Stuckert, who was then Curate at St. Mary's, 39<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets in Philadelphia, to consider becoming Christ Church's next rector at an annual salary of \$1,350. The use of the rectory was a part of the Vestry's offer. On April 10, 1913, The Reverend Howard Morris Stuckert assumed the Rectorship.

According to a diary left by Mary L. Sharp, an early parishioner of Christ Church, during Fr. Stuckert's rectorship there was no system yet in place by which money was pledged and given regularly by the church membership. Actually, there were not even any regular contributors to the church, which was at that time supported by about 13 people belonging to 7 families. This must have been very difficult for Fr. Stuckert and the previous rectors, and perhaps one of the reasons why they stayed such a short time.

Fr. Stuckert set out to correct this situation, and he succeeded to a marked degree. On September 19, 1913, the vestry initiated a system of envelopes "of the simplest type" to cover all expenses except extraordinary repairs and the Easter offering. They also agreed to undertake a personal canvass of all parishioners to discuss the gravity of the financial situation existing within Christ Church.

In February 1914 Fr. Stuckert published the following summary of weekly offerings in a Church bulletin:

Monthly average for offerings in 1912: \$91.70

Monthly average for offerings in 1913: \$114.06

1913 increase in offerings between 1913 over 1912 averaged \$22.36 or 24-1/2%

On June 8, 1914 Fr. Stuckert sent the following letter to each member of the parish:

Dear Friend:

The financial condition of our Parish is better today than it was this day a year ago. Possibly this is due to your kindly cooperation when the weekly system of envelopes was introduced. The Parish has undertaken the building of a new Parish House, the contract for which will be signed within a few weeks, and this means a considerable increase in the cost of parochial maintenance (sexton, light, coal, etc.).

In order to provide for the increased expenses of the coming year the Vestry asks those who are not subscribers to become so now. Are you not willing to contribute five cents a week to the maintenance of religion in this community for the benefit of yourself and others and as your obligation to Almighty God?

Secondly: That those who are subscribers increase their offerings by at least ten cents a week.

Thirdly: That *you* will mark the enclosed card and return it to the *Rector* by mail or by placing it upon the alms basis at any service.

When the change from monthly to weekly envelopes was made a written statement of the extent of your obligation was not called for. But the Parish is pledged by contract to pay the salaries of rector, organist, and sexton and is expected to do its share toward church extension, the Bishop's salary, Convention expenses, etc.

*It* cannot escape *its* obligations. It is therefore imperative at this time that the treasurer know definitely how much may be depended upon from each person.

Please let us hear from you at your earliest convenience. The Parish is entirely dependent upon the free gifts of its people, given through the envelope system. If you are without envelopes some member of the vestry will call upon you this month to explain our financial system and leave the

envelopes. Everyone should give something, systematically and in proportion to their ability.

We rely upon you to do your part.

Your friend and rector,  
/s/ Howard M. Stuckert

In early 1917, the decision was made to sell the Sunday School Chapel completed during the rectorate of Fr. William H. Lewis (Christ Church's 2<sup>nd</sup> Rector) to the Seventh Day Adventists for the sum of \$75. This building had been used most recently as the Parish Hall, and by now the growing number of parishioners had outgrown the size of the building. Apparently the Adventists were in no hurry to move the building after they purchased it, since in the vestry meeting minutes dated February 5, 1917 is the following notation:

“It is regularly moved and carried that the Secretary be authorized to notify the Adventist Church to remove the balance of their building from our property.”

A bit terse, perhaps, but to the point, and probably got things back on track. The building was finally moved to a site on Barber Avenue in Woodbury where it served as the Adventists' place of worship.

Fr. Stuckert's next project was to urge the Vestry's approval to move ahead with the building of a new Parish House (see Chapter 15: “Christ Church's ‘New’ Parish House”). Looking back in history, this was an enormous leap of faith by an already stressed and weary congregation. To add to an already difficult situation, while the building was underway World War I was declared in Germany, and again according to former parishioner Mary L. Sharp, “the workmen threw up their hands and wanted to quit then and there. But the work progressed, and in spite of many setbacks the new building was finished in time for the church's Bazaar in December. The entire cost of the new Parish House was about \$12,000 - \$5,000 of which was already in the church treasury, a fund for the purpose having been started with the Easter Offering in the year 1908. Additional contributions brought this amount to over \$6,000.”

When the building was complete, under Fr. Stuckert's leadership the Sunday school membership rose from 30 children to over 100 children and adults. Fr. Stuckert organized and taught a bible class with about 40 regular attendees. At his direction a new set of By-Laws was drawn up, conforming to Church By-Laws. He also instituted better methods of financing church monies.

Once the new parish house was open. Fr. Stuckert planned methods of attracting young people to Christ Church. Although a Young People's Association had been formed a year or two before he had arrived, it was not well attended, probably due to lack of adequate facilities. But now the church had a proper parish house and hall, and once a month young people and adults – members and non-members of the church – came to participate in plays and attend dances. Fr. Stuckert also wrote and distributed a small newspaper called "Christ Church Chimes" in an effort to bring the members of the church into closer fellowship with one another and within the church.

For a while things seemed to settle down. Fr. Stuckert's salary was raised to \$1,500 a year, and although he accepted the increase apparently he remained uncomfortable with the financial condition of the church. On May 25, 1915 he wrote the following letter to the Vestry in which he expressed his thanks for the increase, but also voiced his continued concern:

To the Vestry of Christ Church, Woodbury, NJ

Gentlemen:

I agree to your proposition to increase my salary from \$1,350 to \$1,500 per annum, of course with the conditions of our previous contract, that it is payable monthly and that added to it is the use of the Rectory.

I wish to express to the vestry my appreciation of their kindness, but add in haste that I accept with some misgivings as I fear the Parish will find it hard to bear the added burden.



I hope that our renewed Pastoral relations will be greatly blessed and rebound to the glory of God and the strengthening and upbuilding of His Church.

Faithfully Yours,  
/s/ Howard M. Stuckert  
Rector

As Fr. Stuckert feared, financial problems persisted, and in May 1917 several members of the vestry offered personal money(s) to help pay off a number of small debts that continued to plague the church. At the Annual Parish Meeting on April 1, 1918 Fr. Stuckert proposed as a possible solution to the money crisis to voluntarily accept a \$600 reduction in his \$1,500/year salary, reducing his salary to \$900. In addition, since there was not enough money to pay a sexton, he would give up living in the rectory, be at the church on Sunday and one other day a week (and other times only when necessary), and/or send a lay reader or priest if he couldn't be there – all this because he felt it was essential for Christ Church to have a sexton.

Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the Vestry met privately in the Parish House, with Fr. Stuckert presiding, and the following was moved and seconded:

“That the vestry, following the suggestion made by the Rector at the last meeting makes the following propositions:

1. That the Rector's salary be \$900 per annum, payable monthly.
2. That the Rector relinquish all right to the personal use of the Rectory.
3. That, in consideration of the reduced stipend, the Rector be free to live elsewhere, and give his services only on Sundays and All Saints, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension Day, and one afternoon and evening during each week.
4. That the Rector at his discretion may supply a Lay Reader at his own expense for not more than two services per month.
5. That the Rector be granted each summer a two months' vacation, half at the expense of the vestry.
6. That the vestry reserves the right to cancel this contract after it has been in force for twelve calendar months upon thirty days' notice being given by either party thereto in which case the Rector reserves

the right to the Rectory at present stipend (\$1,500) and gives his whole time as formerly.

7. Due notice of this proposition shall be conveyed to the Rector by the Secretary, and the reply spread upon the minutes.
8. That the acceptance of this Proposition shall be optional with the Rector up to and including June 1, 1918, and shall be conveyed to the vestry at a regular or special meeting at the earliest possible time.”

Finally the years, the hard work, and many difficult situations took their toll on the 9<sup>th</sup> Rector. At a special Vestry meeting held on July 15, 1918 Fr. Stuckert resigned, effective August 31, 1918.

## **Addendum**

Until the publication of this latest history of Christ Church, very little was known about Fr. Howard M. Stuckert, except those facts that could be gleaned from Vestry minutes and scant parish records. Until now Fr. Stuckert is primarily remembered within Christ Church as the embattled rector during the time of the Parish House renovations in 1914.

Further research has uncovered some interesting facts regarding this fine gentleman's background, education, and service to God and his church, and it seems appropriate at this time to reintroduce him to the parish family.

Howard M. Stuckert was born in Philadelphia in 1884. He attended Central High School, and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1907. In 1910 he entered the Philadelphia Divinity School, and was ordained a Priest in 1911.

In 1915 Fr. Stuckert was awarded his M.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and his Doctorate in Philosophy from the same university in 1923 (after his tenure at Christ Church).

He came to Woodbury from St. Mary's, Philadelphia where he had been serving as a curate, and remained at Christ Church from April 10, 1913 to August 31, 1918. After leaving Christ Church, Fr. Stuckert served in various capacities at the Church of the Saviour, Philadelphia; the Church of the Holy Comforter, Philadelphia; Old St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia; St. Asaph's, Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; The Church of the Good Shepherd, Germantown; the Church of Our Saviour, Camden; St. Peter's, Clarksboro; the House of Prayer, Philadelphia, and finally Grace Church, Haddonfield.

Dr. Stuckert also studied in Germany, and taught history of religion, ethics, philosophy, history of art, esthetics and comparative history at the University of Pennsylvania and Rutgers University in South Jersey. He was also former acting master of history at Tome School, Md., assistant history professor at Ohio State University, a former teacher at the Episcopal Academy in Overbrook, Penna., a lecturer at the Philadelphia Episcopal

Divinity School, and head examining chaplain while in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania.

In March 1936 The Rt. Rev. Francis Marion Taitt, Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania (1931 – 1943), along with many other Episcopal clergy and representatives of the laity united in a commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Rev. Dr. Howard Morris Stuckert's ordination to the Priesthood, held at the House of Prayer, Church Lane and Limekiln Pike, Branchtown. The celebration was conducted under the auspices of the congregation of the House of Prayer, where Dr. Stuckert was rector. At that time publicity releases described Dr. Stuckert as being widely known throughout the Episcopal Church and one of its foremost scholars and theologians.

Dr. Stuckert left the House of Prayer to accept a call for his final rectorate at Grace Church, Haddonfield, New Jersey, where he spent seven and a half years – from December 15, 1941 until March 21, 1949. In 1942 he blessed and dedicated the new side altar at Grace Church as a testimonial to the men and women of the parish who were in both wars in the service of their nation. Under his leadership two new organizations were instituted – The young people's Fellowship Club, and The Girls' Friendly. Under his guidance, the Sunday School at Grace grew to “an active attendance of 88, with a staff of competent teachers.” And during his rectorship Grace Church, Haddonfield celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, climaxed with a special service of the Holy Eucharist celebrated by The Rt. Rev. Wallace J. Gardner, then Bishop of New Jersey.

A brief history of Grace Episcopal Church contains some interesting comments regarding the years while Dr. Stuckert was rector. “Most beautiful church building in the community. Best toned organ in the community. Two good Choirs with excellent Choirmaster and organist. Average attendance at 9 a.m was 50 persons, and at 11 a.m., 70 persons.”

Dr. Stuckert retired from Grace Church, Haddonfield on March 21, 1949, and at the time he was described by Beatrice Stackhouse Stuckert, Director of the Haddonfield Public Library (no relation as far as can be determined) as follows:

“Dr. Stuckert was one of the finest scholars and most fascinating conversationalists I have ever known. He had a wonderful wit and a rich fund of stories based on art, literature, history, and people. He loved to teach those with true interest and a receptive mind. His students loved him and while teaching he had “Dr. Stuckert’s At Home” to which his students swarmed. Rutgers has a Memorial Award in Philosophy in his honor.”

Dr. Stuckert was so loved and admired by his congregation that when he retired the vestry approved a plan to give an honorarium of \$25 per month, plus enough to guarantee him an income of \$1,200 per year. He was also invested with the title of Rector Emeritus.

The Rev. Dr. Howard M. Stuckert died at the Hospital of the Woman’s Medical College on February 29, 1956, and was buried with a Requiem Mass celebrated and sung at the Church of Our Saviour in Camden, New Jersey. He was survived by two sons, Howard M., Jr., and Philip A. M., both of Haddonfield, New Jersey, and five grandchildren.

How interesting to learn more about the 9<sup>th</sup> Rector, whose tenure at Christ Church, Woodbury was marked with so much dissention. How unfortunate that many of the then parishioners at Christ Church apparently misunderstood and misjudged this priest, teacher, scholar, and gentleman.

And how gratifying it is to this author to have uncovered the above facts, and to provide in part the legacy that The Reverend Dr. Howard M. Stuckert so richly deserves.

### **Chapter 33**

**The Reverend Canon Robert G. Wynne Williams, S.T.D.**

**10<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**

**November 1, 1918 – July 31, 1960**

The Reverend Canon Robert G. W. Williams was born in Wales on November 7, 1888, the son of The Reverend and Mrs. John Williams. Canon Williams' father was a clergyman of the Church of England, and was also Chaplain of Ruthin Castle. From Ellsmere College in Shropshire, England he came to the United States in 1909 and continued his preparation for the ministry at St. Stephen's College and the General Theological Seminary in New York. He was ordained to the Diaconate in St. Paul's Church, Camden, by Bishop Matthews on May 17, 1917. On Maundy Thursday, March 28, 1918 he was ordained by Bishop Matthews in St. Wilfred's Church, Camden.

On September 9, 1918, the vestry sent the following letter to The Reverend R. G. Williams:

Woodbury, N.J.  
Sept. 9, 1918

Rev. R. G. Williams  
#60 South 30<sup>th</sup> St.  
Camden, N.J.

Dear Sir:

At a meeting held this evening by the Wardens and Vestry of Christ Church, Woodbury, N.J., it was unanimously agreed that a call be extended to you for the rectorship; the remuneration to be \$1500.00 per annum, with free use of the rectory adjacent to the Church.

Should you decide to accept as we trust you will, the matter will have to be put before Bishop Matthews for his approval, and then we will give you final confirmation.

We will say that we received a letter some days ago from the Bishop in which he sanctioned our giving you consideration.

Yours very truly,

At a special vestry meeting held on September 16, 1918 a letter from The Reverend R. G. Williams accepting the call to the Rectorship was read. And once again another rector

was faced with an immediate financial crisis. At this same meeting (with Fr. Williams in attendance) the treasurer reported a cash balance of \$45.23, and outstanding bills amounting to \$568. The fact that Christ Church owed considerable money was noted, ways of raising funds to reduce the debt were discussed, and the new rector proposed telling the congregation on the first Sunday of every month the statement of the finances of the Church. In November 1918 for the immediate payment of certain bills, Mr. J. T. Warren, a member of the vestry, offered to lend to the vestry the sum of \$300 without interest until after Easter. The offer was accepted, and the money was applied to the payment of Diocesan expenses and Missions, and to pay off the balance of painting in the rectory and the parish house.

As a further indication of the gravity of the financial situation, in December 1918 the ladies of Christ Church Guild reported they were unable to carry on their work due to the lack of heat in the Guild Room, and asked the vestry to at least supply wood for the grate and oil for the stove in the room. The Property Committee agreed to handle the matter, and apparently they did.

In April 1919 the decision was made by the vestry that it would incur no one item of expense in excess of \$500 unless the same was submitted to a congregational meeting for approval.

Yet through all this, Christ Church survived. During Fr. Williams' rectorate, according to Vestry Meeting Minutes dated March 1, 1920 a motion was moved and seconded that an Endowment Fund of Christ Church be established, and a year later, the Fund was begun.

In November, 1928, The Episcopal Prayer Book was changed as authorized by the General Convention, and 200 copies of the "new" 1928 Prayer Book were ordered by the Vestry for use of the parishioners at Fr. Williams' recommendation. Cost of the new books: 25 cents each.

On June 3, 1929, the iron fencing that today encloses Christ Church's Jubilee Garden, and the area between the Church and the Rectory on Delaware Street, was approved by the Vestry, again at Fr. Williams' suggestion.

Despite calls from other churches over the years, Fr. Williams remained at Christ Church for the next 42 years. He arrived at Christ Church "on the footsteps of a war that had shocked the minds and hearts of all Christians." He led his flock through the great Depression, the longest and worst period of high unemployment and low business activity and a period when millions of Americans were jobless, homeless, and penniless, and which assuredly impacted the citizens of Woodbury as well. He was rector during the Second World War, and throughout the Korean Conflict. During his rectorship he served on all important diocesan committees, and was for some years the President of the Standing Committee.

On April 18, 1950, Fr. Williams was made an Honorary Canon of Trinity Cathedral by The Right Reverend Wallace John Gardner. The service of institution was held in Christ Church before a large congregation of clergy of the Diocese, other Clergy of the city of Woodbury, and members of the congregation.

Canon Williams' many contributions to Christ Church are best summarized by Fr. John Bird as he described them in "The Red Book" history of Christ Church:

"In 1951 under the direction of Canon Williams, the properties of Christ Church were improved and expanded. The Pulpit and Lectern were moved to their present locations. The organ was completely rebuilt and improved with the organ pipes being placed in a small room above the entrance to the Chancel. During the alterations a general redecoration of the Church was carried out under the supervision of Mr. Ralph Kurtz, a Vestryman. A new wing was added to the Parish House from plans drawn by Mr. Earl L. Daily, a Vestryman."

In the spring of 1954 The Reverend John Van Sant was appointed a Curate at Christ Church. This appointment was a first in the history of Christ Church, and the increase in the ministerial staff indicates an expanding circle of influence through which Christ



Church was touching lives. Fr. Van Sant was from Atlantic City, New Jersey, and had just graduated from the Philadelphia Divinity School where he had been ordained a Deacon. He, his wife, and their 5-month old son came to Christ Church to work with the young people of the parish. Fr. Van Sant remained at the church until September, 1955; he was followed by Fr. Frederick S. Wandall, who served from June 1, 1956 until May 31, 1957, and then by Fr. Robert J. Sykes, who assumed this role on June 1, 1957, and remained until April 30, 1960.

A personal memory of Canon Williams was written by parishioner Mary Louise Whittall in 1953 when she recalled: "In 1918 The Rev. Robert G. Williams came to us as Rector. He was quite young and newly married. He is with us today in 1953 – not so young, and several times a grandfather."

On May 23, 1956 Christ Church celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of continuous services in the church, and at this celebration held a testimonial dinner for Canon Williams, with over 400 people in attendance. Excerpts from an article in the May 24, 1956 issue of the *Woodbury Daily Times* describes the dinner as follows:

The Rev. Canon Robert G. Williams, rector of Christ Episcopal Church since 1918, was honored last night at a testimonial dinner that climaxed the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church.

Tributes were paid to Canon Williams as an outstanding churchman, a humanitarian, and a civic leader by Mayor Henry W. Peterson, representing the city; Dr. Harold Simmerman, representing the service clubs of Woodbury, and The Rev. G. Wendell Jung, representing the Ministerial Association.

Mayor Peterson said that Canon Williams had contributed greatly to community life, as well as doing outstanding work in his ministry for the church, and pointed out that he had given aid and assistance to hundreds of people who had gone to him seeking counsel and comfort.

Dr. Simmerman said that his association with Canon Williams had revealed him to be a man with a warm, human sense of humor that "is so essential in human relationship." He also said that as a Rotarian "he has exerted a tremendous influence in his activities in that field" and "has been

an inspiration to many men who have been associated with him in the service organization.”

Canon Williams was referred to by the Rev. Jung as the “dean” of the Ministerial Association and said that “he has brought honor to that title” and has “inspired his brother clergymen.”

Bishop Banyard, in his address, said that Woodbury has become one of the foremost parishes in the diocese, and that Canon Williams is one of its foremost clergymen.

Again quoting from Fr. Bird’s writings:

“On Sunday afternoon, November 3, 1957 Canon Williams was honored by his Seminary. The honorary degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology was to have been conferred at the commencement exercises of the General Theological Seminary in May 1957, but because of illness Canon Williams was unable to attend, so representatives of the Seminary came to Woodbury and within the walls of Christ Church paid tribute to this fine pastor and scholar.

“This ceremony was held during Evensong, beginning at 4 p.m. The Rev. John V. Butler, D.D., Rector of Trinity Church, Princeton, acted for the Dean, and with the members of the Board of Trustees of General Theological Seminary conferred the degree upon Canon Williams. Dr. Butler was assisted by the Rev. Howard Miller, M.A., Rector of Holy Trinity, Collingswood.”

Canon Williams retired as the 10<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church during the Spring of 1960, with his resignation effective July 31 of that year. He and his wife remained in Woodbury until he died on March 16, 1964, and was buried from the church he had served so faithfully for 42 years. Before his interment, in an unprecedented move and with the vestry’s approval, Canon William’s body lay in state in the chancel of Christ Church, with a 24-hour “watch” of parishioners established in tribute.

In 1965 a stained glass window was installed in Christ Church, and dedicated to the memory of this long-term and faithful rector by parishioners and friends. The window, called The Saint David Window, celebrates Canon Williams’ ministry and his Welsh heritage, and is found next to the pulpit, directly behind the organ console.

Following her husband's death, Canon Williams' wife, Alice Moffett Williams, continued to reside in Woodbury and to worship in Christ Church. For more than 30 years Mrs. Williams authored a column called "Thought For the Day," published in *The Gloucester County Times*. She spent her final days at The Evergreens in Moorestown, New Jersey, where she died on January 29, 1977.

*Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.  
And let light perpetual shine upon them.  
May their soul(s), and the souls of all the departed,  
Through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen*

## **Chapter 34**

### **The Rev. John Albion Van Sant 1<sup>st</sup> Curate of Christ Church 1954 – 1955**

The Rev. John Albion Van Sant was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey on October 22, 1924, and graduated with honors from the local high school. As a young boy he was a member of the choir of the Church of the Ascension in Atlantic City. Later he was a regular member of the choir at The Church of the Epiphany in Ventnor, N.J. (where his father also sang) until 1943, when he entered the U.S. Army Air Force.

In 1947, the year after his military service was over, John entered Rutgers University and was graduated with honors, receiving his B.A. degree in the classics. In 1951 he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

In December 1950 Fr. Van Sant was accepted as a postulant, and a year after entering The Philadelphia Divinity School he was made a candidate for Holy Orders. On May 8, 1954, he was ordained a Deacon by The Rt. Rev. Wallace J. Gardner, and on November 27, 1954 ordained a Priest by The Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard.

That same year Fr. Van Sant accepted the call to Christ Church, Woodbury, where he served as the church's 1<sup>st</sup> Curate under the rectorship of The Rev. Canon G. W. Williams, Christ Church's 10<sup>th</sup> Rector. In 1955 he left Woodbury to become rector of All Saints, Elizabeth, New Jersey, where he served until 1961. That same year he became Canon Residentiary in Trinity Cathedral, Trenton, New Jersey, where he remained until he retired in 1989.

But his service in the church was not yet over. In 1990 Fr. Van Sant moved to Palmyra, New Jersey to serve as Vicar of Christ Church, and remained there until 1997. He then accepted the appointment to become a Priest Associate at The Church of the Good Shepherd in Berlin, N.J., serving as Assistant Priest to his son, The Rev. Paul A. Van Sant. He remained at Good Shepherd until 2006, when he “retired” once again...until his

son Paul became the rector of St. Stephens, Whiting, N.J., and once again asked if his father would agree to serve with him as Priest Associate. And so he did, which is where Fr. Van Sant, a member of the Society of Mary, is today in 2007.

## **Chapter 35**

### **The Rev. Frederick Summerson Wandall 2<sup>nd</sup> Curate of Christ Church (1956 – 1957)**

Frederick Summerson Wandall was born in Camden, New Jersey on June 8, 1930. In 1953 he earned a BA degree at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. He then entered the General Theological Seminary in New York and graduated with an M.Div. degree in 1956. On April 28, 1956 he was ordained a Deacon by The Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard, and on October 27, 1956 Bishop Banyard ordained him a Priest.

Fr. Wandall's first assignment was to serve as Christ Church's 2<sup>nd</sup> Curate under Canon Robert Williams, with the understanding he would remain in that role for a period of two years.

During his service at Christ Church there is very little reference in the Church's records concerning Fr. Wandall's assigned responsibilities and/or activities. Fourteen months after his arrival at a vestry meeting held on April 22, 1957 Canon Williams announced Fr. Wandall would be leaving no later than September 1, 1957, and expressed regret that his 2<sup>nd</sup> Curate would not remain at Christ Church for the full two-year period as originally anticipated. The supposed reason for his early departure (which actually occurred on May 6, 1957) was that Fr. Wandall planned to move to a parish in Cape May, New Jersey, but there is no record of his ever serving in that parish. Instead he continued his education at The University of Pennsylvania, and completed his studies there in 1958.

Fr. Wandall then moved "across the pond," and from 1959 – 1960 he was a Chaplain at Christ Church, Oxford. While in England he earned his M.Litt. degree in 1961 from Oxford University.

Following his return to the United States, Fr. Wandall married and had two children. He served in a number of parishes in New York State, and in various parishes in Virginia as

Assistant, Vicar, and Priest-in-Charge. From 1989 through 1990 he taught at George Mason University in Northern Virginia (near Washington, D.C.)

He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and the author of “Charles Williams and Minor British Novelists.”

**Chapter 36**  
**The Reverend Robert James Sykes**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Curate of Christ Church**  
**(1957 – 1960)**

The Rev. Robert James Sykes was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Curate to serve under The Rev. Canon Robert G. W. Williams.

Fr. Sykes was born in Philadelphia, Pa. on September 11, 1931. After graduating from Temple University, he attended The Philadelphia Divinity School. On April 27, 1957 he was ordained a Deacon by The Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard.

On May 6, 1957 Bishop Banyard recommended Fr. Sykes to fill the role as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Curate at Christ Church. At the vestry meeting on June 6, 1957 Canon Williams announced Bishop Banyard's recommendation and Fr. Sykes was approved as Curate, with a starting date of September 12, 1957 and an annual salary of \$3,000 plus \$85 a month allowance to cover the cost of an apartment.

Fr. Sykes accepted the offer, and became immediately involved in his new assignment. During his first month he reported having secured 18,000 copies of pre-printed covers for the Church Bulletin, provided at no cost by a Mr. R. B. Lucy. During the meeting Fr. Sykes expressed his appreciation, but also suggested the picture of Christ Church on the cover could be improved upon by using a professional photographer.

On October 3, 1957 he informed the members of the vestry in their regular meeting that his main focus would be to direct his efforts toward the young people in the church, and work to enhance the Sunday School program.

On November 1, 1957 Fr. Sykes was ordained a Priest by Bishop Banyard, and his salary was immediately raised to \$3,600.



At Canon Williams' suggestion, on January 9, 1958 Fr. Sykes reported organizing several young people to serve as ushers. His theory: having them act as supplementary ushers would encourage them without interfering with their regular routine activities, and also allow them to become accustomed to this service in the future as adults. The next month he assigned a young assistant usher (or reserve usher) to function at the 11 a.m. service. He also assigned two young people to serve at each family service.

In October 1959 Fr. Sykes met with the Ministerial Association of Woodbury and announced Christ Church was to be the host for the ecumenical Thanksgiving Service that year.

On April 18, 1960 Fr. Sykes notified Canon Williams and the vestry that Bishop Banyard had appointed him Vicar of Good Shepherd in Berlin, New Jersey, effective May 1. He remained at Good Shepherd until 1969, and while there a new church building was begun in 1967.

In 1969 Fr. Sykes accepted a call from The Memorial Church of the Holy Nativity in Rockledge, Montgomery County, Pa., where he served as Rector until 1979.

He retired in 1991, and presently resides in Lansdale, Pennsylvania.

## **Chapter 37**

### **The Reverend Canon William Vernon Rauscher, Jr. 11<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church August 1960 – April 1996**

William Vernon Rauscher, Jr. was born on October 17, 1932 in Long Branch, New Jersey, and raised in Highlands. After commencement at Atlantic Highlands High School, he furthered his education at Glassboro State Teachers College (now Rowan University), where he graduated with a BS in Education. Upon graduation, in 1954 he entered The Philadelphia Divinity School in Philadelphia. He was ordained a Deacon and then a Priest in 1957 at Trinity Cathedral, Trenton, N.J. by The Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard, Bishop of New Jersey.

Fr. Rauscher began his ministry as Vicar of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Florence, N.J., a small assisted parish near the steel town of Roebling, N.J. Three years later, in 1960, he was called to be Rector of Christ Church, Woodbury. He was 27 years old.

In 1960 Christ Church's property was in need of major repairs. There was no secretary, no office or office equipment, no extensive files – only a dedicated group of parishioners faithful to the previous rector, Canon Robert V. Williams, who had served the church as Rector for 42 years, who still lived in Woodbury, and worshiped with his family at Christ Church.

Fr. Rauscher's first move was to hire a secretary and arrange a temporary office in the vestibule of the rectory. Next step – a project resulting in all parish buildings being restored and repaired, major alterations to the Parish house, complete redecoration of the church, replacement of all termite-damaged beams in the undercroft, pointing the entire exterior of the church, replacing the church's slate roof, and numerous improvements in the Parish House facilities. Six years later, all of these projects were completed, and all debts paid from money raised.

In 1964, with the approval of the vestry, Fr. Rauscher invited his mother and father, Marie and Bill, Sr., to move to Woodbury and live with him in the rectory. His parents agreed to so do, with one stipulation: that they would continue spending the winter months in Florida. While living in the rectory Marie and Bill, Sr. helped take care of the property, hosted social events, helped with all the bazaars, and generally assisted their son in every possible way. After her husband's death in 1986, Marie continued to live in the rectory with her son until he retired, and then with him in Woodbury until the time of her passing on Easter Day, 2005, when she was 96 years old. Always a gracious hostess, her modest, unassuming manner endeared her to all Christ Church parishioners.

At Fr. Rauscher's direction, a residence opposite the rectory was purchased and renovated to provide housing for assistants to the rector. This home, now known as "The Jackson House," was paid for in full through his fund-raising efforts. A fully equipped office to more adequately serve the expanding church's needs was also built on to the Rectory.

In 1968 under Fr. Rauscher's rectorship, a new pipe organ was donated, and a rebuilt organ chamber was completed as a memorial gift. In 1970 the church was air-conditioned, and a zoned heating system was installed in all buildings. In 1990, he raised \$40,000 to replace the deteriorated sidewalk on Delaware Street, paid for almost entirely by the Cornell family in thanksgiving for the life of Ralph Cornell. During that same year outdoor lighting was installed, along with 6 Olde English Bell Lanterns and Posts given by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hickling, Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Hickling, and Mr. and Mrs. George Nessanthaler in memory of Robert and Margaret Hickling; by Mrs. Paul Kaiser in memory of Donald and Mary Kaiser; by Peg and Richard Geiger in memory of Edward J. and Margaret D. Finan; and by Ethel and Paul Goldy in memory of Ethel Henning. Five custom made iron hitching posts given in memory of family loved ones by Stu and Regina Weisgerber were installed on the new sidewalk at the same time.

Bi-weekly healing services were instituted in 1965, which 42 years later are now conducted on a weekly basis. Support of Alcoholic Anonymous was another important

part of Fr. Rauscher's ministry, and soon after his arrival an invitation was extended to this group to meet in the Parish House. Decades later, in 2007, these weekly meetings still take place.

In 1971 Fr. Rauscher was made an honorary Canon of Trinity Cathedral. During his rectorate at Christ Church, three men were presented for the priesthood, and five priests served as Curates under his tenure. Also at his initiation Christ Church's Endowment Fund (begun under Canon Williams) was reinstituted and reorganized, and is today considered an active, growing, and protected resource for Christ Church's preservation.

A student of Ascetical and Mystical Theology, as well as Parapsychology, Psychical Research, and Comparative Religions, Canon Rauscher's studies and experiences span decades, including his special interests in magic, mentalism, mediums and psychics. Over the years, he has been recognized as an expert in these fields.

Although he considers himself first and foremost a pastor, a great many seminars and conferences were held at Christ Church, arranged while Canon Rauscher was rector. Lecture series brought speakers from the United States and abroad to the church (including astronaut Edgar D. Mitchell), and attendance at these events was comprised of a mixture of people from all faiths. Seminars led by guest clergy were held on the subjects of Science and Religion, along with his Lenten series titled "School of Religion," a study that encompassed a variety of subjects.

A prolific writer, over the years Canon Rauscher has published 12 books on many different subjects, including religion, suicide, parapsychology, ESP, and biographies of famous individuals well known in various professions. Magic has been a lifelong hobby, and in addition to being an outstanding performer in this field, he has received numerous honors as an historian of magic. He has belonged to the International Brotherhood of Magicians for 58 years, and to the Society of American Magicians for more than 30 years. In 1991 he was elected to the S.A.M. Hall of Fame, and is also a member of The

Magic Circle in London, England's prestigious magic organization. He also holds membership by election in the Inner Magic Circle.

After 36 years of service, Canon Rauscher retired as the 11<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church on Easter Day, April 7, 1996. During his ministry at Christ Church Canon Rauscher baptized 490 persons, presented for confirmation and reception 844 persons, conducted 504 funerals, and solemnized the marriage of 236 couples. He conducted or participated in approximately 8,436 services of worship at the church he loves. Now retired (but still serving when requested as an Assisting Priest), he resides in Woodbury, New Jersey, and like his first predecessor, attends Christ Church on a regular basis.

On September 13, 1998 a stained glass window commemorating Canon Rauscher's life and ministry was installed in the nave of Christ Church. A focal point of the window is the moon located in the center top area. Imbedded in the window is lunar material presented to Canon Rauscher by Astronaut Edgar D. Mitchell, the 6<sup>th</sup> man to walk on the moon. Canon Rauscher met Dr. Mitchell in the early 1970's, and has followed with interest the career of this remarkable man – and friend. The lunar material presented by Dr. Mitchell to Christ Church, Woodbury provides the church with a rare gift among the churches of Christendom – a gift that symbolizes for meditative thought man's exploration of God's universe.

On November 2, 2007, as part of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Christ Church, the parish observed the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Canon Rauscher's Ordination to the Priesthood. On behalf of the parish, The Very Rev. Brian K. Burgess (the present Rector of Christ Church) invited Canon Rauscher to stand as Celebrant at this service of Holy Eucharist, attended by more than 200 parishioners and friends. Also at Fr. Burgess' invitation (and with the permission of The Rt. Rev. George E. Cuncell, 11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New Jersey), The Rt. Rev. G. P. Mellick Belshaw, 9<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New Jersey (retired) and Canon Rauscher's long-time personal friend, presided and delivered the sermon. A catered reception followed in the Parish Hall, where Canon Rauscher and Bishop Belshaw, joined by Fr.

Burgess and The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird, Assisting Priest, greeted the large crowd of well-wishers.

## **Chapter 38**

### **The Reverend Ludwig Irving Weinrich, Jr. 4<sup>th</sup> Curate of Christ Church (1967-1969)**

Ludwig I. Weinrich was born in Somerville, New Jersey on August 2, 1933. In 1964 he graduated from Rutgers University, and then entered the Philadelphia Divinity School, graduating with an MDiv.degree in 1967. He was ordained a deacon on April 22, 1967 and a Priest on October 28, 1967 by The Rt. Rev. Alfred L. Banyard.

That same year Fr. Weinrich began first assignment as the 4<sup>th</sup> Curate of Christ Church, serving under Canon William Rauscher; he remained in that position until 1969. While at Christ Church he completed the original research for a more extensive history of the church, and the first draft of “The Red Book” history of the church was a result of his effort.

Fr. Weinrich then became Rector of All Saints in Elizabeth, New Jersey where he served until 1974, followed by his appointment as Rector of St. Mary’s Church in Keyport, New Jersey (1974 – 1986). During this last appointment, Fr. Weinrich continued his theological studies by entering the Princeton Theological Seminary and graduated in 1980 with an MA degree.

Throughout his years of service, Fr. Weinrich focused his ministry on fire fighters. He served as Chaplain of the Holmdel, N.J. Fire Department in 1982, Chaplain of the Fire Department in Keyport, N.J. in 1981, Chaplain of the Bayshore Active Fire Department in 1975, and Chaplain of the Fire Department in Hazlet, New Jersey that same year.

Fr. Weinrich was a member of the Order of the Holy Redeemer; he was the author of “A Mission to Taiwan,” published in an historical magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Fr. Weinrich died on February 2, 2004.

## **Chapter 39**

### **The Reverend Dr. John E. Bird, Jr. Assisting Priest at Christ Church Formerly 5<sup>th</sup> Curate at Christ Church 1969-1975**

The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird, Jr. was born in Pittsburgh, Pa. on August 27, 1940. He attended Monmouth University for his undergraduate studies, and graduated with honors in 1966.

In 1967 he and his wife Mary Beth became the parents of their first son, Michael (who like his father chose to follow the path of Priesthood, and in 2004 was called to be Rector of Christ Church in Bronxville, New York.)

In 1969 Fr. Bird graduated from the Philadelphia Divinity School with honors, where he was awarded the M.Div. degree. He was ordained a Priest on October 25, 1969 by The Rt. Reverend Alfred L. Banyard, then Bishop of New Jersey.

At that time, The Reverend William V. Rauscher was Rector of Christ Church. The congregation had grown, and pastoral responsibilities had reached the point where assistance would be a welcome necessity. At Bishop Banyard's recommendation, in 1969 Fr. Bird accepted the responsibilities of Curate at Christ Church at the invitation of the Rector, and he, his wife and their young son moved into what is now the Jackson House. In 1970 the Birds' second son, Jeffrey, was born in Woodbury. Now married, Jeffrey and his family reside in Brick, New Jersey.

Fr. Bird remained at Christ Church until 1975, when he resigned his position as Curate and accepted a call to become Rector of St. Luke and the Epiphany in the center city area of Philadelphia, Pa. He remained in that position until 1983, when he moved his family to Florida to become Rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Jacksonville, where he served until 1988.



From 1988 until 1999, Fr. Bird was Rector of the Church of St. Uriel the Archangel in Sea Girt, New Jersey. While at St. Uriel's, he pursued his studies at Virginia Theological Seminary, and in 1993 was awarded his doctorate (D.Min.). St. Uriel's was to be his last appointment before retiring, when he planned to return to Woodbury, New Jersey to relax and live. Or so he thought.

When Fr. Anderson resigned as Rector of Christ Church in February 2004, Fr. Bird was requested by the vestry to assume the role of Priest-in-Charge until such time as the next Rector was found, a role he fulfilled until January 2005 when The Rev. Brian K. Burgess joined the church as its next rector.

Now Fr. Bird has once again retired from full-time parish life, but as Assisting Priest at Christ Church (an appointment effective in early 2005 at Fr. Burgess' request) he is available to assist whenever called upon. He has also taken services at various churches throughout the diocese on an as-needed basis, and is especially busy during the summer months.

He and his wife Mary Beth now reside full-time in Woodbury, New Jersey, where both are active parishioners and friends of the parish.

**Chapter 40**  
**The Very Reverend Roger J. Hamilton**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Curate of Christ Church**  
**1975 – 1980**

Fr. Hamilton was born in Trenton, New Jersey on March 24, 1949. After receiving his BA in 1971 from Trenton State College, he attended The Philadelphia Divinity School, where he received his M.Div. in 1974.

On November 23, 1974, he was ordained a priest by The Rt. Reverend Albert W. Van Duzer. That same year Fr. Hamilton began his ministry by serving as a curate at St. Peter's, Freehold, N.J. In 1975, he left St. Peter's to become the 6<sup>th</sup> Curate of Christ Church, Woodbury.

From 1980 through 1998, Fr. Hamilton served as Rector of Christ Church in Somers Point, N.J., until in 1998 he accepted a call from St. Michael's Church in Orlando, Florida, where he now serves as Rector. He is currently the Dean of the Central Deanery, a member of the Diocesan Board, the Treasurer of the Institute of Christian Studies, and a member of the Board of Canterbury Retreat and Conference Center.

Under Fr. Hamilton's direction, the Music Ministry at St. Michael's is strong and vital. The choir has sung in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., as well as in several cathedrals in England, including Westminster Abbey. In 2002, the Adult and Youth Choir sang at Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, England.

Fr. Hamilton and his wife Karen are the parents of two daughters, Ann Marie and Rebekah.

## **Chapter 41**

### **The Reverend Samuel M. Outerbridge Seventh Curate at Christ Church, Woodbury 1980 – 1986**

The Reverend Samuel M. Outerbridge was born on April 25, 1940. In 1965 he graduated from Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio with a B.A. degree. In 1972 he received his M.Div. degree from the Philadelphia Divinity School. He was ordained a Deacon in June 1972 at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City, N.Y.; six months later in December 1972 he was ordained a Priest.

Between 1972 and 1980, Fr. Outerbridge served as Curate at St. Mary's, Haddon Heights, and Vicar at St. John's Church in Sewaren, New Jersey. At Canon Rauscher's invitation, in 1980 he became the 7<sup>th</sup> Curate to serve Christ Church, Woodbury.

Fr. Outerbridge is unique. He was frequently described as "always up," "happy in his work," "positive," "a good listener," "always trying to keep the peace." Throughout his ministry, his emphasis was always on young people and the importance of their service in the church.

From Christ Church, he moved to New Milford, Connecticut as Curate at St. John's Church, and then to the Church of St. Uriel the Archangel in Sea Girt, New Jersey, where he served as Curate under The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird, Jr., Rector of the church.

In 1997, Fr. Outerbridge left the Jersey shore for a year of Sabbatical Study in London, England. After his return, and following Fr. Bird's rectorship, in 2000 Fr. Outerbridge was called by the vestry as the VIII Rector of St. Uriel's. During 2003 he presided over St. Uriel's yearlong 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, a year marked by diverse programs and activities. He retired as Rector in May, 2004.

The following year Fr. Outerbridge gave up his priesthood in the Episcopal Church, and converted to the Roman Catholic church as a layman.

**Chapter 42**  
**The Reverend Alfred William Degerberg**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Curate of Christ Church**  
**1986 – 1996**

The Reverend Alfred William Degerberg was born on September 25, 1929 in Philadelphia, Penna. He was a 1952 graduate of Ursinus College. In 1955 he graduated from The Philadelphia Divinity School with a Th.B. He was ordained a Deacon on May 28, 1955, and a Priest by The Rt. Rev. Oliver J. Hart, Bishop of Pennsylvania, on December 3, 1955.

Before coming to Christ Church, Fr. Degerberg served as Rector of the Free Church of St. John in Philadelphia (1955 – 1959); Rector of All Saints, Crescentville, Philadelphia (1959 – 1972); and Rector of Old Swedes in Upper Merion (1972 – 1986). In 1986, under the rectorship of Canon William V. Rauscher, he became the 8<sup>th</sup> Curate at Christ Church.

Fr. Degerberg charmed the congregation with his illustrative sermons. He is also remembered for his helpfulness, faithfulness and kindness to the sick and shut-ins. He and his wife, Diana, were active in all parish activities and events, and equally as involved in civic affairs. Some of today's congregation will recall the Degerbergs' participation in the Woodbury Fall Parade, where they rode on floats each year. Many will also remember him standing at the door in front of the church before the service, greeting all as they entered.

When Canon Rauscher retired in April 1996, Fr. Degerberg served as Interim Priest at Christ Church, a position he filled from that date until February 1997 with the arrival of The Rev. Douglas E. Anderson, Christ Church's 12<sup>th</sup> Rector.

The Rev. Alfred William Degerberg died on September 1, 2003, and was buried from St. Thomas' Church, Whitmarsh, Pa. by The Rt. Reverend Charles E. Bennison, Bishop of Pennsylvania.

**Chapter 43**  
**The Reverend Douglas E. Anderson, SSC**  
**12<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**February 1997 – February 2004**

Following the retirement of The Rev. Canon William V. Rauscher, from April 1996 until February 1997 The Reverend A. William Degerberg filled the void as Interim Rector at Christ Church. In February 1997, The Reverend Douglas E. Anderson accepted the Vestry's call, and became the church's 12<sup>th</sup> Rector.

Born on July 6, 1968, Fr. Anderson was a Canadian by birth. He attended Trinity College at the University of Toronto, and while there he sang in the English Collegiate tradition in the Chapel Choirs of the college. He also sang in the Gallery Choir of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Toronto to help defray his college expenses. From September 1992 until May 1994 he was a Seminarian Assistant at Our Lady of Grace Church in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, during which time he spent two months' Parish Internship at St. Clement's, Philadelphia, Pa. In 1994 he graduated Cum Laude from Nashotah House, with a M.Div. degree. He was ordained to the Diaconate in June 1994, and to the Priesthood in December of that same year by the Bishop of Fond du Lac.

In August 1994 he was named Curate at St. Matthias Church in Dallas, Texas where he served until 1996; from there he moved to Woodbury, N.J. to accept his first rectorship. At the time he was 28 years old.

Fr. Anderson introduced many changes in the rectory soon after his arrival. Newly married, he and his wife Traci changed the colors of each room to reflect their youthful and colorful personalities. While living in Woodbury, the Anderson's 3 daughters (including a set of twins) were born.

Under his guidance, the church's liturgy increased in ritual and High Church traditions. Stations Of The Cross were installed as memorials by several members of the congregation. Young girl acolytes were encouraged to serve at the altar for the first time

in the Church's history. Worshipers grew accustomed to the aroma of incense now used on special occasions during the service of the Holy Eucharist, and in 1998 a Thurible was given by the Nester Family in memory of William, husband and father. Acolyte Brett Davison served as the first Thurifer in the Church's history, accompanied by Christopher Smith, the first Boat Boy. Sanctus Bells were rung during the service to announce the sacredness of the consecration of the elements.

Fr. Anderson's musical gifts came to the fore, and his melodious chanting enhanced the sung services at each celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Enabled by the generosity of parishioner Mrs. E. Diana Redfield, four choral scholars were employed to supplement the choir, adding refinement to the worship.

Services of the Holy Eucharist held on Saturday evenings were introduced during the summer months for those whose schedules inhibited regular attendance on Sunday mornings. Popular at their beginning, the services were discontinued after two years.

In September, 1998, at Fr. Anderson's request, The Reverend Robert E. Sullivan, Jr., who had recently retired as Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Chews Landing, accepted the position as Priest-In-Residence at Christ Church to assist the Rector whenever possible and whenever available. He presently resides in Christ Church's "Jackson House," located next to the Rectory. (See Chapter 42: The Reverend Robert E. Sullivan.).

In 1999 Fr. Anderson appointed a committee to oversee renovating the church grounds alongside the church and in front of the Parish House. Renovated to coincide with the turn of the century, the ground area was named "The Jubilee Garden," and parishioners generously donated bushes, trees, and shrubs. A blue stone patio was laid, and a bronze memorial plaque with a granite base listing the names of more than 400 family and friends, living and deceased, was installed in the front of the Garden. A focal point in the Garden is the impressive statue of Jesus Christ, hand-carved from marble taken from the quarries of Carrara, Italy, and shipped to the United States.

In early 2000, Fr. Anderson initiated plans to renovate and redecorate the wing of the Parish Hall that housed the Church School classrooms. This was an enormous undertaking, and when completed afforded additional classrooms in an area that for many years had stood vacant, damp and dark. Six new classrooms were completely refurbished, two new lavatories were constructed, accommodation for a storage room was planned, and a fully equipped nursery was included. The Sunday School students now had a bright and cheerful space in which to worship and learn.

This wing, dedicated in Advent, 2002 was named The Florence Ullrich Education wing to honor a dedicated Church School teacher and long-time parishioner. (See Chapter 18: The Mahley, Carney, and Ullrich Families). At the time of its completion, the renovations were entirely paid for by parishioners of the church.

At Fr. Anderson's urging, in 2003 Christ Church's first web site was created, and by early 2004 the site was up and running. After several years of refinements and expansion, visitors to the site are now introduced to the Church and afforded a short history of the parish, a preview of coming events, pictures which are frequently updated of activities and events, etc. The web site address is: <http://christchurch.woodburynj.org>.

On January 15, 2004 Fr. Anderson submitted his resignation as Rector of Christ Church, and accepted a call to Texarkana, Texas, where 6 weeks later he became the rector of St. James Anglican Episcopal Church. He preached his last sermon at Christ Church on Sunday, February 22, 2004, and for those who may remember the mixed emotions experienced by the entire congregation that day, his final words are as follows:

### **TEXT OF FATHER ANDERSON'S LAST SERMON AT CHRIST CHURCH**

Once upon a time a priest was leaving for another parish. The last thing he did was to prepare three envelopes for his successor. On his last day in the parish he handed them over to the incoming priest. "Open these," he said, "when you find yourself in any kind of trouble."

The new priest settled in, and things went very smoothly for a few months. In time, however, he began to encounter resistance. So he opened the first envelope. “Repaint the sanctuary,” said the note. The priest redecorated the church interior, and everyone was happy – for a while. Soon enough, people began to grumble again. So he opened the second envelope. “Take all the children in the Sunday School out for ice cream,” the note read. The priest took all the children for ice cream, and the parents thought he was wonderful – for a while. Again the people began to complain. So he opened the third envelope. It read “Prepare three envelopes ...”

A cute story for a morning such as this.

We have in the Gospel for this Last Sunday after Epiphany the account of the Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36). Jesus takes Peter and James and John up to a mountaintop where our Lord’s appearance is transformed, and his clothing becomes “white and glistering” in the words of the Collect. Beholding Jesus transfigured with Moses and Elijah, the three disciples must have stood there with their mouths hanging open in awe and their eyes popping out of their heads. Indeed it was an awesome sight! “The Lord is King; let the people tremble,” we sang in today’s Psalm (Ps. 99), “He is enthroned upon the cherubim, let the earth shake.”

And then Peter opens his big fat mouth. Peter, Peter, Peter. He says to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here, let us make three booths – three little huts, three cabinets – one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

But no booths will be built. Peter’s construction plans are put on hold when a voice comes from heaven, “This is my Son, listen to him!” And if we’d read a little further in the ninth chapter of Luke, we’d have learned that the very next day, Jesus and the disciples came down off the mountain to continue our Lord’s ministry by casting a demon out of a boy.

Peter’s problem was that he wanted to control the situation, to prolong it, to domesticate it, by building holiday cabins on the top of the mountain – “It is good for us to be here.” Peter – not knowing what he said – does not realize that the glory he has seen is not something to be bottled up, but rather is meant to teach them something about Jesus, and about his ministry on earth.

I want you to know that the last seven years here at Christ Church have been a real mountaintop experience for me. I have seen the glory of God manifested through the people of this parish. We have accomplished so much – priest and people together! I don’t want this to turn into a “these are a few of my favorite things” sermon, but let me quickly touch on a few.



I have experienced the glory of God in the Christian community here. Over my time, I have felt a growing sense of family. Indeed, over the past seven years I have heard the phrase “parish family” used more and more. And we are a family, aren’t we? Those who have four generations of relatives worshipping together, and those who have only recently become part of us. I think there has been a growing awareness that we do not *go* to church, but we *are* the Church. I have seen care and love in this parish family that I have seen nowhere else. The Church is not the priest, the Church is not the members who have been here since the Flood, the Church is not even bricks and buildings. The Church is “we the people” – all the people. And I have seen something of the kingdom of heaven in the parish family here.

I have seen the glory of God in transfigured lives. Some people believe that the age of miracles has ceased. I say otherwise. I have seen many miracles: I have seen people that were patchy in their attendance, now here week in and week out. They have come to realize that they need the support of a loving Christian community. They have come to know that they need their souls nourished with the Body and Blood of their Savior. They have seen that the power of God, given in Word and Sacrament, working in them can do infinitely more than they could ever do on their own.

I have seen hurt or angry souls begin to be healed by the Great Physician.

I have seen timid people stand taller and speak with boldness because they discovered that “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (I John 4:4).

I have seen men and women, who thought that what they learned about the faith in Confirmation Class was enough, now never miss the Adult Class. How necessary this is for, “When I was a child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; [but] when I became a man, I gave up childish ways (Epistle: 1 Cor. 13).”

Yes, I have seen God revealed in transformed and transfigured lives.

I have seen the glory of God in your stewardship. And I mean that word in its fullest sense. Stewardship, I have said, is “Everything I do with everything I have after I say ‘I believe.’” I have seen you grow in financial giving. Many of you have invested heavily in the work of God, and you can see the results around you – glorious music, the Jubilee Garden, beautiful vestments, a brand new education wing, and so on. I am pleased that the Vestry is full steam ahead with Phase II of the renovations. It would be so easy to be cautious, to be timid. But you are faithful stewards, conscientiously providing for the needs of a twenty-first century parish, and for generations yet to come. “Where your treasure, is” says Jesus, “there will your heart be also.”

But more important, I have seen the way you have given of your time and talent – “yourselves, your souls and bodies” in the words of the Prayer Book. Look, will you, at the back of your Bulletin. Each and every Sunday more than 50 people serve the common good – and there are probably another twenty or thirty names that don’t make it into the Bulletin. On my first Sunday here, I remember Fr. Degerberg (God rest his soul) buttonholing people on the sidewalk before Mass, desperate to find someone to read the Lesson. We have so many readers now that one is lucky to read once or twice a year! “The ministers of the Church,” reads the catechism, “are laypersons, bishops, priests and deacons.” In this parish these are not mere sentences in the back of the Prayer book, but a living reality. In this parish family, I have seen St. Paul’s words come true: “Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it.”

Like I said, my time here has been a real mountaintop experience – I could go on for many hours. But I need to tie this up.

The point, dear ones, is this: The Gospel for today teaches us that this time on the mountain cannot be domesticated, it cannot be controlled, it cannot be bottled away in our memories, it cannot be closeted up in pining away for the past. It has indeed been good for us to be here. I am so very thankful to God. But this experience needs to be put to use and carried into the future. In the days ahead, you will still need to be a caring Christian community, supporting and loving one another. You will still need the transforming strength and amazing grace that comes to you in the Holy Eucharist. You will still need to be good stewards of time, talent, and treasure so that the kingdom of God can be enlarged both in this parish family and in the world. God gives us these mountain top experiences so that we can *use them* to bless others.

May God bless us richly this day and every day.

**Chapter 44**  
**The Reverend Robert E. Sullivan, Jr.**  
**Priest In-Residence**  
**1998 –**  
**Christ Church, Woodbury**

In September 1998, at the request of Fr. Douglas E. Anderson, Christ Church's 12<sup>th</sup> Rector, and with the approval of the vestry, Fr. Sullivan accepted the newly created position of Priest-In-Residence. Fr. Sullivan's responsibilities were defined "to assist Fr. Anderson whenever possible, and whenever available." The arrangement included living quarters for Fr. Sullivan in the "Jackson House," a church-owned property next to the rectory.

At the time Fr. Sullivan joined Christ Church a press release was issued which detailed his interesting and varied background. For those unacquainted with his history, and who may not have seen the release at that time it is as follows:

The pathway that led Fr. Sullivan to Christ Church, Woodbury has been circuitous. A native of Philadelphia, he was baptized at Trinity Church, Oxford, an historic Colonial-era church in the Northeast section of the city. When Robert was ten years old, the Sullivan family moved to Hamilton Township, a suburb of Trenton, and transferred their Church affiliation to Christ Church, Bordentown. It was here that young Robert first met the late Bishop Banyard, who at that time served as Rector of the Sullivan's church. Following his confirmation in 1938 at Christ Church, Robert became a member of the Order of St. Vincent, and served as an Acolyte for several years in his home parish.

After graduation from Hamilton High School, Fr. Sullivan was inducted into the United States Army. At the completion of his Infantry training he embarked for France, where he served in the 26<sup>th</sup> Division under General George Patton. Wounded in battle, he spent time in hospitals in France and the southern part of England. Back at the front when the war ended, he was sent home in January 1946 with the Silver Star and two Purple Heart Medals.

In 1946 Fr. Sullivan entered Princeton University. Following his graduation three years later he enrolled in the Episcopal Church's Philadelphia Divinity School. His ordination to the Diaconate was

celebrated in June 1952 in his home parish of Christ Church, Bordentown, and his early assignments in this role included serving as Vicar of St. Peter's, Woodbury Heights, and St. James, Paulsboro. He was ordained to the Priesthood at Trinity Cathedral in Trenton in December 1952.

The year 1958 found Fr. Sullivan far from New Jersey at the Institut Catholique in Paris, where his studies included French Spirituality. In 1959 he returned to the United States and entered the Novitiate of the Order of the Holy Cross in West Park, New York (a monastic order of the Episcopal Church). As a member of the Order, his responsibilities included teaching at St. Andrews' Preparatory School in Sewanee, Tennessee and later at Mt. Calvary Retreat House in Santa Barbara, California.

His missionary work next took him to the Holy Cross Mission in Bolahun, a town located in a primitive section of Liberia, West Africa. For six years he served as Chaplain at the leper colony in Bolahun, while also teaching at the Mission Schools located within the colony. Fr. Sullivan remembers these six years as one of the most exciting and rewarding periods of his lifetime, and today is appalled at the constant turmoil and chaos that affects this once peaceful area of the world.

In 1971 Fr. Sullivan left the Order of the Holy Cross and returned to New Jersey, where he served as an assistant for almost a year at St. James, Long Branch. In 1972 he was appointed Rector of St. John's, Chews Landing, a distinguished Episcopal Church which has been placed on the National Register of Historic Buildings. He preached his first sermon there on a snowy Sunday morning in February to a congregation which over the next 25 years grew to know and love him. In 1989 under Fr. Sullivan's leadership the congregation celebrated their Church's Bicentennial anniversary. Fr. Sullivan remained at St. John's until his formal "retirement" in 1998.

From his background, it is obvious that Fr. Sullivan loves to travel, and by now has actually lost count of the number of times he has crossed the ocean. He is also an avid tennis player, and can be found on local courts at least once or twice each week.

In 2007, Fr. Sullivan is loved by the parishioners at Christ Church as he was (and still is) loved by those at St. John's, Chews Landing, who describe him as "The Good Shepherd of St. John's Episcopal Church." He continues to play tennis once or twice a week on the local courts in Woodbury, but now spends the winter months at his home in Bradenton, Florida (where he also plays tennis). He is a warm, witty and charming man who serves

as a role model of humility, generosity and kindness in his treatment of others. The parishioners of Christ Church are blessed by his presence among us.

**Chapter 45**  
**The Very Reverend Brian K. Burgess, SSC**  
**13<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church**  
**February 2005 –**

Between January 15, 2004 and February 22, 2005 emotions were strongly divided among the parishioners of Christ Church. Many felt disappointed that their rector, his wife, and his children (all three of whom had been born in Woodbury) left so quickly. Others were anxious to move on and find a replacement as soon as possible.

This is not an unusual situation when a rector leaves his church, and one that had been faced by the parishioners in the past. The Vestry elected Senior Warden George T. Mitchell, Jr. as Presiding Officer of the Corporation; at the same time Junior Warden B. Dawson Shoemaker, M.D. was designated as Chairman of the Search Committee. Under the leadership of these two gentlemen, the search for the 13<sup>th</sup> Rector was soon underway. During the interim, The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird was named Priest In Charge until the next rector would be called.

In February 2005, The Reverend Brian K. Burgess became the 13<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, Woodbury. Fr. Burgess' arrival signaled once again the beginning of a new era for the parish. He, his wife Denise, their son Robert, and daughter Catherine moved into the rectory filled with memories of the past, but clear in their anticipation of the future.

Brian K. Burgess was born in Tampa, Florida on November 6, 1960. In 1983 he received his BS in Music Education from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. For the next seven years he served as Director of Bands: first at Rockville Jr./Sr. High School in Rockville, Indiana, and then at North Fort Myers Senior High School in Florida. In 1989 he was hired by the Lee County (Florida) Division of Public Safety to serve as Training Coordinator, and then Operations Coordinator of their nationally recognized Emergency Management Program.

In 1996 his desire to serve God as a Priest and pastor became too strong to resist any longer, and that year he entered the University of the South School of Theology, as a Postulant for Holy Orders. In December 1999 he received his Master of Divinity degree with honors at The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. He was ordained a Priest in December of that year by The Rt. Rev. John B. Lipscomb, Bishop of Southwest Florida.

From 1999 until 2001 Fr. Burgess was Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Brooksville, Florida. From 2001 until 2005 he served as Associate Priest and Day School Chaplain at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Fr. Burgess' ministry is one of total devotion, dedication to pastoral responsibilities, zeal for traditional worship, and Anglo-Catholic ritual that inspires and invokes a sense of the divine. Like his predecessor, Fr. Burgess is a member of the *Societas Sanctae Crucis*, the Society of the Holy Cross, founded in London in 1855 by a small group of Anglo-Catholic priests who came together for support, mutual prayer, and encouragement at a time when the Catholic Revival in the Church of England was threatened by persecution and misunderstanding.

In 2005, during his first year as rector, Fr. Burgess instituted the Passport Program to prepare young people for Confirmation. In this program, points are awarded to Confirmation Class students, earned by participation in various activities within and outside the Parish. A total of 90 activity points are required, and each student must attend 20 out of 25 scheduled sessions before they are confirmed.

In 2006, Fr. Burgess initiated what is now an annual community service commemorating St. Florian's Day, during which a blessing is bestowed on a static display of fire apparatus as well as county fire fighters of many different Christian traditions and various faiths. The blessing is followed by a grand procession of fire fighters in full dress uniform to Christ Church for a Service of Evensong, solemnized by the ringing of a fire bell placed in the church's chancel for the occasion to honor those who have died in the

line of duty. This St. Florian's Day service has grown over the past two years, and the parade of fire trucks, firefighters, Christ church's clergy and choir, led by a group of award-winning bagpipers who march from the local fire house through the streets of Woodbury and ending at Christ Church, is anticipated by the entire community.

On September 16, 2007, under Fr. Burgess's leadership, Christ Church, Woodbury celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the church's consecration. This celebration was preceded by a yearlong series of events in commemoration of the historical event, highlighted by a service of Solemn Eucharist conducted by The Rt. Reverend George E. Councill, Bishop of New Jersey, followed by an Anniversary Dinner attended by 211 parishioners and friends of the parish.

In the Fall of 2007 Fr. Burgess instituted a service to honor the men and women of Christ Church's parish who served their country in various branches of the Armed Forces. On November 11, 2007, thirty members of the parish entered the church in a solemn and dignified procession, preceded by an acolyte carrying the Processional Cross. These men and women had put their lives at risk in service at home and abroad to ensure our continued safety, and during this service each was accorded the honor and thanks due them by a grateful congregation for their devotion to their God and their country. The service of these brave men and women began with World War II, up to and including participation in the current Middle East struggles.

As further evidence of Fr. Burgess' successful outreach into the community, The Ceremony of Lessons and Carols has been expanded in the style of Kings College, Cambridge to include the entire community, as well as the parish family. Local churches of various traditions are invited to participate in this event, held annually at Christ Church. In December 2007 in addition to the Rector and Clergy from Christ Church, the following churches in Woodbury were represented by clergy and members: St. Stephens Lutheran Church, Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, The Presbyterian Church at Woodbury, Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, and The Central Baptist Church. A program of magnificent music was provided by Richard Kurtz, Parish Musician, accompanied by his



wife, Gloria Kurtz, organist at the Church of St. Uriel the Archangel in Sea Girt, N.J. and also an accomplished flautist; the Choir of Christ Church; Mrs. Patricia Noar, violin; Master Christopher Smith, viola; and Mrs. Karin McGarry, cello. A member of the clergy from each of the above churches served as a Lector for the Seven Lessons.

To the delight of the visiting clergy and congregation, at this service the newly organized Choristers of Christ Church made their debut. Fifteen young boys and girls, each wearing a black cassock, a white cotta, and a white ruffled Isca Collarette, processed into the church and sang Austin C. Lovelace's *The Apple Tree Carol*.

The pews in Christ Church, the proud and grateful host of this unforgettable moving service, were filled to overflowing with parishioners, visitors and friends.

In the short span of two years, Fr. Burgess has immersed himself in the diocese, and he now serves as Dean to the surrounding parishes that comprise the Woodbury Convocation. He is a regular visitor to Underwood Hospital, administering the Eucharist and offering comfort to parishioners and to *all* patients who are in spiritual need.

In the Fall of the year 2007, many new exciting educational projects are under way, with the goal of increasing the numbers of an already expanded Sunday School. This is an exciting time of new beginnings for *all* members of Christ Church, and the parishioners look forward to Fr. Burgess' dedicated service for many years to come.

## CONCLUSION

This conclusion is by no means the end of or the complete history of Christ Church, Woodbury. History never ends – it is always ongoing. The important thing is to learn from the past, for in so doing we help secure the future.

In researching and reading the pages of the past 150 years of the church's history, it became very clear the history of this vibrant church of God is still a work in progress, and this book is merely another chapter in the life of the church in which we worship.

Christ Church is more than wood, steel, and stone. It is the *people therein* – those who worship within its walls – who are the foundation of this beautiful edifice. And just as surely, their belief in God will carry them forward, no matter how turbulent the times.

In 1857, challenges lay before the founders; they faced them and the challenges became history. In 2007, one hundred and fifty years later, challenges continue to face the Rector, the Vestry, and each parishioner. As in the past, these challenges will be faced and overcome, and they will become the history of tomorrow.

A former rector once commented: “There are more invisibles in Christ Church than visibles.” This I firmly believe. While writing this history, I felt surrounded by those in the past who live on within the walls of Christ Church. I felt their presence, as if they were satisfied in some way that their efforts were not in vain, that their time here on earth would not be forgotten, but instead live on through the eyes of those who read this book. In November 2006, The Reverend J. Donald Waring, Rector of Grace Church, New York, wrote in a letter to his congregation: “When you kneel at the altar rail to receive communion, you are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who have done the same thing, in the same spot, in remembrance of Jesus. When you drink from the chalice, you are holding a cup that some long deceased parishioner gave in thanksgiving for some departed loved one the world has forgotten. And when you sit in your pew, you are sitting where generations of people have been honored guests in the house of the Lord.” That describes the feeling I had while writing this book.

Their struggles were many; so are ours today. Their sorrows were deep, their joys exhilarating; so are ours today. The congregations of yesterday dwindled and grew, and so at times did their funds; so do ours today. But they survived, and through their efforts Christ Church lives on, 150 years after her cornerstone was laid. And through their efforts and their faith, we, the congregation of today, find we are exactly like them.

To predict the future of any church in today's turbulent world is impossible. Those who live 50 years from now will face challenges and use methodology and computers that today do not exist to solve problems we at this time can't begin to imagine. But they in this Class of Tomorrow will be fortunate to have the solid foundations of past history as a guide for their hope in the future, and will be fortified by their belief in God, in their religion, and through their loyalty to Christ and His church.

We reach toward them with outstretched hands, we who leaned for support on the strength provided by earlier generations who worshiped at the altar of Christ Church, and who now offer our own experience and our devotion to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior as support to the generations in the years to come.

Amen.

## **THIS IS THY HOUSE**

**This is Thy house, O Lord  
I hear Thy Holy Word  
Pervade the silence.**

**Deep within, not uttered by  
Mere vocal voice, I give reply  
Though I keep silent.**

**I cannot speak, nor would I speak;  
Instead, Thy quietude I seek.  
My soul needs rest.**

**Here, within these walls I find  
A firmer faith, a peace of mind.  
My soul is blessed.**

**Grant me, Lord, this sacred hour,  
The healing touch of Thy great power  
That I may serve Thee well,**

**That I may go my way today,  
Grateful for this place to pray,  
The house where Thou dost dwell.  
Amen.**

**Irvin R. Lindemuth**

## Acknowledgements

For numerous conversations with The Reverend Canon William V. Rauscher, 11<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church, who offered assistance, support and encouragement at all times;

For conversations with The Rev. Dr. John E. Bird, former 5<sup>th</sup> Curate and present Assisting Priest at Christ Church, and author of *Highlights in the History of Christ Church* ("The Red Book") published January 1971, who understands better than most the effort involved in researching and writing this latest History of Christ Church;

For support offered by B. Dawson Shoemaker, M.D., former vestryman and Senior Warden, and long-time and faithful parishioner of Christ Church;

For information gained during conversations with Mrs. Helen Tomeo, Mrs. Dorothy Landberg, Mrs. Florence Ullrich, Mrs. Helen Nester, Mark W. Nester, D.M.D., and Richard Kurtz, parishioners of Christ Church;

From conversations and suggestions offered by Mr. James Kilpatrick, former parishioner and vestryman of Christ Church;

Through conversation with The Rev. John Van Sant, 1<sup>st</sup> Curate of Christ Church;

Through information found in the early Parish Vestry Meeting minutes;

From information obtained in burial records from St. James the Less Church, Philadelphia;

For assistance by Mrs. Edie Rohrman, Trinity Episcopal Church, Swedesboro, New Jersey;

For assistance by Mrs. Fran Hurley, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Freehold, New Jersey;

For information and suggestions by David and Patricia Fletcher, parishioners of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Mt. Holly, New Jersey;

For assistance from The Reverend Canon Laurence D. Fish, Sr. Historiographer, The Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey;

For information offered by The Rev. Canon W. Gordon Reid, Rector of St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia, and Mr. Larry Riley, Master of Servers, St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia;

For information and assistance from Nancy R. Miller, Archivist at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia;

From information and assistance offered by the office staff at Grace Church, Haddonfield;

Through letters written by former rectors and parishioners;

From information in early Parish Registers;

For assistance by The Gloucester County Historical Society;

From quotations in *The Spire on the Square*, a book of history about St. John's Episcopal Church, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

For assistance by parishioner Richard Geiger, who scanned all the photographs in this publication;

And finally, to graphic artist and friend Dennis Ulrich for his talented assistance in layout and design.

To all of the above, my deepest appreciation.

J.A.M.

December, 2007

## About the Author

Joan A. Mitchell is a “cradle Episcopalian,” and has been a parishioner of Christ Church, Woodbury for many years.

Mrs. Mitchell is a published author of children’s books, short stories, and serials, and was for many years a regular contributor to *Jack and Jill Magazine*, published by The Curtis Publishing Company. She has extensive experience in editing and rewriting at both managerial and professional levels, and has been listed in *Who’s Who of American Women* and *The Writer’s Directory*.

In December 1970 Mrs. Mitchell joined Towers Perrin (then Towers, Perrin, Forster & Crosby) in Philadelphia as a member of the newly formed Employee Information Systems Department. She remained with Towers Perrin for the next 22 years, during which time she served in various capacities at different levels within the company. Prior to her retirement in 1992 she was a member of the professional staff within the company, overseeing and managing a staff of talented individuals who provided document creation and editorial support for the internal consulting staff, as well as outside clients.

Mrs. Mitchell is the originator of the popular series called “Have You Noticed?” that appeared from November 2003 through December 2005 in Christ Church’s *Parish Newsletter*. She also served as Editor and Coordinator of the same *Parish Newsletter* during 2004 – 2005.

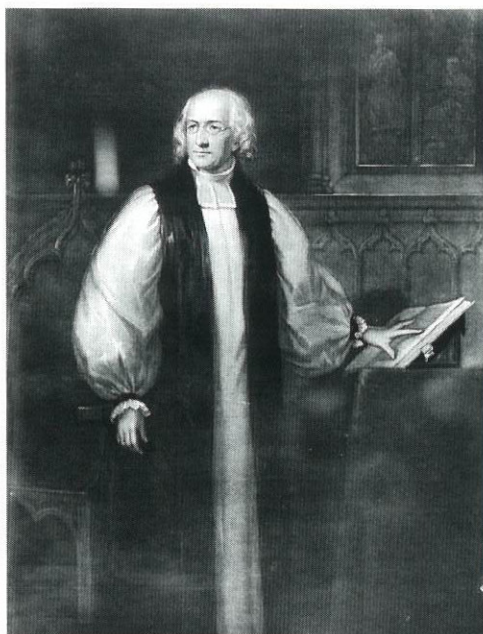
She presently resides in Cherry Hill, New Jersey with her husband George, and their two cats, Smoky and Benji.

## A GALLERY OF PHOTOGRAPHS

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**The Rt. Rev. John Croes**  
1<sup>st</sup> Bishop of New Jersey



**The Rt. Rev. George Washington Doane**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Bishop of New Jersey



**The Rt. Rev. George E. Council**  
11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New Jersey



**The Rev. William (Guilielmus) Herbert Norris**  
Missionary, Founder, and 1<sup>st</sup> Rector  
of Christ Church





**The Rev. Howard E. Thompson**  
4<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



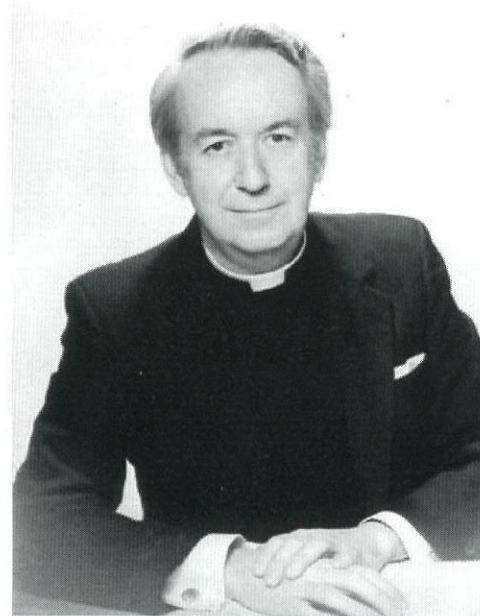
**The Rev. Edgar Campbell**  
8<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



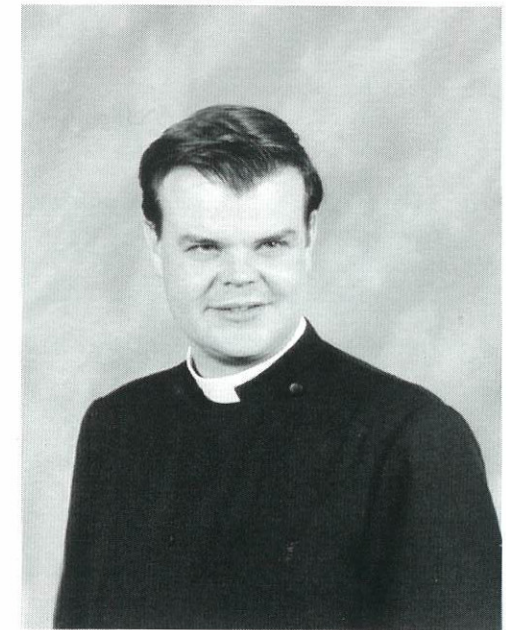
**The Rev. Howard Morris Stuckert**  
9<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



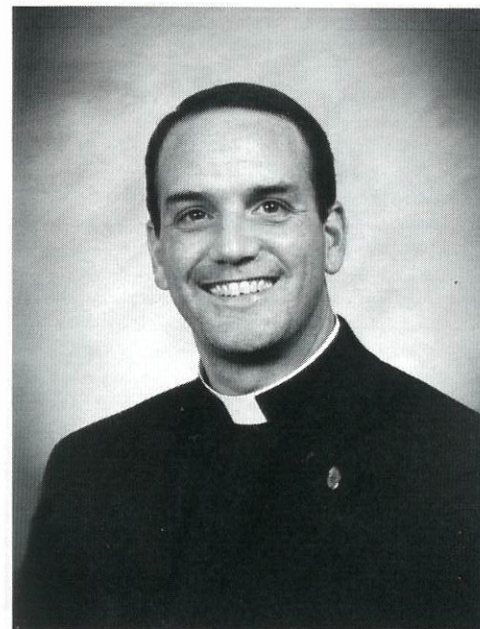
**The Rev. Canon  
Robert G. Wynne Williams, S.T.D.**  
10<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



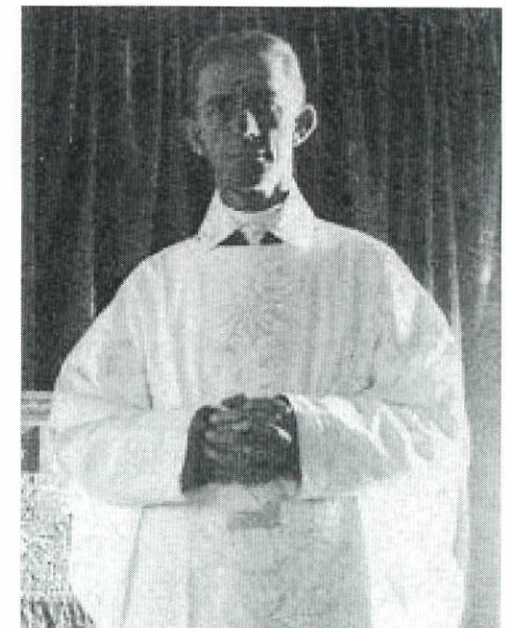
**The Rev. Canon William Vernon  
Rauscher**  
11<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



**The Rev. Douglas E. Anderson,  
S.S.C.**  
12<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church



**The Very Rev. Brian K. Burgess,  
S.S.C.**  
13<sup>th</sup> Rector of Christ Church

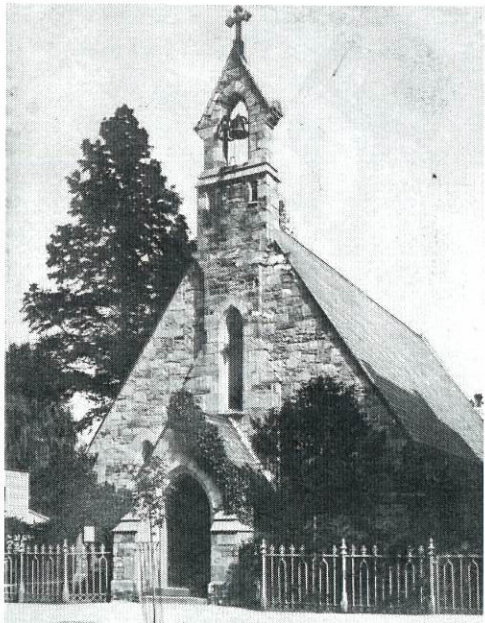


**The Rev. Howard E. Thompson**  
in front of the altar  
(Sometime between 1884 – 1895)





A young **Canon Robert G. Williams**  
in front of the altar



Christ Church before 1906

To all whom these presents may concern, We  
whose names and seals are hereunto affixed do  
certify that the Congregation of Christ Church in  
the City of Woodbury in the County of Gloucester and  
State of New Jersey which is a religious society wor-  
shipping according to the customs and usages of  
the Protestant Episcopal Church desiring to con-  
form themselves into a body Corporate according  
to the Act of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey  
in such case made and provided: Met at Christ  
Church aforesaid in the said City of Woodbury  
on the tenth day of April in the year of our  
Lord One thousand eight hundred and seven  
to give pursuant to ten days previous notice given  
by the intention of the said Congregation to form  
themselves into a body Corporate by an advertise-  
ment set up in open view on the Outer door of  
the said Church it being the place where the said  
Congregation usually assemble for divine services  
which notice designated the day when and the  
place where they designed to meet for that purpose  
The Rev. William H. Lewis Rector of said Church be-  
sided and Samuel H. Gold Secretary of the said  
Congregation recorded the following

The Congregation then proceeded by a vote  
of a majority of those present to designate the Cor-  
porate name of the body which the said Church  
shall be known and which is: "The Rector, Wai-  
den & Vestrymen of Christ Church in the  
City of Woodbury" The Congregation then chose Robert  
H. Jeff and Benjamin H. Carter Wardens and  
Henry C. Dote, Samuel H. Gold, David Cooper  
Samuel C. Wells, Theodore Gross, George Clark  
and Frank J. Dote Vestrymen, And also by a ma-  
jority of Votes fixed and determined on Monday  
of the month called Easter Week, Annually as the  
day on which new election of officers of the said  
Church shall take place.

In testimony whereof And in Order that the  
Proceedings may be recorded, we the Rector and Sec-  
retary aforesaid have hereunto set our hands and  
seals this tenth day of April in the year of our  
Lord One thousand eight hundred and seventy four

Wm. H. Lewis Jr. Rector  
Samuel H. Gold Secretary

Recorded May 16 1874  
Indeulago

Copy of the Original Charter of  
Incorporation of Christ Church  
April 10, 1874



Christ Church and Rectory c. 1896

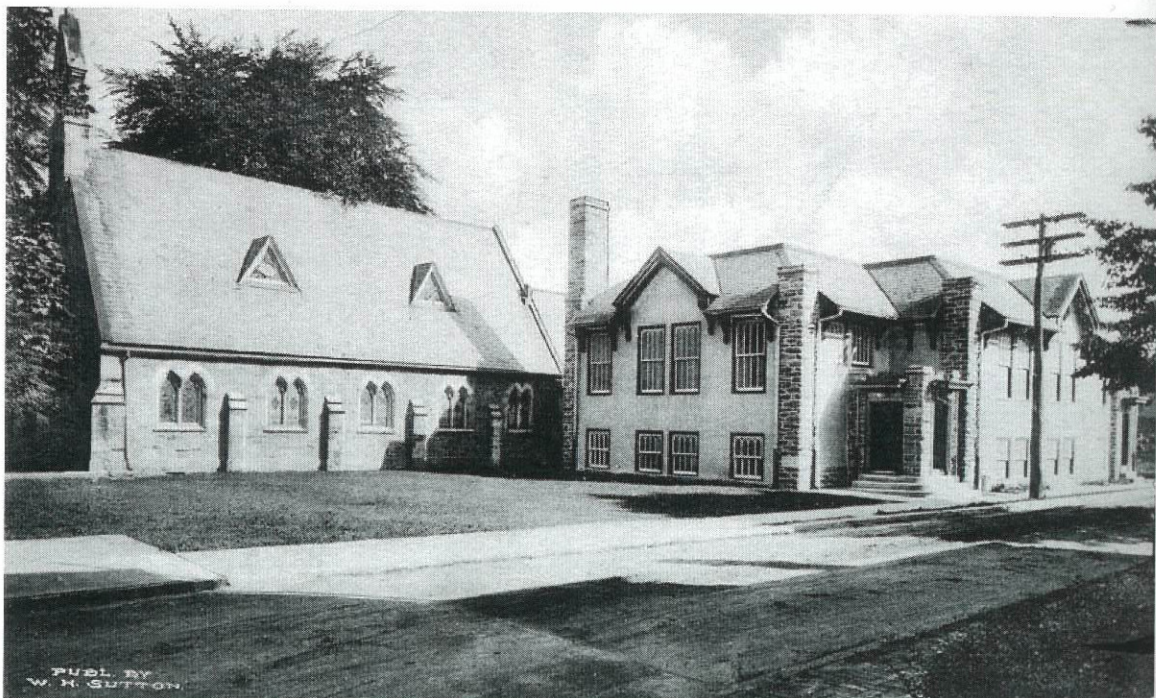


From left: Rectory, Christ Church, and Temperance Hall c. 1900





Interior of the Old Parish House (Sunday School Chapel) 1886 – 1917



Christ Church and the "New" Parish House c.1914

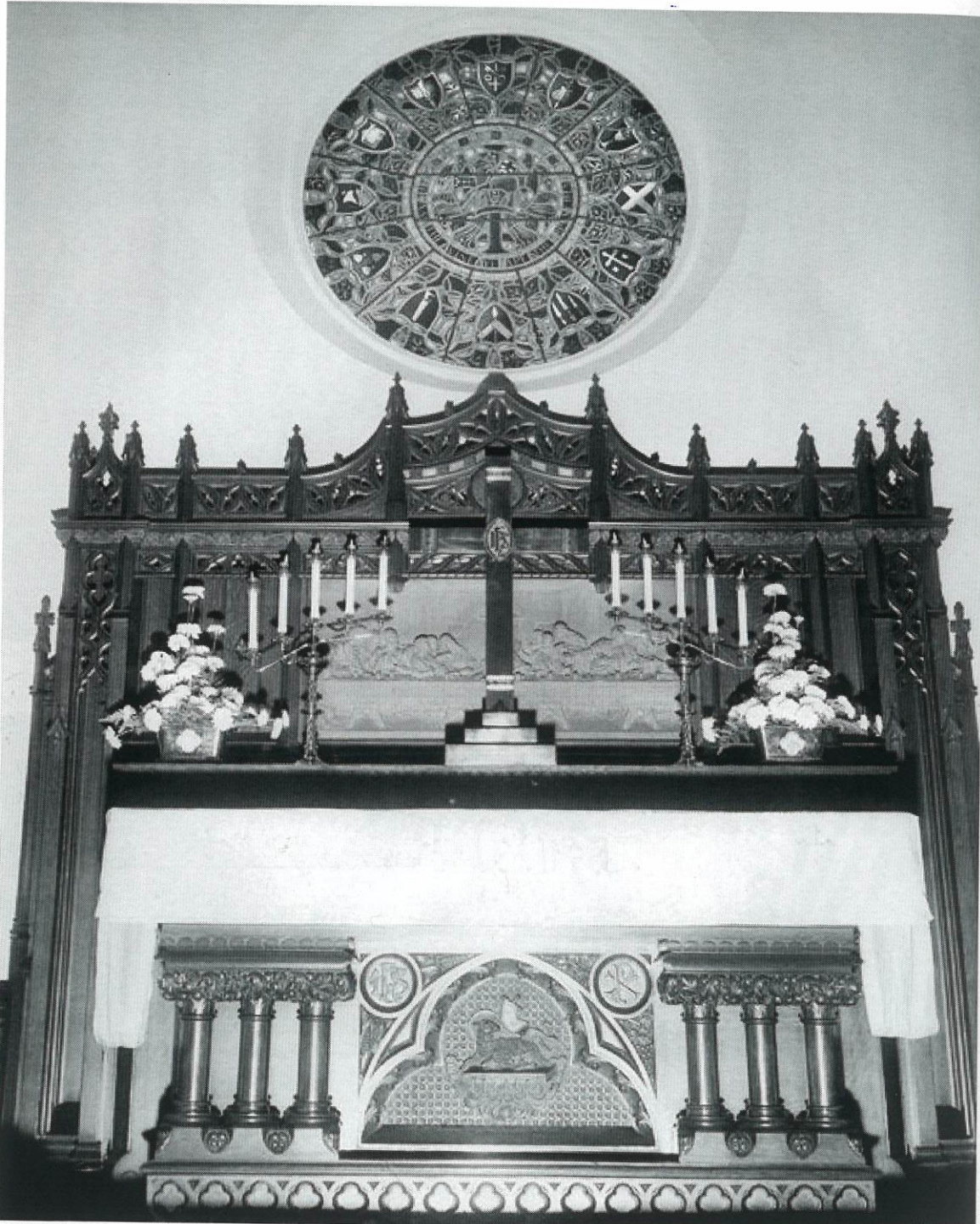


Chancel and Sanctuary c. 1960  
(Note tile floor and three original windows behind altar)



Inside Christ Church (after 1923 and before 1951)  
(Note Pulpit on the Epistle side and organ console and pipes on the Gospel side)

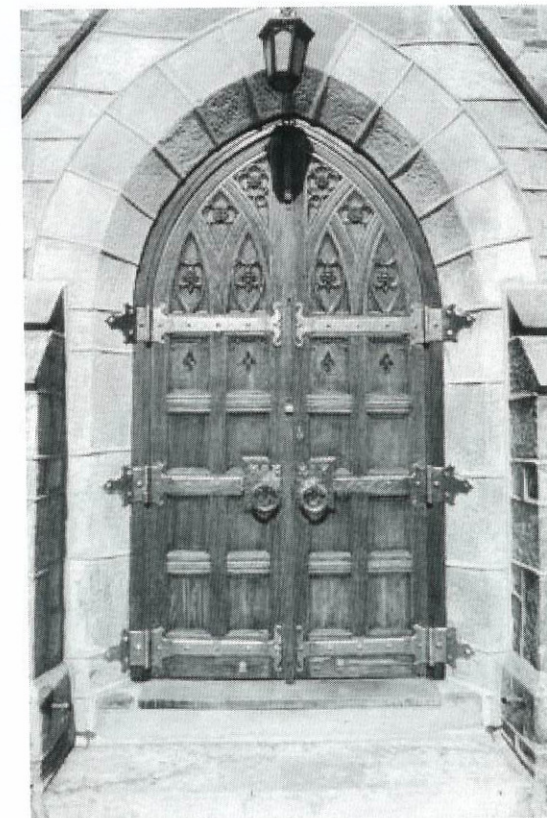




Altar and Apostles' Window



Altar Reredos Panel carved by Alois Lang



Front Doors of Christ Church given in memory of William A. Stiles Commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of Christ Church – Dedicated November 1, 1931